



CHATEAU MONTELENA WINERY
ESTABLISHED 1882

2014 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes from the Winemaker, Matt Crafton, January 2017

INTRODUCTION

Year in and year out, great vineyards produce great wine. It's really that simple. At our fingertips in this twenty-first century, we have subsurface soil mapping, infrared aerial photography, and a whole host of other techniques and toys that quantify that seemingly simple fact. However, it's amazing when one realizes that it probably all began in the Napa Valley with a handful of dirt, old-fashioned gut instinct, and the desire to try something other than walnuts or pasture. The farmers who got it right are the ones who are still around today and are the ones we worked with in creating this wine. Most of them don't know or care about the alluvial fan in the soil beneath their feet or the canopy density at the edge of the hill. They've just known for years that the vines east of the tall, live Oak need a bit more attention. They know every single vine and treat them just a little bit differently. It's that dedication to touch and feel, the attention to detail in both the vineyard and in the winery that allowed us to express the unique character of this classic wine.

VINTAGE WEATHER

The weather in 2014 couldn't have been better. With persistent questions of long-term drought lingering, the mild, cool spring that materialized eased those concerns as the growing season stretched into a moderately warm, pleasant summer. The textbook conditions allowed the vines to set a bumper crop. But with careful canopy management and an eye on the forecast, we had the luxury of thinning as needed to yield optimal ripeness as harvest began in late August and continued steadily into October.

NOSE

The nose is classic Napa Valley, filled with juicy blackberries, rich cocoa, and cassis. After a few moments, dried cherry and a touch of tobacco come into focus along with some wispy notes of fresh violets.

PALATE

Density and concentration sum up the palate nicely as tight-grained tannin is interwoven among layers of fresh raspberry, mint, and hazelnut. These slowly transition to a subtle richness of molasses and fig that's almost chewy enough to sink your teeth into.

FINISH

The finish is seamless and complementary to the palate with strawberry jam, Earl Grey tea, and bright, refreshing acidity that should pair equally well with light fare or hardy cuisine.

Technical Information

HARVEST DATES

September 11 - October 9

ALCOHOL

14.2%

BLEND

86% Cabernet Sauvignon
13% Merlot, 1% Cabernet Franc

BARREL AGING

16 months, French and Eastern
European oak, 27% new

BOTTLING DATE

April 2016

RELEASE DATE

March 2017

WINEMAKER

Matt Crafton