



Bedrock Wine Co. Winter Release

November 2017

For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.
—The Book of Job 14:7

2017 will obviously be remembered for the fires. Whether it was the Tubbs, Atlas, Nuns, Adobe, Norbomm, Potter, Partrick or Pocket, we watched as 197,000 acres of our landscape leapt with fire—leapt through our friends' homes and wineries, through favorite hiking spots and over highways, through office parks, through us. I find it hard to write about as it still feels too raw. It is hard to be poetic about something when damages seem to be discovered every day.

What I will say is the memories we will carry forward overwhelmingly involve the lithe group of people who live in Sonoma and Napa. We saw people who had lost everything cracking gallows-humor jokes behind smoke masks. Former interns working at fire affected wineries coming in to help with pump-overs because they wanted to help and do something "normal." Seeing dogs romp in the backyard, providing a respite from the stress for their evacuated owners. The never-ending texts and calls of support. Feeling friendships grow and deepen as the outside world became a crucible. Awed by the incredible work ethic of thousands of first-responders and firefighters, some coming from as far away as Australia, do the Paso Doble with one fiery f'in' bull. Yes, our landscape changed dramatically and much succor is still needed; however, I have never seen our community so galvanized, and from this I take the greatest solace.

Like many, we have been trying to figure the best way to contribute to the larger relief effort. It feels fitting that we offer our 2016 Alta Vista Gewurztraminer to the list, with profits going to the North Bay Fire Relief Fund. The vineyard itself saw fire burn through it, eviscerating the surrounding hillsides and turning the vineyard floor black. However, the vines themselves, planted in the 1940s, appear to be fine—their trunks are wearing a bit more black makeup (we will call it their goth-phase) but cambiums are green and the buds carrying next year's growth are alive. A fitting metaphor, I hope, for our community writ large.

Though the fires defined our October, a unique 2017 harvest kept us busy in August and September. July was one of the warmest on record with a period of intense heat around the solstice, creating sunbrun that unfortunately "lightened" the crop on a number of our vineyards. However, August was temperate, and the fruit quality from our Oakley and Amador vineyards is as strong as I can remember. The first week of September brought another period of heat, and 50% of the total harvest arrived in just six days. Thankfully, the rest of September remained relatively mild, and we had the luxury of picking almost all of our remaining fruit in a relatively relaxed manner. Most importantly, when fire started ripping through our world, we were 98% through harvest, with the late-ripening jewel of Pagani coming in a mere 48 hours before the firestorms began.



The release today is always one of my favorites for its sheer diversity of wines offered. From old field blends like Oakville Farmhouse and Pagani Ranch, to North Coast and Hudson Syrah, to rich whites like Cuvee Karatas and delicate aromatic wines like our first Rieslings from Cole Ranch, this offering embodies what I love about making wine in California. Also, it is lovely to note that we oversaw farming on half of the wines offered today—something we strongly believe is allowing us to push the quality gauntlet to new heights.

In other news, though it feels petty to talk about, Chris says I need to tell everyone that after twelve years of work I am officially the first winemaker Master of Wine in California. Surprising no one, my final research paper was on old-vine field blends. So yeah, I found that out one evening this harvest too (September 3rd at 10:30 pm, not that I was paying attention).

As always, thank you for your continued support of Bedrock. We, quite literally, could not do it without you!

Best,

Chris and Morgan (Twain-Peterson MW!)

The Wines

2016 North Coast Syrah: As usual, this one is a ripping bargain for what goes into it. There is a limit to the amount of high-end Syrah we want to make and this is the windfall (wine-fall? Ugh, dad jokes). A blend of Hudson, Weill, Gibson Ranch and a trace of Shake Ridge, the wine saw roughly 40% whole-cluster inclusion and 2% co-fermented Viognier. Peppery, meaty and full of Syrah violets, this will certainly be our house wine this winter. Drink 2018-2025

2016 Oakville Farmhouse Heritage Wine, Oakville: A true “Grand Cru” site, the tiny Oakville Farmhouse Vineyard lies on the far western side of the appellation under the vineyards of Harlan and Promontory. Planted in the 1930s (making it the oldest vineyard in Oakville), the vineyard is a field blend of Negrette, Petite Sirah, Mondeuse, Zinfandel, Carignan, Chenin Blanc and more. Fermented in open-top tank, the wine was aged, without racking, for 15 months in 228L piece, 35% of which were new Taransaud and Boutes barrels. Intensely perfumed and well-balanced, this is a wine of the old-guard “claret” mold and will reward aging. Drink 2019-2030



2016 Pagani Ranch Heritage Wine, Sonoma Valley: Always a crowd favorite, the 2016 Pagani is a dark and dense wine with many mysteries to tell over the coming years. A field blend planted in the 1880s, our blocks at Pagani Ranch are 40-60% Zinfandel, the remainder being composed of Petite Sirah, Alicante Bouschet, Carignan, Mataro, Mission, Lenoir, Petit Bouschet, Semillon, Aramon and more. When looking at the great Sonoma Valley “Grand Cru” old vine sites we get to work with, Pagani plays the Charlie Munger to Bedrock Vineyard’s Warren Buffett-- just as smart but perhaps a little more direct and immediately likeable. Drink 2019-2030

2016 Carlisle Vineyard Zinfandel, Russian River Valley: From the lovely vineyard of our friends Mike and Kendall Officer, this wine is always one of my favorites for its gorgeous fruit and classic RRV aromatics. Made from vines approaching their 90th birthday located in the Piner-Olivet area of the Russian River Valley, this is a wine of dark hue and vibrant perfume—I tend to eschew using fruit descriptors, but there always seems to be a distinct spiced mulberry component to this wine. Luxurious and fruit-forward, this will provide great drinking pleasure after decanting or age nicely for up to a decade. Drink 2018-2027

2016 Cuvee Karatas, Sonoma Valley: Based around the oldest Semillon plantings in the country, if not the world, Cuvee Karatas is a “Bordeaux Blanc” style wine with a California inflection (hella NorCal bro!). Fermented and aged entirely in barrel, this is “serious” white wine that will reward aging. Monte Rosso Semillon, planted in the 1880s on Lenoir rootstock, provides the dense core to this wine. Sauvignon Musque from Uboldi Vineyard in Kenwood contributes expressive aromatics and tension. This is unfortunately our last foreseeable vintage of this wine as we lost our contract on the Semillon. Drink 2019-2030

2016 Pato Vineyard Heritage Wine, Contra Costa County: Though we have farmed this vineyard for four years, this is our first wine from this beautiful place. Planted in 1905 and located on the interior edge of Oakley, this well-known site (Ridge, Rosenblum, Neyers and others have vineyard designated it in the past) is own-rooted and planted on the famous Delhi sands that define the area. The wine is a completely different expression of the area than Evangelho—the site tends towards slightly higher pHs and a riper expression of the area. Here, dark fruit dominates, in part due to the larger percentage of Petite Sirah. The sandy soils provide supple texture and polish but there is considerable fruit weight. This will be lovely now, with a good decant, or with some bottle time. Drink 2018-2025

2016 Schmiedt Road Zinfandel, Mokelumne River: My favorite year for our Lodi Zin since the inaugural 2012 Kirschenmann Vineyard! At its best, the wines from this area of Lodi combine elegance and perfume (sandy soils) with the unique meatiness and weight that comes from being in a warmer locale. Composed of lots from the neighboring Katushas’ and Kirschenmann vineyards, both planted circa 1915, the wine was aged in French cooperage ranging from 228-liter piece to 600-gallon foudre with limited new oak exposure. Aromatic and expressive, this wine will be lovely after a few hours in a decanter for nearer term drinking (though like most Bedrock wines, will also benefit from some time sideways in the cellar). Drink 2018-2025



2015 Hudson Vineyard Syrah, T'n'S blocks, Napa Carneros: The two gorgeous blocks of T and S produced a classic Hudson Syrah in 2015. The loaded aromatics of the site—always seeming to feature an array of bacon, pepper, violets and charcuterie—combined with the voluptuous fruit of the 2015 vintage to create a gorgeous wine. Meticulously tended by Lee Hudson and Kelly MacLeod, the wine saw 50% whole-cluster inclusion at fermentation and was reared in 30% new French oak of various sizes. Always one of my favorite wines of the year. Drink 2019-2030

2016 Alta Vista Gewurztraminer, Moon Mountain District: Somewhere back in the 1940s, someone was crazy enough to plant 2.5 acres of dry-farmed Gewurztraminer on a steep and loosely-terraced hillside above their homestead overlooking Sonoma Valley. When we took over farming in 2013, we were completely ensnared by the sheer insanity of its mere presence. After five years of pouring TLC and resources into the place to bring it back to fruitfulness, fire burned through the vineyard. From above it looked like we may have lost it. Fortune somehow shined on the site, and though the ground burned under the vines they have somehow survived. All profits from the 70 cases of wine made from the vineyard in 2016 will be donated to wildfire relief charities. Drink 2018-2024

2016 Cole Ranch Riesling, Erster Zweieiger Zwilling, Cole Ranch AVA: Thanks to the intrepidity of our assistant winemaker Cody Rasmussen, we started working with this gorgeous vineyard in 2016. Planted in 1974, Cole Ranch is unique in that it is a monopole AVA—meaning the only vineyard in the appellation is Cole Ranch itself. Located on the road between Ukiah and Boonville in Mendocino, the ranch lies in relative isolation from other vineyards (not so much for all the cannabis grown in the surrounding hills). In 2016 we decided to make two wines from the ranch: the first, Erster Zweieiger Zwilling, or First Fraternal Twin, was fermented to complete dryness. Floral (gardenia?) and perfumed, this features gorgeous aromatics and high-tone structure, with racy, mineral drive. Maybe my favorite Riesling we have made to date. Drink 2018-2024

2016 Cole Ranch Riesling, Zweiter Zweieiger Zwilling, Cole Ranch AVA: Zweiter Zweieiger Zwilling, or Second Fraternal Twin, was picked at the same time as the Erster but made in a German Spätlese style with only 9% alcohol and 85 g/l of residual sugar. Having no idea whether we would like it or not, we made a tiny amount of this wine. We think it is a fascinating handcuff as it is so different from its drier sibling. Though the sweetness gives an impression of baby fat, the aromatics and internal density and acidity (pH is nearly 3.0) of the wine indicate it will have a long future. Drink 2018-2030

2014 Weill-a-Way Vineyard Syrah, Sonoma Valley: Though 2013 was our last year making the Weill “Exposition” wines, we still made a single wine in 2014 using the same methods. Using a large percentage of co-fermented Viognier and a moderate fraction of whole-cluster, we vinified the wine using native yeasts. It then spent three years in 100% new oak barrels of various sizes without racking. Though only an individual wine, this was created in the same mold as the Weill wines of 2011-2013. Thus, it is an outlier stylistically for us, albeit one that many enjoy, particularly the fans of the Exposition Trios. Drink 2020-2030
