

CATERWAUL

2021 CATERWAUL LAST RITES CABERNET SAUVIGNON

NOTES

The final rounding out of the 2021 wines in barrel was especially important for the Last Rites Cemetery Vineyard bottling. This site is always a bit of black hole in fermenter and the goal is to find some generosity in the finished blend somewhere during elevage. Vine age here has helped as well, the wine feels more dense and saturated than the equally structured 2018 version. Being the second consecutive drought year could have been a struggle for a site as well drained as Cemetery, but our experience with the vineyard helped us navigate that challenge and hang our blocks out until late September. This ensured the abundant tannin of the vintage would be ripe enough to help flesh out the finish instead of clipping it. Dark notes dominate the fruit and savory elements with black cherry and blackberries leading into damp earth, fresh tobacco leaf, black olives and iron soil notes providing a multi-dimensional, layered texture. The tannins are abundant but ripe so they mark both the incredible nature of the vintage and the site. There is a little hint of blood orange and sous bois that adds some lightness to the very end of the palate adding one more note of complexity to what is already a very dynamic wine.

VINTAGE

Like many of the finest vintages in Napa and Sonoma counties, 2021 was marked by high quality and low yields. Throughout the early growing season and into late Spring this area received almost no precipitation, continuing another year of drought conditions. The vines responded appropriately, setting a small crop load. Specific vineyard practices we instituted included leaving extra leaf coverage in the fruiting zone to protect the small berries and clusters from getting excessive exposure to heat and direct sunlight.

The silver lining here is that the quality of the fruit on the vines was outstanding, and we had a long harvest window with no inclement weather forcing our hand on when to pick. With unlimited hang time, we were patient and waited until the fruit had reached full phenological maturity. This resulted in beautiful finished wines which possess great color, depth, power, and complexity.

PARTNERSHIP

A partnership between Matt Hardin and Thomas Brown was formed during the 2014 vintage after countless years of working together. Out of that friendship the idea of utilizing the strengths of one another gave birth to Caterwaul wines. Matt Hardin, a 6th generation Pope Valley resident and farmer, is owner of Hardin Vineyard Management, one of the most renowned vineyard management companies in Northern California as well as his own Matthew Wallace Wines. Thomas Rivers Brown, winemaker for some of Napa and Sonoma's most iconic labels (Schrader Cellars, Outpost and his own Rivers-Marie & Aston), has more than 50 100-point wines to his resume.



APPELLATION:

St. Helena

VARIETAL:

Cabernet Sauvignon

BARREL AGING:

100% French Oak

85% New

20 months in Barrel

ALCOHOL:

14.5%

TOTAL PRODUCTION:

363 Cases