

VINTAGE 2023



PULIDO~WALKER

Cabernet Sauvignon

MELANSON VINEYARD

There are a multitude of superlatives being used to describe the 2023 Napa Valley vintage, and while we like to avoid hyperbole, it's not a stretch to say that our experience of this vintage was one of the most joyful in quite some time.

The best growing seasons give us the least to talk about, no drama, just smooth sailing. 2023 was that kind of blessedly uneventful season across the Napa Valley. It began with above-average rainfall, replenishing reservoirs and erasing drought conditions. Budbreak came on the later side due to all that rain, but the trade-off was an extra month or more of hang time on the other end.

Patience was key. Once we got past a certain date on the calendar with no intense heat events, we felt confident de-leafing the cooler side of the vines. Another heat milestone passed, and we'd exhale and de-leaf the afternoon side of the canopy as well. So it went, making little tweaks to the clusters and a series of micro passes as the days got shorter using every last hour to ripen the fruit to our liking; 2023 afforded us that luxury.

We harvested the fruit from the Melanson Vineyard on October 14. Yield from that site was up slightly compared to past years, but it was nothing like the big crops we saw in other vineyards. This site produces incredible wines, but it doesn't have the capacity for increased output, even in a textbook growing season like 2023. All the more reason to prize the wine.

Winemaking & Tasting Notes

We pulled 2.5 tons of fruit and fermented both clones 7 and 337 together. Such small ferments can be a challenge, but thankfully this fruit is easy to extract. And the effort is always worth it. The 2023 Pulido~Walker Melanson Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon is clearly a reflection of its Pritchard Hill origins. The wine is fully black fruited and brooding, with a big-shouldered impact. It is redolent of iron and cooking spices, and gives bloody, almost meaty notes.

Thanks to the cooler weather, the grapes were able to hang until mid-October and develop ripe, rounded tannins. When the 2023 wines were young, some people were concerned that they seemed too big, too tannic. But a lot of intensity and tannin is to be expected in a 6-month-old Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. With time, things fell into place, and the wine is achieving excellent equilibrium.

Although we do recommend cellaring it, uncorking the final blend will most certainly be a coveted experience for those lucky enough to obtain this wine.

THOMAS RIVERS BROWN
Winemaker

Data

Estate Grown

Varietal: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Clones: 7 and 337

*Aging: 20 months in 100% French oak
(80% new barrels)*

*Barrel Coopers: Darnajou and
Taransaud*

Alcohol: 14.8% by vol.

Titrateable Acidity: 5.8 g/L

pH: 3.98

Bottling Date: June 2025

Production: 98 Cases

Site

Appellation: St. Helena, Napa Valley

*Acreage: 10.5 acres on Pritchard Hill,
adjacent to Colgin Estate*

Elevation: 1,100–1,350 ft.

*Soil Composition: Fractured
serpentine and clay with igneous
and seabed rock*

Planted: 1999

