

VINTAGE 2011



PULIDO-WALKER

Cabernet Sauvignon

MELANSON VINEYARD

Despite a growing season beset with challenges across the Napa Valley, this second vintage from our Pritchard Hill vineyard will likely prove even finer than the first. The 2011 growing season was uncharacteristically wet, with late rains in June eliminating a good deal of fruit. In the Melanson Vineyard, this meant that the naturally small set required minimal thinning. While summer fog persisted on the valley floor, our hillside blocks enjoyed full sun. An early fall rain for the third consecutive vintage had zero impact on this high elevation site. The canopy dried out quickly and the fruit hung through late October, taking full advantage of the best ripening conditions in the region.

Winemaking & Tasting Notes

Clones 7 and 337 were picked and fermented separately. Grapes were hand sorted with extra attention to the health of the berries, given the wetness of the season. Clusters were destemmed without the addition of sulphur and cold soaked for seven days. Only natural yeasts attended each small lot, with no inoculation for alcoholic or malolactic fermentation. The wine was pressed off the skins after a relatively short maceration, owing to the concentration of tannins in the thick skin of this hillside fruit. After 20 months barrel aging in 100% French oak, the wine was bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

The tiny 2011 yield from this Pritchard Hill site is a blessing, as a small set that occurs naturally produces a different result than multiple thinning passes through the vineyard. This difference is evident in the concentration of our wine.

An anomaly of the wet 2011 vintage, Melanson Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon once again testifies to the advantages of this site above the valley fog. Prolonged development on the vine shows beautifully in the glass, with flavors of black fruit, crushed rock, and exotic white flower aromatics. One of only a handful of Napa Valley wines recognizable by smell alone, the unique texture and mid-palate of the Melanson consistently delights.

THOMAS RIVERS BROWN
Winemaker

Data

Appellation: St. Helena, Napa Valley

Varietal: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Clones: 7 and 337

Aging: 20 months in 100% French oak (75% new barrels)

Barrel Coopers: Darnajou, Ermitage and Taransaud

Alcohol: 14.7% by vol.

Titrateable Acidity: 0.58

pH: 3.76

Bottling Date: June 6, 2013

Production: 195 Cases

Release Date: August 2014

