



California Sweet Vermouth No. 8

Our vermouth is primarily about the quality of the wine — the base wine before the herbs, spices, and fruit extracts are added. Each year the grapes for vermouth are picked very late, with some botrytis and raisins at harvest, and we produce a rich and complex dessert wine. Then we layer in extracts made from fresh organic ingredients.

This base wine is mainly composed of a rare variety named Flora, which was bred at UC Davis by the legendary Harold Olmo back in the 1930s to be a base for fortified wines. Flora is a natural cross between Semillon and Gewürztraminer. The California industry moved away from these types of wines by the 1960s and Flora fell into obscurity. The temptation to make wine from this rare and historical variety was too much to resist. The Flora is blended with smaller amounts of Viognier and Muscat of Alexandria.

The grapes are fermented with the skins using daily punchdowns to increase the extraction of flavors and phenolics. The wine is macerated for at least a week before being pressed and transferred to a mix of old brandy casks and neutral French oak barrels for aging. The young wine is folded into our solera, and the portion bottled each year is a blend of multiple vintages with the oldest wine coming from 2015. The older wine provides dried fruit and nutty aromas which are balanced by the vibrancy and fresh citrus notes of the younger wine.

The base wine is mixed with infusions of our own blend of fruit, herbs, and spices, many of which we grow ourselves. Homegrown blood oranges, sour cherries, and coriander seed amplify the fruit notes from the base wine. Cardoons from the Matthiasson garden and foraged wormwood provide the bitter notes that bring depth and balance the residual sugar. All infusions are made in neutral grape brandy.

This is our eighth batch in the twelve years since our first release. The wine is bottled unfinned and unfiltered to preserve the complex aromas and flavors from the infusions. The vermouth will occasionally develop some sediment in bottle, but this will not impact the flavor of our handmade, farmhouse vermouth.

The Matthiasson Sweet Vermouth No. 8 makes a great Boulevardier, Blood and Sand, Negroni, Manhattan, or spritzer, and can also be served neat as an aperitif or to accompany dessert.

305 cases. Alcohol by volume 17.0%.