

2011 Cabernet Sauvignon

Sonoma Valley



**77% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Cabernet Franc, 6% Malbec
5% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot**

Copy from the back label: Winemaking is a combination of art and science, cooking and chemistry. Like a memorable meal, it's about the quality of the ingredients and the interplay of flavors, textures, and technique. Cabernet is the dominant flavor and forms the mid-palate structure and the long finish. Cabernet Franc adds a chocolate like experience at the top of your palate. Merlot give it more nose. Malbec fills in the lower back, like blackberries. Petit Verdot adds a touch of spice. The blend is full bodied yet mellow. We made 800 cases. Learn more at www.cleanwine.info.

The Vineyards: Five Sonoma Valley vineyards, under contract with Deerfield, supplied grapes for this blend. The Cabernet is from four distinct terroirs, an upper mountain slope, a rocky mountain valley, and a steep terraced hillside, all in the Sonoma Valley AVA. This contributed to the complexity of the Cabernet flavors, and structure. The varietals rounding out this Meritage style blend were from two vineyards each. This is more than a blend of varietals. It is a blend of places, distinctive and unique. It is uniquely Sonoma and uniquely Deerfield.

The 2011 Vintage was a challenging one, with a cooler than optimum summer and a wet harvest. Each vineyard took exceptional care and intervention to assure clean, and flavorful fruit. The partnership between winemaker and grower was seldom more important. During sorting we threw out a lot of grapes, anything that wasn't good. The losses were great but the wine profited. In such "winemaker's years" Deerfield wines shine.

The Winemaking: Each lot was fermented and aged separately. After triple sorting the handpicked grapes, a fermentation protocol, from yeast selection, to temperature control, feeding, oxygenation, and maceration times was implemented for each lot. We age many of our red wines longer in the barrel than any other American winery. Long barrel aging not only softens tannins and integrates flavors into a balanced harmony, it also concentrates the wine, by about 6% per year by evaporation through the barrel. This allowed the 11 separate lots in this blend to achieve richness and depth that shorter barrel aged wines can never attain.

Tasting notes: The color is deep, dark and brilliant. The nose is true to Cabernet with a bit of leather, some allspice and cedar. The taste unfolds in long linear strokes from front to back. The tannin is definitively Cabernet typical but without being obtrusive or dominant. All the elements are harmonious and integrated. You have to look for the oak; it is so much a part of the whole experience. The wine is dry yet gentle for a Cab. It has good balance across the pallet, every corner sensitized, no holes or blanks. Over all the balance is toward bright fruit and suggests this Cabernet will have a long life. In the winter of 2016 at this writing the wine is still very young and a bit closed in. Another year of bottle age will profit the profile and a long decanting is called for at this earlier stage. All our 2011 reds are showing unexpected youth and potential for very long cellar aging.

At bottling: Alc. 14.3%. pH 3.65, T.A. 6.2g/L R.S. 0.2g/L, Unfined. Vegan.
Barrel aged 38 months in 60% French and 40% American barrels, 25% new.
Cross flow clarified before bottling, sterile bottled, Velcorin free. Low histamine.
SO2 at bottling 20 ppm, at release, less than 12 ppm.
Bottled 600 cases, March 25, 2015. Released January 2016.

For more information: robert.rex@deerfieldranch.com www.deerfieldranch.com
www.cleanwine.info

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