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Dyer Cabernet Sauvignon 1999

The 1999 vintage already has a pedigree, having received early recognition as an outstanding year for Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. The season began with a dry spring, with negligible rainfall after April. Budbreak was in mid-April, later than usual, and cool temperatures held off bloom and set until late June. Summer temperature remained mostly in the 80s during the day, dipping to the 40s at night. The ripening was slow and even, with some gentle nudging from short heat waves in mid-July, late August, and late September. In mid-October a final blast of heat allowed us to harvest on October 16th, with full ripe characters occurring without excessive sugar accumulation, something that we are beginning to feel is characteristic of Diamond Mountain. We farm without herbicides or pesticides, and rely on intensive handwork. Our yield was less than a ton and a half per acre.


As in previous vintages, in 1999 we co-fermented all four varieties (78% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Cabernet Franc, 5% Merlot, and 5% Petit Verdot) using indigenous yeast. After 22 days over maceration, we drained and pressed the new wine directly to a combination of French and Russian Oak barrels. The discovery of well-cooperated Baltic oak barrels has been a revelation. These northern forests produce a tight-grained stave that was prized in the early history of the Bordeaux wine trade but the politics of the region have made them difficult to obtain until recently. We think the quality of the oak compliments and frames the concentration of our wines beautifully.

One difference in winemaking in the 1999 vintage was that after the normal 20 months in the barrel, we felt that this particular wine had some much mass and structure that it would benefit from further aging. After 30 months in the barrel and a year in the bottle we are happy to announce that we have achieved our goal and can offer you a wine that is complex, well balanced, and supple. Our cellar notes read, "Complex aromas of cocoa, cassis and sandalwood. Structure is classic; lean and racy with a concentrated, jammy flavor profile that lingers on the palate."

This release totals 149 cases (including a smaller number of magnums).



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