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N A P A V A L L E Y

CIMAROSSA CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2018

VINEYARD We source only from Block 10 in this unique cinder-cone volcanic site. Steep, terraced, west facing – we love this block. 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 The 2018 gave us a wine that was in every way bigger, chewy tannins, yet a soft core of dark fruits that makes it very approachable now. Cimarossa’s elevation and exposure helps to keep the fruit in gorgeous condition. 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 have shown us that the mocha richness that this cooperage imparts complements the Cimarossa mountain fruit.

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WINEMAKER’S TASTING NOTES The 2018 Cimarossa Cabernet shows the tremendous dark fruit of the vintage. As always this is the most ‘reserved’ cabernet of the line up and just screams for time in the cellar or decanter to allow it to show its best. The tannins in the 2018 Cimarossa are more sweet than in previous vintages (think more like 2016). Black fruit, creosote and lots of deep, dark structure mark this gorgeous 2018 Howell Mountain Cabernet.

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VINTAGE 2018 was a very long and overall cool vintage which aided its longevity and hang time. The grape set was under ideal conditions in the Spring, and the clusters on average were larger than normal, full, and picture perfect. Hollywood clusters, show offs; a beautiful and large set. We thinned (dropped fruit) more radically than we did in 2017 and 2016, one cluster per shoot in To Kalon. Still, by harvest it was on average a good 10 to 15% more than we had initially anticipated. Long, long hang time, picture perfect clusters, no real heat spikes, and an even and long picking season.

97 points – Antonio Galloni, *Vinous*

96 points – Joe D’ Angelo, *International Wine Report*

