



2017 CABERNET FRANC LAKE COUNTY

The father of Cabernet Sauvignon, this grape is among the most challenging to work with and seldom is bottled as a pure varietal. Its great vigor requires bright sunlight and a limiting soil to prevent excessive fruit shading, but its delicate aromas will also easily burn off.

Diamond Ridge is located in a sunny, high altitude site with rocky volcanic soils which force Cabernet Franc to put its energy into pushing its roots down into the rock, resulting in a lively mineral energy in the wine's finish. These conditions develop good color and firm but refined tannins which impart amazing age-worthiness.

Because of its proximity to Clear Lake, the site is also blessed with a "lake effect" -- a daily visit from the cooling breezes off this deep body of water, largest in the State. The consequence is that the plum and cinnamon aromas the grape develops are conserved. The combination of rich fruit aromatics, firm tannin structure and lively minerality make this among the most complete and collectible expressions of Cabernet Franc in the New World.

The 2016 was harvested on September 27, fermented traditionally with extended maceration, and aged in neutral French oak for 56 months to resolve its incredible reductive strength. For roundness and fat, we co-fermented with 23% Merlot. Age has added a tobacco bouquet to its spicy cherry and rosemary aromas which resemble a well-aged Graves. The resulting palate possesses a sweet core of fruit which is framed by soft tannins and a bright mineral finish.

A perfect accompaniment to steak béarnaise or wild mushroom dishes, the wine loves open fires and Bruce Springsteen's Jungleland.

We Smiths offer small lots of extraordinary hand-crafted wines which explore French winemaking traditions in California.

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77% Cabernet Franc Clone 1

Estate vineyard, Clear Lake AVA
Harvested 28 September
24.1 Brix

23% Merlot Clone 181

Estate vineyard, Clear Lake AVA
Harvested 27 September
25.3 Brix

Fermentation techniques:

Anchor NT112 yeast
7.5 g/L untoasted Alliers chips
11-day maceration

Elevage details:

Three weeks microbùllage pre ML
56 months in neutral French oak
Alcohol sweet spot at 14.2%
pH 3.72 at bottling

112 CASES PRODUCED