

THE LINEAGE
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THE STEVEN KENT WINERY

THE PREMIER CABERNET SAUVIGNON

2017
LIVERMORE VALLEY



HARVEST NOTES

After a trio of very good to great vintages (2012-14) including what was the finest (2013) in more than 20 years of winemaking in the Livermore Valley, 2017 moved the bar even higher. The winter saw very significant rainfall with the arroyos at the base of the Ghielmetti Vineyard running with water for the first time since at least 2005 (Livermore recorded 14 inches of rain, an average year total in January through February alone; significantly, though, only .20 inches from July through October — Harvest time). Late August through October exhibited nearly perfect weather: temperate, practically no rainfall so that fruit came in with balanced ripeness and higher than average quantity from Ghielmetti Vineyard.

WINEMAKER NOTES

The Premier Cabernet Sauvignon represents the finest assemblage of Cabernet in the vintage from the vineyards sites we farm and with which we work. While the wine is always 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, the final blend is a careful consideration of quality and balance regardless of site and clone and differs each year depending upon the magic and vagaries of the vintage. The Livermore Valley has a long and glorious history; though, far less time highlighting what, in my mind, it grows as well as any region in the world: the Cabernet family of grapes. The Premier — since its inception in 2009 — is our effort to show just how magnificent this grape can be when the vineyards are farmed meticulously and when a certain winemaking philosophy that embodies balance and pace and freshness of fruit is brought to bear. In 2017 we harvested Cabernet from six vineyards and eventually sorted through more than 120 barrels of wine to pick the final 8: each of which was magnificent on its own, and more importantly, even greater as part of a blend. Only fruit from the Home, Ghielmetti, and Sachau Vineyards was considered great enough to be included in this offering.

TASTING NOTES

The Premier 2017 is the finest Cabernet Sauvignon we have made in 24 years of wine making. Somewhat shy aromatically (with aeration, showing notes of dark berry, bay, and graphite) in its youth, one can expect a fuller array of herb and fruit to develop with time. On entry, this wine shows abundant warm fruit flavors and significant tannin and acid structure. The Steven Kent style is very evident in the mid-palate of this wine: though tight and big and tannic, it still shows a lovely pace — an acid-driven characteristic that embodies freshness, balance, and the ability to pair wonderfully with food. From the standpoint of flavor, this wine shows gorgeous notes of dark fruit, savory herb, pencil lead, and a very subtle mushroom-tinged forest-floor quality that is very beguiling. The finish is lengthy, focused, and shows very grippy tannin that will require significant aging to soften. Like all other vintages of the Premier, this wine was made with a deftness and structure that will reward long-term aging. Stored properly, the 2017 Premier Cabernet Sauvignon should evolve beautifully for 25-30 years, and we believe it to be the quintessential example the world-class quality of the Livermore Valley.

VINEYARD SOURCE(S)

100% Cabernet Sauvignon: 62.5% Home Ranch Vineyard, 25% Ghielmetti Estate Vineyard, and 12.5% Sachau Vineyard. These three sites, separated by 3.4 miles, lay on a nine-mile axis of world-class quality cutting through the heart of Livermore Valley wine country.

HARVEST DATA

October 11- 14, 2017 | pH 3.60 | TA 0.59 | Alcohol 14.8%

FERMENTATION

Home and Ghielmetti were fermented in stainless steel tank and Sachau was fermented in open-topped box. Fermenters were inoculated with the D254 and D-21, and D-80 yeast strains.

COOPERAGE

Aged for 22 months in 75% new French oak barrels. Mostly, Le Grand, Taransaud, and François Frères..

CASES PRODUCED

331 six-packs

RELEASE DATE

May 16, 2020