

Cakebread Cellars



2010 Cabernet Sauvignon Dancing Bear Ranch, Napa Valley

Vineyards

Our high-elevation Dancing Bear Ranch on Howell Mountain in Napa Valley yields small, intensely flavored berries with excellent tannin and acidity levels. This is especially true in cool vintages like 2010, which accentuate the fruit's unique, high-toned mountain character. To ensure the grapes reach full physiological maturity, we carefully manage the crop on each vine for optimal ripening and flavor development. Planted on steep hillsides reaching elevations over 1,800 feet, these hardy vines are rooted in well-drained volcanic soils and enjoy excellent sun exposure, prompting their fruit to ripen earlier in the season than do our valley floor grapes.

Vintage 2010

2010 was a notably cool growing season in California. The year began with substantial rainfall, which pushed back bud break, flowering and grape set by several weeks. After an unusually cool summer, heat spikes in late August kick-started full ripening. Cooler temperatures returned in early September, extending the season and allowing us to harvest our Dancing Bear grapes with an optimal balance of sugar and acidity.

Winemaking

The challenge in crafting Dancing Bear is to fully capture the intense mountain character of the fruit without extracting overly aggressive tannins. Winemaker Julianne Lak's approach is to carefully monitor tannin levels in the juice and wine during fermentation and maceration. After the component lots of the 2010 Dancing Bear achieve an optimal balance of fruit intensity and ripe tannins, the free run wines are drained from their skins and transferred to French oak barrels. In all, the 2010 vintage spent 19 months in barrel, 39% new, prior to bottling in April, 2012.

Tasting Notes

Our 2010 Dancing Bear presents a nose of dense, earthy, ripe black fruits – primarily blackberry and dark plum – complemented by cocoa, anise, pepper and Asian spice scents. Beautifully structured on the palate, its rich, deeply concentrated, boysenberry, fig, mountain spice and dark chocolate flavors are framed by fine-grained tannins and culminate in a long, spicy finish featuring savory oak, blackberry and mineral tones. Aged 19 months in 39% new French oak, this youthful mountain Cabernet is delicious now with hearty foods, but will develop even greater dimension and complexity over the next decade.

Grape varieties: 93% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Cabernet Franc, 1% Merlot

Vineyard: Dancing Bear Ranch, Howell Mountain, Napa Valley

Harvest dates: October 13 – October 16, 2010

Fermentation: 100% in stainless steel

Barrel aging: 19 months in French oak, 39% new

Alcohol: 14.5%

Total acidity: 0.64g/100 ml

pH: 3.63

Bottled: April 2012

Winemaker: Julianne Laks

