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TOR Cabernet Sauvignon

Napa Valley, Howell Mountain Cimarossa Vineyard, 2014

BLEND: 100% CABERNET SAUVIGNON

PRODUCTION: 275 CASES | RELEASE DATE: JANUARY 2017

Vintage

2014 was the third consecutive vintage of superlative fruit quality. The year began under the drought conditions, but we received two very well timed and high volume rains in February and March that provided the vines with the hits of water that they needed to kick start the season. Bud-break was perhaps 10-14 days earlier than 'normal' but with a cool spring, the actual flowering was approximately a week earlier than 'normal'. Crop load was good, like 2012 and 2013, so fruit thinning was essential to quality. Mountain vineyards were ok with one to two thinning passes, where the valley floor sites normally required two or more passes to get a more balanced load. When all the fruit was in, we all looked back on our third straight high quality vintage.

Vineyard

"Cimarossa" means 'red hill top' in Italian, which aptly defines this very special hillside vineyard, planted on a volcanic cinder cone. 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

The 2014 Cimarossa was fermented in a single closed top tank for 11 days. This is not a wine that we leave in tank for a long time. The general process is get it in tank, get it warm, and get it off the skins to avoid any of the drying tannins. This is pressed slightly sweet to its normal 100% new Darnajou barrels where it stays for 18-20 months before it is bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes

After 11 years working with this vineyard I keep thinking it can't get any better and every year I am proven wrong. This year's Cimarossa Cabernet shows once again that this is one of the blue chip sites on Howell Mountain. Once again this shows the amazing structure and density that you expect from Howell Mountain but with the amazing core of sweet fruit that Cimarossa somehow has every year. This is again all black fruits with currants, beef brisket, graphite and a core of steel.

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