



2020 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 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. 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 so worth it.

The soils are some of the most unique in the entire Napa Valley. 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, and complete enough, to be worthy of a single vineyard designation.

There were terrible fires in 2020 — on August 19 the Vaca Mountains erupted in flames — we looked across the valley at the smoke and decided to harvest the entire Phoenix Vineyard the next day, while the sky above us was still blue and the smoke was still at bay. It was our earliest Cabernet harvest ever, and we love the resulting wine — pure, fresh, and incredibly elegant.

This wine was given 20 months of elevage in ~20% new French oak, a few older French oak barrels, two seasoned Demi-muids, and a large foudre (to preserve the aromatics, similar to Barolo-style aging). The wine will reward long aging or can be enjoyed young with a meal after a little decanting.

The pH is 3.73, TA is 8.1, and alcohol is 12.0%. 361 cases produced. Certified Organic vineyard.