

2007 CABERNET FRANC



100% Cabernet Franc Clone 1
Diamond Ridge Vineyards, Clear Lake AVA
Harvested 7 October
24.5 Brix

Fermentation techniques:
Anchor NT112 yeast
5 g/L untoasted Alliers chips
35-day maceration

Elevage details:
Four weeks microbùllage pre ML
91 months in neutral French oak
Alcohol sweet spot at 14.2%
pH 3.78 at bottling

118 CASES PRODUCED

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 2007 was harvested on October 7, fermented traditionally with extended maceration, and aged in neutral cooperage for 91 months to resolve its incredible reductive strength. It was necessary to skip over this vintage until the 2008, which matured in 61 months, was sold through first.

Age has added nuances of romano, truffle and musk bouquet to its spicy white cherry and rosemary aromas. 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 still a collector's wine which will gain silkiness and aromatic complexity from a few more 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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