

DUCKHORN VINEYARDS



NAPA VALLEY

Estate Grown Philosophy

Our Napa Valley Estate Vineyard portfolio is comprised of seven distinctive properties totaling 183 planted vine acres. Due to variations in soil, microclimate, exposure, and other viticultural factors, each site produces grapes with distinctive flavors

Our Estate Grown wines represent 25 years of research and experience with Napa Valley Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Our philosophy has always been that the essence of great winemaking lies in the vineyard: exceptional fruit comes from distinguished sites that have the right combination of soil, climate, exposure and farming techniques. We began producing Estate Grown wines with the 1995 vintage, when we produced our first Estate Grown Napa Valley Merlot. In 1997, we introduced an Estate Grown Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon.

Our Estate vineyards are located on alluvial fans or the slopes of Howell Mountain. There soils are well-drained with little topsoil and produce vines with intense fruit, which translates into aromatic and complex wines. With the farming of more grapes coming from our own vineyard properties, we enjoy greater control. We are not concerned about getting higher tonnage, but rather about having the optimum amount of fruit per vine to yield consistently high quality grapes. Yields from our estate vineyards are targeted at 3 to 4 tons per acre. We adjust our viticultural practices to reflect the vintage, through bud and shoot removal, cluster thinning and leaf removal in heavy crop years, or extra water and nutrients in low-yield years. We keep the grapes on the vines for as long as possible to capture the fullest range of fruit flavors. We sample the fruit numerous times before harvest, not only relying on numerical analysis, but also on our own sensory evaluation. With our Estate vineyards, we can also harvest the grapes at natural maturity, even going through some vineyard sites several times, picking only the ripe fruit with each pass.

In the cellar, the finest French château oak barrels are used. The wine is handled minimally and gently during the numerous rackings, which take place during the 20 months of barrel aging. The vineyard lots are kept separate until the final months before bottling. Only the lots that embody the true character of their varietal and our style are considered. To be part of the final blend of an Estate Grown wine, a lot must have texture as well as finesse. It must be elegant and balanced, with obvious berry fruit components supported by varietal notes and integrated oak. The final blend should be approachable in its youth, but also have structure and strength to carry forward for a decade or more.

Because the wines from several individual Estate Vineyards have been historically impressive, starting with the 1998 vintage we decided to capture these unique expressions of terroir as a separate series of Estate Grown Cabernet Sauvignon bottlings. As with all of our Estate grown wines, they are produced in limited quantities.

Our winemaker Mark Beringer explains: "Our Estate Grown philosophy shows the quality potential when we have full control from vineyard to bottle." These wines are the pride of our portfolio. They represent the standard which we expect to elevate with each ensuing vintage.



Duckhorn Vineyards, 1000 Lodi Lane, St. Helena, CA 94574
Tel: 707-963-7108 Fax: 707-963-7595

www.duckhorn.com

DUCKHORN WINE COMPANY