

# TOR

N A P A V A L L E Y

## OAKVILLE HILLSIDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON

2015

**VINEYARD** Drive the Oakville Cross Road to the Silverado Trail then look directly forward and up and you see Tierra Roja, a small four acre jewel of a hillside vineyard. Great neighbors – Backus, Screaming Eagle, Maya and Rudd. The vineyard is dotted with big rocks, and the soil is definitely roja (very red). You might expect the wines to be massive, but they are very perfumed, dark, and complex - more like Screaming Eagle. This wine comes from the upper steep terraces of the vineyard, directly below Dalla Valle. We used 5% Cabernet Franc from one of Oakville's premier vineyards to make the wine a fond homage to its neighbor Maja.

.....

**WINEMAKING** The Oakville Hillside Cabernet was fermented in a single closed top tank. This was allowed to stay on its skins for a little over 30 days. The wine continued to pick up sweetness and depth without adding on any drying tannin so extended maceration was used. After fermentation this was lightly pressed to new Taransaud and Darnajou barrels.

.....

**WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES** The profile of the 2015 Oakville Hillside Cabernet is one of mixed red and black fruits along with the great spine of acidity that the red soils of the Eastern hillsides provide. This is medium/full weight with black cherry, currants, cedar and sweet/ripe tannins. The tremendous balance on this Cabernet shows everything that you could want for a long graceful evolution, but should also be very approachable in its youth.

.....

**VINTAGE** Over my decades as a Napa vintner I have gained great respect for "drought years." They are yin and yang years, where a farmer has to pay very close attention to each vine. In years like 2015, every vine was pushed to the limit – its access to water, its survival. The survivors make up small crops - that is the "yin." The "yang" is - the quality can be off the charts.

In 2015, we suffered up to 45% losses in several blocks. It was an early start, but cool weather during flowering in May contributed to a less than normal fruit set. The berries that did set were generally much smaller than usual. Once the set was complete, we had warm to very warm conditions up to and through harvest. There was no rush to judgement on when to pick, we had plenty of space at the winery for the short crop, and all the fruit was in before the winter storms started to line up off the coast. Initially, I did not pass judgement on this vintage; but now having tasted all the wines in bottle – it is a great one in all respects.

CASES PRODUCED: 300

