



*Tasting Notes:*

A bright, expansive nose announces this wine packed with warm currant, red licorice and berry compote flavors around a core of loamy earth and subtle spice character. Complex and structured to last, the palate features silky smooth tannins weaved with firm acidity.

*Vineyards:*

Best known for old vine Zinfandel and new plantings of Rhône varieties, the Dry Creek Valley is fully capable of producing world-class Cabernet Sauvignon when the right conditions come together at a particular site. When we first laid eyes on the Merrill's Vinegrove adjacent to our winery, we knew we had found such a site. Planted along a rolling swale a few hundred feet up from the valley floor, the combination of sun exposure, well-draining soil, and slightly cooler temperatures create the perfect storm for richly flavored, densely structured, classic California Cabernet. The blend also includes 4% Malbec from Blau Vineyard in Knights Valley and 3% Petit Verdot from Ellis Alden Vineyard.

*Vintage:*

The first winter with big rains in half a decade allowed soils to store up plenty of water – this helped vine health during the scorching hot summer that brought over a dozen 100-degree days. We harvested our estate Vinegrove Cabernet Sauvignon on September 8th - by far the earliest ever. This turned out to be a stroke of good fortune, as the wine was fermented and safely in barrel by the time that year's devastating wildfires struck.

*Winemaking:*

The grapes were de-stemmed into small open-top tanks for a long cold soak to encourage development of color before fermentation began spontaneously with wild yeast. Fermentation continued without the addition of any chemicals or enzymes, aided only by the heat of the sun and gravity-fed "pump-overs" once per day. After pressing the wine went into French oak barrels – 33% of which were new – aged for 24 months, and was racked only once, immediately prior to bottling.