

2007 Cabernet Sauvignon

Zukowski Vineyard, Knights Valley

Reserve

**95% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot,
Row Select**

The Vineyard: Mark Zukowski's vineyard surrounds their house on the north west slope of Mount St Helena just as highway 128 begins its climb from Knights Valley over the mountain to Calistoga. This is one of our favorite spots for Cabernet. Knights Valley is in Sonoma County but it is well inland, sharing more weather similarities with Calistoga in Napa County than with its adjacent neighbors Chalk Hill and Alexander Valley. There is just a touch of cool damp Sonoma nights to give the wine made from these grapes extra layers of flavor unlike any other Cabernet.

The vintage: Harvest 2007 was an exceptional vintage with ideal weather conditions from the spring bloom to the fall harvest. The grapes ripened evenly without heat spikes, producing a perfect balance of fruit, acid and tannin, resulting in fruit forward wines of moderate alcohol and extraction.

The winemaking: The grapes were hand picked early in the morning, and triple sorted at the winery, leaving only perfect berries in the open top stainless fermenter. Fermentation was allowed to begin on native yeast followed by pure strain inoculation. The Cabernet and Merlot were blended before the end of fermentation and given 20 days extended maceration.

Elelage: Barrels were 40% new, 55% French, 35% American, and 10% Hungarian. The barrels were topped every three weeks and tasted and analyzed bi-monthly. The barrels were racked at the wine's first anniversary and again when the final blend was made, three months before bottling. This is the first bottling of the Zukowski, Knights Valley Cabernet as a stand alone vineyard designated wine. Two previous vintages were made to hone the techniques and then used in other blends.

Tasting notes: This wine screams, Knights Valley. It is dark, almost black in color. The nose is Cabernet and generous after some time open. It is still closed at this writing and will improve for many years. This wine benefits from decanting or aeration to open it up. The mid-palate is powerful without heat or over extraction. The tannins are as they should be, strong but willing to give space to the fruit. This is what great Cabernet should be like.

Cabernet picked October 9, 2007.

Brix: 25.2°. T.A. 6.0g/L, pH 3.49

At bottling: Alcohol 14.1%, R.S. 0.01%, pH 3.85,

T.A. 6.1g/L, M/L complete, V.A. 0.05

Barrel aged: 41 months

Unfined. Cross flow filtered before bottling, sterile bottled, Velcorin free.

SO₂ at bottling 22 ppm, at release less than 12 ppm.

Bottled 150 cases, April 2011; Released February 2012.

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