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N A P A V A L L E Y

CIMAROSSA CABERNET SAUVIGNON

2017

VINEYARD From red dirt high atop Howell Mountain, this Cabernet Sauvignon is a consistent marvel. Bellissima. Genoa native Dino Dina christened his Howell Mountain vineyard Cimarossa (pronounced Chim-a-rossa), Italian for “red hilltop.” A very special site indeed, where grapes and olive trees grow side by side in soil composed primarily of red volcanic rock and dust. Not much can be cultivated on these steep slopes, rising from 1,800 to 2,300 feet in elevation. The grape clusters are small, the berries are tiny, and the flavors are deep. The wines from this site are true Howell Mountain Cabernet. They are not to drink immediately; rather demand and deserve full attention. These wines of structure, immense depth, and richness will come into their own with age.

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WINEMAKING 2017 gave us the lowest yields that we have seen from Cimarossa in our fifteen years of working with this Howell Mountain site, but as always, beautiful fruit. Cimarossa’s elevation and exposure helps to keep the fruit in gorgeous condition. For the first time we made our 2017 Cimarossa Vineyard with only the free run juice, no pressings. The result is a slightly “softer” version of Cimarossa, still very much mountain, but more refined and velvet-textured tannins than previous years. As we have done for a few years now, we have matured this wine for twenty months in 100% Darnajou French oak barrels, trial and error has shown that the mocha richness that this cooperage imparts compliments the Cimarossa mountain fruit.

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WINEMAKER’S TASTING NOTES Cimarossa impresses with its rich integrated tannins that set it aside from all our other Cabernets. It is quintessential Howell Mountain. Jeff has mastered this wine, the steep volcanic block it comes from, and yes, those mouth coating tannins. Cimarossa lovers will be happy, this is Cimarossa for decades.

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VINTAGE It will be one of those vintages that will be discussed for decades to come. The wines we made are beautiful, our highest-scoring Chardonnays to-date as well as Cabernets and Proprietary Reds that are reflective of great vintages, with early barrel scores into potential 100-point range. Our reds have excellent extract; layered, downright sexy wines that have the structure to live a long time. I taste the wines and marvel. It was a very wet spring, over 30 inches of rain in January and February alone. Spring bloom and set went smoothly and we rolled into the summer with heat spikes in July, late August, and early September. By early October all the Chardonnays were in and the Cabernets were reaching optimum maturity. We dropped a lot of fruit in 2017, a cluster per shoot in To Kalon, and in part because of this, we had all our fruit in by mid-October. Then came the fire, which had no influence on our wines, but changed all our lives. The wines themselves are rays of sunlight when I reflect on 2017.

95-97 Points – *International Wine Report*

CASES PRODUCED: 130

RETAIL BOTTLE PRICE: \$155

