

2005 POETRY CABERNET SAUVIGNON, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

These Cabernet Sauvignons, made from only the best fruit from select vineyards, are quintessential representatives of some of Napa's most renowned appellations. They are produced in limited quantities, and only in years when the quality of the fruit and resulting wine are exceptional. Sourced from the steep hillside terraces of our own Poetry Vineyard, this wine delivers all of the elegance and concentration for which the Stags Leap District is famous.

Vintage

In 2005 we saw a cool, dry start to the growing season, which was quickly replaced by a prolonged period of warm, wet weather throughout spring and right on into bloom. Warm, damp soils promoted continuous vine growth, while ideal temperatures during bloom ensured perfect fruit set. An excessive, if not record, crop load loomed, so early and repetitive thinning was required due to the flawless summer growing conditions. A lack of intense heat spikes or adverse weather during fall ripening allowed us to pursue record hang times, in some instances leaving fruit out to ripen on the vines into November. What resulted was an arduous harvest yielding a record crop of unusually complex berries. Creative vineyard management and winemaking practices allowed for a large harvest of exceptional quality, producing wines of unusual depth, complexity, and a clean sophisticated elegance not seen in recent vintages.

Vineyard

The Poetry Vineyard is the easternmost of our two estate Stags Leap District vineyards, located just a stone's throw from the winery and the Twin Peaks estate vineyard. The vineyard sits on a steep west-facing high-exposure hillside below the luxurious Poetry Inn. Reaching from the highest elevation of the Stags Leap District Appellation down almost to the valley floor, this vineyard's heart and soul are a gritty combination of shallow soils atop fractured shales and low-yielding old vines of Cabernet Sauvignon.

Winemaking

Grapes were picked in the darkness of the early morning hours, and immediately subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting and refinement process. The berries were gently delivered to tank by our unique crane system, minimizing disruption of berry integrity. Cold soaks lasted approximately three to five days and fermentations were managed via a combination of delestage and pumpovers. Extended maceration of two and a half to five weeks fine-tuned our tannin profiles, and allowed us to perfect mouth feel and wine complexity. The components that make up this wine underwent eighteen months of élevage in seventy-eight percent new French oak and twenty-two percent neutral French oak.

Tasting Notes

This multi-tiered wine boasts layers of complexity that evolve as the wine slowly decants. An initial burst of black licorice drizzled on a blueberry pie is accented by intensely perfumed posies. A second, deeper layer combines a kirsch component with sandalwood, nutmeg, and candied citrus notes. Such heady aromatics segue into rich and harmonious flavors of dark ripe cherry, cassis, and chocolate cordial framed by classically structured acidity and focused tannin. A svelte yet dense extract creates a finishing richness which declares that this is a wine for the ages.

Analysis

Composition: 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Malbec, 2% Petit Verdot, 2% Merlot
Alcohol: 15.2%
Bottling Date: June 2007
Release Date: October 2008
Production: 925 cases