

Cakebread Cellars



2015 Vine Hill Ranch Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Vineyards

The grapes for this elite cabernet sauvignon come from three special blocks of vines incorporating two distinctive cabernet sauvignon clones grown in the renowned Vine Hill Ranch in Napa Valley's western benchlands near Oakville. We have purchased these grapes since 1982, and they have consistently produced singular, long-lived wines. Hand-harvested at night to ensure the fruit's freshness and varietal purity, we ferment and barrel-age each of the three vineyard blocks separately. After assessing the attributes of each wine, we blend the three to create a uniquely complex and intense cabernet sauvignon that speaks eloquently of its *terroir*.

Vintage 2015

After abundant harvests from 2012 through 2014, the 2015 growing season experienced more weather extremities that led to a small, yet outstanding, vintage. 2015 was our earliest harvest ever in the 40+ year of Cakebread Cellars history. A warm, dry winter fostered early bud-break, though a cold spell during fruit set limited cluster sizes. A warm summer and late-season heat spikes ensured beautiful ripening.

Winemaking

We employ traditional artisan winemaking techniques to maximize the singular character of our Vine Hill fruit. After the grapes are gently destemmed and crushed, the must (unfermented juice and skins) from each of the three vineyard lots is cold-soaked in small, closed-top, stainless steel tanks for 48 hours to extract color, aromas, flavors and fine tannins prior to initiating fermentation (in the same tanks) with a cultured French yeast strain. Once fermentation completes, the wines enjoy an extended maceration on their skins to fully extract color and flavor and soften tannins. Our 2015 Vine Hill Cabernet Sauvignon aged 22 months in French oak barrels, 66% new, before bottling in July, 2017.

Tasting Notes

Ripe, brooding, boysenberry, blackcurrant and black fig aromas, abetted by hints of loam, mineral and toasted oak, preface an immensely concentrated palate featuring deep, lush, dark cherry, boysenberry and cassis flavors. Tightly structured by youthfully firm, yet supple tannins and fresh, crisp acidity, the Vine Hill displays a density and power found in only the finest cabernet sauvignons. It culminates in an incredibly long, savory finish showcasing rich, earthy, black fruit flavors refreshed by cool mineral tones. A truly delicious wine, even in its youth, this intense, yet elegant cabernet sauvignon will flourish with another decade of bottle aging.

Grape varieties: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Vineyards: 100% Vine Hill Ranch, Oakville
Harvest dates: September 15th – 19th, 2015
Fermentation: 100% in small stainless steel tanks
Barrel aging: 22 months in French oak, 66% new

Alcohol: 15.4%
Total acidity: 0.64 g/100 ml
pH: 3.55
Bottled: July 14th, 2017
Winemaker: Julianne Laks