



Napa Valley Sweet Vermouth No. 2

First off, our vermouth is primarily about the wine. The base wine. It is 100% Flora, which is a variety bred at UC Davis by the legendary Harold Olmo back in the 1950's. It is a cross between Semillon and Gewurtztraminer. Though Olmo isn't with us any more to confirm our theory, our conviction is that he bred it specifically for fortified wines. The California industry moved away from these types of wines in the 1970s, and Flora fell into obscurity. When we heard that Flora still existed in the organically farmed Yount Mill Vineyard we immediately begged for some fruit. This fruit is a rare exception for us—normally we try to grow all of our own fruit—but the temptation to make wine from this rare and historical variety was too much to resist.

Batch number two is a non-vintage blend of the 2012, 2013, and 2014 vintages. For this reason it will be three years until we are able to repeat it.

The fruit was picked very late, with around 40% raisins at harvest. Besides the natural high sugar, the must was sweetened further by chaptalizing with cane sugar, to about 45 brix.

The grapes were fermented whole cluster (skins and stems) in open-top fermenters. We did manual punch downs twice a day. We let the fermentation stop naturally, with residual sugar remaining due to the high brix when the grapes were crushed, and pressed the wine into partially full used barrels.

We added no sulfites, instead allowing the wine to slowly oxydize and develop the wonderful nutty and dried fruit flavors. The three vintages were barrel aged between eight and thirty-two months.

To complement the natural grape aromas of the Flora we made infusions of our own home-grown blood oranges and sour cherries, along with organic coriander that we purchased, in a base of neutral grape brandy.

The bittering was mainly done by adding an infusion of our own home-grown cardoons, but we also purchased organic chinchona bark, wormwood, and blessed thistle to infuse for a little more complexity.

The wine was bottled unfiltered. 502 cases of half bottles were produced.

The Napa Valley Sweet Vermouth No. 2 makes a great blood and sand, negroni, manhattan, or even better, can be served neat as an aperitif or to accompany dessert.