2013 Vaca Red Blend
Napa Valley

Our second vintage of Vaca Red is a Bordeaux-style blend of 62% cabernet sauvignon, 25% merlot and 13% cabernet franc. The fruit comes from our three Napa Valley hillside estates on the western slopes of the Vaca Mountain Range, which forms the eastern boundary of Napa Valley. From north to south, they are Dancing Bear (5% of the blend), Doggwood (58%) and Suscol Springs (37%). All three are high-elevation sites with well-drained, rocky, volcanic soils that foster grapes with deeply concentrated flavors. Cakebread Cellars is likely the only winery with estate Vaca Range vineyards spanning the length of Napa Valley. Each site contributes its unique personality to our Vaca Red blend based on its location on the north-south axis and the particular exposures offered by its steep, angled slopes.

Vineyards
Suscol Springs Vineyard east of the town of Napa is the coolest of our three Vaca Range estates. Its vines are planted amidst rocky outcrops overlooking the Napa Valley floor. Doggwood Vineyard is located further north above Conn Dam near Napa’s eastern ridgeline in a warm, bowl-like valley boasting multiple sun exposures. Dancing Bear Ranch, our northernmost Vaca Range vineyard, is planted on the steep slopes of Howell Mountain, far above the fog line, at elevations exceeding 1,600 feet. With a near-360 degree exposure and dry soils that stress the vines, Dancing Bear yields fruit with a distinctively intense mountain character.

Vintage 2013
In 2013, a warm, dry spring initiated early budbreak, ensured trouble-free vine flowering and grape set, and led to a consistently mild summer that fostered steady, even ripening and grapes with wonderful flavor concentration. The fruit for our Vaca Red was night- and hand-harvested for freshness and varietal intensity between September 17th and October 8th.

Winemaking
Our 2013 Vaca Red is a blend of multiple lots of wine from our three Vaca Range vineyards. Each lot was separately harvested, cold-soaked (to enhance color, flavor and tannin extraction), tank-fermented and barrel-aged prior to blending. Tank size, yeast strain, fermentation temperature and barrel type were tailored to the fruit character of each lot. The 2013 Vaca Red spent 22 months aging in French oak barrels, 50% new, prior to bottling on July 30th, 2015.

Tasting Notes
Our 2013 Vaca Red displays a wonderfully dense, layered nose of ripe black cherry, boysenberry, blackberry and blackcurrant complemented by intriguing scents of warm earth and dark chocolate. Deeply concentrated on the palate, the wine delivers deliciously lush dark cherry, blackberry, boysenberry, plum and cassis flavors supported by smooth tannins and vibrant acidity, culminating in a rich, lengthy finish enlivened by savory spice and mineral tones. This spectacular red blend is hard to resist now, but it will handsomely repay 8-10 years of cellaring.

Composition: 62% cabernet sauvignon, 25% merlot, 13% cabernet franc
Vineyards: Napa Valley: 58% Doggwood, 37% Suscol Springs, 5% Dancing Bear Ranch Howell Mountain vineyards
Harvest dates: September 17th – October 8th, 2013
Fermentation: 100% in stainless steel tanks
Barrel aging: 22 months in French oak barrels, 50% new

Alcohol: 14.9
Total acidity: 0.62
pH: 3.67
Bottled: July 30th, 2015
Winemaker: Julianne Laks