

CHATEAU MONTELENA

Chateau Montelena's 19th century stone structure stands as a quality icon in Napa Valley, consistently producing some of the finest wines in California.



Cabernet Sauvignon 2018

Napa Valley, California

ESTATE

Chateau Montelena's history is one of the deepest and most storied in the Napa Valley and California. Founded just north of Calistoga in 1882, it was one of the largest wineries in the state. Prohibition put an end to Montelena's winemaking, and the next major era began in 1968, when Jim Barrett purchased the estate. Jim fell in love with this exceptional property, blessed with a complex mix of soils, slopes and biodiversity of wildlife and fauna. He had a dream of creating wine at the level of the great First Growths of Bordeaux, and set about replanting the vineyard, outfitting the winery with modern equipment, and studying the processes necessary for farming and winemaking at the highest quality level.

WINE

The wines at Chateau Montelena are often described as having classic "old-world" structure with ripe California fruit, and the Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is emblematic of this style. These wines tend to have more acid and more moderate alcohol levels as compared to some of the "cult" Cabs. This combination of classic chemistry and California sunshine allows them to offer immediate pleasure and complexity on release, and the ability to develop beautifully.

VINEYARD

Soils: All of the prime vineyard sites have been selected for their alluvium soil profile. These soils provide an earthy, complex and concentrated Cabernet Sauvignon softened by the judicious addition of Merlot. The cobbly, gravelly subsoil makes for deep root penetration and good drainage.

Farming: Chateau Montelena is committed to sustainable farming and produces wine in their solar powered winery.

WINEMAKING

Grape Varieties: 88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 1% Cabernet Franc

Fermentation: Temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks to allow the wines to ferment slowly and evenly.

Aging: 16 months in French and Eastern European oak barrels (26% new). Bottled April 2020.

Alcohol: 14.2% ABV

VINTAGE

A cool start to the growing season and late bloom in the vines seemed to portend a late, long growing season. but by June, the Napa Valley summer was in full swing. With a healthy crop, the vines weathered the heat, recharging each evening with cool breezes from the Pacific. Harvest was slow and steady, allowing for selective and precise picking decisions. The result is a wide array of aromas, flavors, and textures that seamlessly fuse into the character of this wine.

TASTING NOTE

"Dark garnet, nearly violet in the glass; the nose possesses an aromatic intensity that is irresistible. The palate is fresh and dynamic, with cranberry, cola and raspberry jam. The acidity is laser focused, the spine pulling the layers of flavor into harmony with the wine's supple, yet dense, structure. The tannins here serve to elevate, not overwhelm the kinetic balance of texture, ripeness, and vineyard character. Toasted hazelnut and vanilla emerge as the wine leans savory with mushroom, black pepper, and cedar. The Merlot in the blend really shines here with rhubarb, cassis, and velvety softness."

- WINEMAKER, MATT CRAFTRON