

PETER PAUL

WINES

2017 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

First, let's get the big question out of the way. Are we happy with how our Napa Cabernet turned out in a vintage that resembled an episode of "American Ninja"? Absolutely! In fact, we think it shares many of the qualities we loved about the media-darling, high-scoring 2016, including soaring aromas and superb structure. More blunt questions: Did we suffer from the fires? No, most of our fruit was brought in before the devastation. Did the late summer heat spikes hurt us? Actually not at all, as most of the late-ripening grapes like Cabernet (and the Petit Verdot, so good) were able to relax in the fall with some moderate weather. Plus, the fact that vines shutdown metabolically over 92F meant (counterintuitively) that sugar levels were not as outrageous as you'd expect. Overall we are *very* happy with how our vineyard sources managed in this wild ride.

About this wine

Rutherford continued to be a lively part of our Napa Cab program with pristine red-fruit purity, while Yountville brought a gorgeous depth, and St. Helena provided impressive complexity. It is worth reminding the reader - the risk of smoke taint is thankfully not part of this wine (we would not release it otherwise – for instance there likely won't be any 2020 Napa wines). Once in the winery, the fruit experienced minimal racking with 26-month aging in 45% new French Oak, and was bottled, unfinned and unfiltered Dec 2019. Extended bottle-rest has allowed the various components to fully integrate.

Tasting Notes

It's become instructive (and enjoyable) to consider the newest release of our Cabernet next to the recent vintages. If 2015 was fun and fleshy, and 2016 was deep and daring, 2017 is simply brimming with confidence. Like a sinewy cross-fitter built from struggle, this wine fully challenges the perception of a "down vintage. Soaring aromatics are the first striking thing you'll notice. Next, fine-tuned layers of black fruits, roasted herbs & spices, unsweetened cocoa develop in the glass in a particularly beautiful, if somewhat cerebral strength; with air, the touch of austerity yields to a delicious complexity. Drink over 5-8 years – decant if opening before 2022.

Technical Data

Varieties: 93% Cabernet Sauvignon 3% Petit Verdot,
2% Cabernet Franc, balance Merlot & Malbec
Sub-appellations: Yountville, St. Helena, Rutherford
Maturation: 100% French Oak; 45% new
Cases Produced: 510 cases, 5 magnum cases, Three-3L Bottles