



## **2019 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, Phoenix Vineyard**

In 2017, we had an opportunity of a lifetime. After 22 years of making wine wherever we could find space, we had the chance to buy our own winery. The elderly owners of the vineyard and winery next door to a property we were farming could no longer manage the upkeep and needed help. We started farming their grapes for them as a favor, and later that same year purchased the property, granting them a lifetime estate; we gained our dream of a winery, and they secured their home for the rest of their lives.

The Phoenix Vineyard was planted in 1982 by that same family on the steep hillside above the winery. They used old heritage field selections of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Merlot. With the help of their sons they lovingly cared for the vines themselves the entire time. When we took over, we converted to Organic Farming, planted new vines where some of the old vines had given up, and focused on rejuvenating the old vines with compost and pruning.

The steep hillside and narrow rows require most that work be done by hand—even the compost is applied with shovels and wheelbarrows, that task alone takes two weeks. It's a challenging vineyard to farm but it's worth it.

The soils are some of the most unique in the entire Napa Valley. While most of the best vineyard soils in the Napa Valley are either of volcanic origin or are on mixed alluvial deposits, the East-facing steep hillside of the Phoenix Vineyard sits on an undisturbed ridge of ancient marine shale soils. The rock content and sea minerals of these soils create unique and haunting wines with high-toned red fruits, perfumed and exotic, and a lightness in the mid-palate that is contrasted by a long, firm, and structured finish. Wine singular enough, yet complete enough, to be worthy of a single vineyard designation.

After multiple small hand harvests to “cherry pick” individual vines as they become ripe, the fruit was fermented at low temperatures in small, open-top tanks and punched down by hand one to three times per day, depending on how the wine tasted during the fermentation. This wine was given 20 months of elevage in 20% new French oak, a few older French oak barrels, and a large foudre (to preserve the aromatics, similar to Barolo-style aging). The wine should reward long aging, or enjoyment young with a meal after a little decanting.

The pH is 3.63, TA is 6.2, and alcohol is 13.0%. 233 cases produced.