

TOR

N A P A V A L L E Y

DR CRANE VINEYARD

CABERNET FRANC

2023

VINEYARD Napa pioneer Dr. George Belden Crane originally planted Beckstoffer Dr. Crane Vineyard in 1858. Acquired by Beckstoffer Vineyards in 1997, the vineyard's pure rock to gravelly loam soils were replanted in 1998 to multiple clones of Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot, and Cabernet Franc. Just south and on the west side of Highway 29, it borders a rock quarry, which defines our block, planted with the rare and shy yielding Clone 6. We also have a small block of Cabernet Franc, which we co-ferment with the Cabernet Sauvignon and, in rare years, produce on its own.

WINEMAKING The 2023 Dr. Crane Cabernet Franc is possibly a wine not to be created again. This was the year when we were able to isolate some of the Cabernet Franc to be fermented on its own. This was done in a single large bin referred to as a '48' and had twice-a-day manual punch downs as opposed to pump overs. After being on skins for a total of 18 days, this was basket pressed and barreled down to a combination of new Darnajou and Täransaud barrels until bottling 20 months later.

WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES "The 2023 Dr. Crane Cabernet Franc shows the classic dried tobacco, earth, and reticence of Cabernet Franc. Cabernet Franc is never the most forward or plush in youth, but I have always looked at it in terms of what youthful exuberance you give up, you gain so much more on the back end of the wine with complexity and layers as it ages (think Cheval Blanc). This shows some of the same graphite stone profile as the Dr. Crane Cabernet. Aromatics are dried sage, rosemary, and dusty earth. On the palate, it is very rich on the entry with ripe blueberry and a bit of iron, but with the acidity that Dr. Crane provides, it is clear that the best years for this are ahead of it." –Jeff Ames

TOR'S NOTE ON THE VINTAGE I quote my friend Karen MacNeil, wine historian, author of the Wine Bible, "2023 was as perfect as any Napa vintage in living memory. It was Napa's 1961 Bordeaux." I remember the 1961 Bordeaux wines well, first tasting most of the First Growths in the 1970s. They were very structured wines, wines that did take a little time to find their "perfect" stride, and when they did, they were wines you never forgot. Across the board, the TOR 2023 wines are instant classics.

