

SPOTTSWOODE

A Family Wine Estate



Harvest 2022

Lydenhurst Cabernet Sauvignon

By Aron Weinkauf, Winemaker

EACH VINTAGE, the growing of the fruit for our Lydenhurst Cabernet Sauvignon is approached as a collaboration with a handful of acclaimed family-owned vineyards throughout the Napa Valley, with each site selected to contribute something unique and special to the final wine. As part of these relationships, we strive to work with organically farmed sites – and we have incentivized our grower partners to transition to organic farming.

2022 offered a very interesting growing season. To begin with, it was our third consecutive year of drought. Though we did receive some much-needed rain in November and December of 2021, the rains did not continue into January and February, which were quite warm and completely dry. With record-low early season rainfall, there was very little water in the root systems of the vines, which was a main contributing factor to the low yields of the vintage. While we did receive some modest precipitation in March, it was not enough to meet our water needs so we proactively irrigated before budbreak. The arrival of modest rains in April and May helped to saturate the root zones and prepared the plants for a more “normal” remainder of the year.

Bloom was normal and healthy, and due to dry weather and moderate temperatures there was no mildew pressure in the vineyards. The growing season was remarkably even and temperate until August, with no noteworthy heat spikes. As a result, the grapes were able to ripen slowly, while preserving the natural acidity that is so important for our wines. In early August, Napa Valley experienced a three-day heat event with temperatures reaching 106° F. While the heat caused no damage to the vines, sugar accumulation plateaued for a little over a week as the plants paused in their development. The temperatures stayed warm thereafter, but the high heat subsided for the next month until it became clear that we were going to experience a major heat event around Labor Day.

In advance of the heat, we began picking the first blocks of fruit for Lydenhurst from our Spottswode Estate Vineyard on September 2, as well as highly aromatic Merlot and Malbec, and a small amount of Cabernet Sauvignon from Young Inglewood

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Vineyards in St. Helena. After ten days of temperatures above 100° F, we enjoyed a much-needed cool down, as well as 1.5 inches of rain, which in combination with supplemental irrigation was extremely beneficial for the vines. On September 24, a day after completing the harvest from our Spottswode Estate Vineyard, we picked two more organically farmed sites, Darms Lane on the western edge of Oak Knoll and Rahn Estate Vineyard on Howell Mountain. The Cabernet from both vineyards contributed great color and richness, with the Darms Lane fruit showing particular freshness. After almost a two-week pause, we harvested Cabernet Sauvignon and a small amount of Petit Verdot from the organically certified Edcora Vineyard on Atlas Peak, and Merlot from the organic Robert Sinskey Vineyards in Carneros on October 6, with the Edcora fruit adding structure and density, and the older-vine Merlot from Sinskey contributing vibrant red fruit.

While the vintage's heat brought never-before-seen extremes on and around Labor Day, the fruit for our 2022 Lydenhurst Cabernet Sauvignon arrived in the winery in excellent condition, with bright acidity, alluring aromatics, supple tannins, and lush, pure, flavors. Our diligent work with our growers and our commitment to improve the health of all of the vineyards we partner with continue to reward our efforts, while laying the groundwork for the vineyard resiliency that is necessary in this age of extremes. As a result, this wine overdelivers in almost every way. Though beautifully lush and approachable, with excellent density and ideal Lydenhurst tannin levels, it is also graceful, marrying poise and polish with a bright, energetic personality.

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