

TOR

TOR Cabernet Sauvignon Cimarossa Vineyard, 2006

Vintage

On New Years Day, 2006, many of Napa Valley's dormant vines went underwater due to one of the wettest storms in memory. Luckily, in a few days, everything was back to normal except for some annoying clean up. Gentle spring storms kept the vineyards damp resulting in a slightly late bud break. Finally, the weather cleared, the fruit set was healthy and above normal, which lead us to multiple thinning during the growing season. In mid-July a blast of heat had many thinking we were headed into an early harvest. Mother Nature fooled us again with cool weather well into the first week of October, slowing sugar development. Our first significant storm came in early October followed by an extended "Indian summer". After such a roller-coaster ride, our Cabernet blocks were picked, with almost perfect flavors and numbers. We picked Cimarossa on October 18th in the morning's first light.

Vineyard

"Cimarossa" means 'red hill top' in Italian which aptly defines this special hillside vineyard. The elevation is 2,100 feet and the soils are predominately red volcanic rock and dust. Not much can be cultivated on these steep hills besides vines and some olive trees (which produce my favorite California olive oil). This is a special place: the clusters are small, the berries are tiny, but the flavors are BIG!

Winemaking

In 2006 we had to do very little work sorting grapes in the winery and vineyard. The quality was uniformly high, little dehydration, or green grapes. With all the Cabernets there was excellent uniformity in grape quality. After morning crushing, the must was presoaked till the indigenous yeast began to slowly metabolize grape sugar, signaling a beginning of fermentation. For the Cimarossa, soaks and fermentation lasted 23 days, when the juice was racked off directly into small Taransaud and Damey French oak barrels. After 18 months in small oak, the wine went to bottle unfiltered, unfinned. Net, net, minimal handling or intervention.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes

This vintage shows a dense purple color and great saturation at the core. Aromatically, this wine soars. Cimarossa is loaded with acacia flower, graphite, chocolate and subtle sweet oak. On the palate it gives up a deceptively sweet and rich entry that masks the grip that comes from the Howell Mountain fruit. This wine displays blueberry, espresso, tri-tip, pencil shavings and cedar. The finish on this it tremendously long, seamless and shows a hint of mint as it finally tails off.



"Reveals sumptuous notes of spice, black currants, espresso, chocolatey fruit and underlying minerality."

Rated 94-96 by Robert Parker, Jr., "*The Wine Advocate*"