



2018 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, NAPA VALLEY

LONGHORN RIDGE VINEYARD, HOFFMAN BLOCK

Vineyard and Winemaking Facts: The east side of the Napa Valley off Monticello Rd is where much of the best fruit in the Napa Valley is grown. Many of the grapes that go into Caymus Special Select and others are from there and it is well known among winemakers this is where much of the best fruit in Napa comes from. Longhorn Ridge Vineyard is exactly 606 yards from the Atlas Peak AVA which makes our well drained soil, moderate climate and mountainous, rocky terrain identical.

The Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard grapes from Longhorn Ridge, Hoffman Block are clone 23 (the Laurel Glen clone) and produce small clusters with tiny berries; more the size of an English Pea than a Cabernet Sauvignon grape. This small size berry produces intense, heavily extracted Cabernet Sauvignon wines every vintage from these vines that yield only 1-2 tons per acre.

Winemaker Richard Bruno discovered this vineyard in 2005 and purchased the first commercial crop from this vineyard. It was clear then this was exceptional fruit. In Vinum's first long term, multi-year contract, Richard wrote in a right of first refusal clause to buy the property should the then owners decide to ever sell. That dream became reality in 2018 when Richard bought the property with another partner (the late veteran winemaker Sam Balakian). Since the 2018 vintage the farming changed to organic and sustainable farming. The cuttings are never burned nor is Round Up used and all sprays are allowed under Organic Certification. We expect to be certified organic in 2022.

Many updates and equipment purchases have occurred since the purchase including a state-of-the-art irrigation system, two frost fans and a disc and ring roller to help get oxygen into the soil and reduce weeds in the vine rows. The original vines have been retrained by removing excess wood. The conversion from a unilateral cordon system toward a four spur can method has allowed plant rejuvenation in the form of more energy (carbohydrate) available to each plant. This will help the vines to become more healthy and balanced and will likely add years of production. We have added missing vines within the block and lengthened some rows as well as planted two new small blocks. One is a half acre of Merlot (Rosemary's Block) and the other is three quarters of an acre of high density Cabernet Sauvignon (Sam's Block).

The grapes are hand picked early in the morning under the lights. The grapes are delivered to the winery early and destemmed into an open top fermenter. The must undergoes 3 days of cold soak followed by 8 days of fermentation. We extend maceration through 14 days after which we drain and gently press the must. We then barrel the wine down into 50% new and 50% 2 year old Chateau Margaux French oak barrels by Seguin Moreau which have been known to soften strong tannin Cabernet Sauvignon. Within these barrels we age the wine for 26 months and rack it a total of 5 times (initially after 2 months, then every six months). The use of only these barrels provides stylistic uniformity conforming to our desired style (rich, supple, velvet finish) vintage to vintage so that the differences are highlighted in the fruit, not the oak barrel profile. Simply put we believe it is the perfect balance between oak and fruit.

Tasting Notes: The color of this cult cab is deep inky purple with dark plum edges. The aromatic entry is very ripe with concentrated sappy cassis and wild huckleberry and blueberry aromas followed by toasted yet integrated vanilla, cigar box and elegant and supple oak spices from cedar to sandalwood. On the palate the wine is refined and complete as it has been aged 26 months in oak and then 6 months or more after bottling. With balanced acidity over integrated oak and grape tannins this wine is deep and ripe with blue fruit notes including cassis and wild huckleberries and juicy blueberries. The texture is supple showing the concentration of the fruit while drawing down onto a finely knit matrix of soft but ever present tannins, sappy oak tannins and silky smooth finish that will age gracefully for decades to come. The mid palate tannins are firm yet the entry is silky soft and transitions seamlessly through the mid palate. This wine is very approachable now in its youth for those craving big Napa Cabernets and will age gracefully through 2050 and beyond for those interested in finely cellared Cabernet Sauvignons or anyone buying a special bottle or case for the birth of a child.

Varietal Composition... 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
 Appellation..... Napa Valley
 Winemakers..... Richard Bruno & Chris Condos
 Grower..... Richard Bruno, Longhorn Ridge Vineyard, Hoffman Block
 Alcohol..... 14.9%
 TA..... 5.93g/L
 pH..... 3.61
 Aging..... 50% new French Oak, 50% 2 year old French Oak, racked 5 times
 Production..... 384 cases produced
 Estate Grown, Produced & Bottled by: Vinum Cellars, Oakville, California

