

# SPOTTSWOODE

Harvest 2023

## Spottswode Sauvignon Blanc

*By Aron Weinkauff, Winemaker*

AFTER A BLISSFULLY unusual vintage that saw abundant winter rains and a long, cool growing season throughout Napa Valley and Sonoma County, the quality of our 2023 Sauvignon Blanc is quite extraordinary. Striking an effortless balance between the energy, freshness, and aromatic complexity that we prize and a sophisticated underlying textural richness, the result is a wine that beautifully encapsulates the Spottswode style.

Following several years of drought, plentiful rains in late December, January, and February saturated the soils. Because the weather throughout spring remained quite cool, budbreak did not begin until early April, which is several weeks behind our historic averages. The cool weather continued until bloom began on May 19, and while we saw good berry and cluster sizes in most vineyards, we also saw a small amount of shatter. We applied a light hand with canopy work and pruning in the vineyards, mostly focusing our efforts on blocks with higher water-holding capacity. The vintage was what our proprietor, Beth Weber Novak (who grew up at Spottswode Estate), calls a “classic Napa Valley growing season in the best ways,” with a cool spring and summer, abundant fog often lingering in the vineyards until late morning, and almost no days above 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

After waiting for warm summer weather that never really arrived, veraison began on August 9, almost three to four weeks later than normal, so we began planning for an equally late harvest. We picked our first block of Sauvignon Blanc from the dry-farmed old vines of the organically farmed Heitz Brothers Vineyard in Calistoga, which contribute balance and structure to the blend. On September 5, we harvested old vine Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon from Tofanelli Vineyard, another organically farmed site in Calistoga. Three days later, we picked the Sauvignon Blanc from our own low-vigor Spottswode Estate Vineyard, which contributes to the underlying structure and power of our Spottswode Sauvignon Blanc.

While the coolness of the 2023 vintage required patience because the weather remained temperate throughout harvest, we were able to pick each vineyard and block exactly when we wished, with no pressure from rain or heat. We harvested Pelkan Vineyard in Knights Valley on September 9. In broad strokes, Pelkan provides acid, structure, and graceful aromas. From there we picked our Atlas Peak grapes from the mountainous

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Stagecoach and Attelas vineyards on September 19 and 20, Murray Vineyard on Sonoma Mountain on September 27, and our last two vineyards, Hyde Vineyard in Carneros and Farina Vineyard on Sonoma Mountain, on October 2 and 4 respectively. As is always the case, each vineyard brings something special to the final wine, with Stagecoach adding ripeness and intensity, Attelas power, richness, and balanced acid, Murray contributing a supple roundness, Hyde texture and a hint of reductive tension (which we appreciate in small doses), and Farina its rocky soils that add a unique union of freshness and concentration.

The result is an eminently complex and compelling Sauvignon Blanc, with a racy acid backbone providing freshness and energy, mouth-watering layers of citrus and stone fruit, and a lovely textural richness from the addition of the Semillon and the use of multiple types of fermentation vessels.

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