



2008 CABERNET FRANC

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 granitic 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 2008 was harvested on October 16, fermented traditionally with extended maceration, and aged in neutral cooperage for 61 months to resolve its incredible reductive strength. Age has added a cedar bouquet to its spicy grenadine and rosemary aromas. For roundness and flesh, we blended in 6% of our 2010 Petite Sirah. The resulting palate possesses a sweet core of fruit which is framed by substantial tannins and a bright mineral finish.

Although suitable for current consumption with pork and cherries or grilled duck breast, this is really a collector's wine which will benefit substantially from a few years in the cellar.

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

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- 94% Cabernet Franc Clone 1
Diamond Ridge Vineyards, Clear Lake AVA
Harvested 16 October
25.6 Brix
- 6% Petite Sirah
Diamond Ridge Vineyards, Clear Lake AVA
Harvested 24 October 2010
26.4 Brix

Fermentation techniques:
Water addition to 25 brix
Anchor NT112 yeast
5 g/L untoasted Alliers chips
32-day maceration

Elevage details:
Three weeks microbùllage pre ML
61 months in neutral French oak
Alcohol sweet spot at 14.1%
pH 3.76 at bottling

147 CASES PRODUCED