

Family Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon



Greetings From Napa Valley, Friends!

I recall my father and I working together to craft our first vintage of Cabernet Sauvignon under the Venge family name in 1992. I was just 16 years old and had been bitten by the winemaking bug entirely. The first vintage of Venge Family Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon is memorable for many reasons, however, as I look back upon that moment, I could not have imagined just how far we would come as a winemaking family over the next 28 years.

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While much has changed over the decades, one thing has remained constant in our approach to winegrowing: sustainably farming only the best vineyards to produce wines with impeccable character.

What started on 19 acres of estate vineyards in the heart of Oakville has now progressed to four Estate vineyard locations and over 300 elite vineyard contracts that range from the eastern mountains of the Napa Valley AVA to Pacific Coast in Sonoma County. We are fortunate to stand on our estate foundations and on the shoulders of wine country farming giants that have been here, in most cases, for nearly a century, and in some cases, longer. What comes from these connections to prime dirt are wines that are at once approachable, yet worthy of ageing in appropriate conditions. Our Family Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon sits at the pinnacle of quality in our pursuit of winemaking perfection, and the 2017 vintage is no exception.

Making this wine has been challenging over the last few years as our Oakville Estate vineyard is in need of replanting in some sections where age and disease have taken hold. As such, we have worked closely with our friends in Oakville to lock in distinct vineyard contracts with some of the AVA's elite growers. These relationships allow us to continue a family tradition that began 28 years ago.

I am delighted to announce we will be able to offer our most sought after wine to more of our enthusiasts than in past vintages. As always, I am grateful for your continued interest and support, and I look forward to seeing you at the winery soon!

Kirk P. Venge



Family Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

Production	320, 750ml Cases
Vineyards	Oakville Estate
Clone(s)	Clone 7, Clone 8
Vine Spacing	4' x 6' to 6' x 8'
Irrigation	Minimal to Dry Farmed
Farming	Sustainable, No Pesticides or Herbicides
Soil Type	Sedimentary, Clay and Volcanic Loams
Climate	Warm Days, Cool Nights
Elevation	50' to 150', 0% to 2% Grade
Style Notes	Silky, Sophisticated, Full-Bodied, With A Very Long Finish, Cellar Worthy



AS SEEN IN SEPTEMBER 2020
WINE ENTHUSIAST
BUYING GUIDE

95 points

"Winemaker Kirk Venge has crafted a stunning, powerful wine that's sourced from his own estate as well as other sites, including Beckstoffer's Missouri Hopper. Smooth, vibrant waves of dark plum and cherry meet and undeniable pulse of dried herb, tobacco and clove, ending in chalky, elongated tannins." Virginie Boon

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2017 is the third vintage of Family Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon using the lots from a combination of elite vineyard sites throughout the Oakville AVA. The primary decision to diversify and augment our Oakville Estate vineyard came from the realization that we will be looking to make significant replanting investments on the property in the near future. With the vineyard being now over 40 years old, it's time to consider a new future for our Oakville vineyard. The decision also came with time in barrel and the realization that we had many outstanding components from each vineyard that warranted our Family Reserve designation.

The 2017 vintage started in stellar fashion, with mild temperatures, ample fruit set across the board, followed by a late summer heat spike that brought harvest in early, followed by the October fires. We were fortunate to have 95% of all of our valley floor and benchland fruit into the winery prior to fires, as a result, our Family Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon is 100% smoke free.



The fruit was carefully handpicked in the cool, early hours of the morning and brought to the winery where it was sorted via our state-of-the-art *Pellenc* four-stage sorting system prior to being moved via gravity to a combination of small stainless steel tank, concrete diamond, and open top fermenters. The fermentation was slow and cool with time on skins lasting a lengthy 18 to 29 days. The fruit was then lightly pressed, keeping “free run” and “press” fractions separate, and aged in 100% new, tight grained French Oak barrels for a lengthy 27 months. We employed 100% native yeast and malolactic fermentations. The gentle use of gravity flow in winemaking is used entirely throughout the making of this wine. The wine was fined via gentle barrel racking and bottled unfiltered.

I love what we have put together from this vintage. The 2017 is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon displaying rich and generous fruit. It is pure silk and sophistication as ripe blackberry, cassis, cocoa, and toasty oak fill the glass. The aromas come into the nose and expand with the inhale. The palate is very supple and fleshy in nature. Rick black cherry and savory mocha flavors provide a full body and fat center. The tannins take the finish into a full 30 seconds or longer. Cellared properly, this wine will age to perfection for 14 years and beyond.

Kirk P. Venge