

THE
STEVEN KENT
WINERY

Lot 549 – Petit Verdot/Cabernet Sauvignon Blend
LIVERMORE VALLEY

Lot 549 encompasses many of the beautiful qualities of both of its constituent parts: Petit Verdot and Cabernet Sauvignon. The name refers to the fact that the Petit Verdot was the 49th wine to be made in 2005 in the small lot winery where we do all of our production. This wine is a blend of 62% Petit Verdot from the Ghielmetti Vineyard and 38% Cabernet Sauvignon from the McGrail Vineyard, both located in the historic Livermore Valley.

Petit Verdot is one of six red varieties authorized in Bordeaux. The relatively cool climate, there would not often allow this late ripener to gain full maturity so it fell out of favor in the 1800 and 1900s. With warmer weather, though, there has been a small resurgence of plantings in Bordeaux. In the Livermore Valley, however, Petit Verdot has found a very hospitable climate: enough warmth to gain full maturity, and the balancing cool evenings that lead to acid retention and balance. Even when it ripens fully, one out of four years, it is generally used in very small percentages to add color and mid-palate body to Cabernet blends. At Steven Kent, we have found a wonderful affinity with the variety's dark color, floral and dark fruited aromas, and leathery texture. Lot 549 is the second release for the Future Release Program to feature Petit Verdot, and 100% offerings will be available down the road.

In Lot 549, each wine was vinified separately and put into oak for about 20 months. A strict selection of barrels resulted in the final blend which was made exclusively for members of the Future Release Program.

HISTORY

The Steven Kent Winery was started in 1996 with the planting of our vineyard site and a mission to produce distinctive Cabernet from the Livermore Valley that could compete in quality with any other appellation. Our first vintage – 1996 – was released three years later to much acclaim, setting a quality benchmark for Cabernet from Livermore.

Though not beholden to 100% Cabernet wines, desiring instead to produce the best possible offering, most of our releases have been varietally pure. With about four acres on our estate vineyard, this variety will be featured when its quality merits the attention.

VINTAGE

Harvest Date: October 21-26, 2005

Fruit: Petit Verdot (62%) from the Ghielmetti Vineyard, harvested on October 21 and clone 8 Cabernet Sauvignon (38%) from the McGrail Vineyard harvested on October 26. The fruit came in with brix levels of just over 25° and a complex, ripe flavor profile. Alcohol 14.5%.

Fermentation: After destemming and crushing the Petit Verdot was fermented in ¾ ton, open-topped vessels, and the Cabernet Sauvignon was fermented in stainless steel tank. Malo-lactic fermentation was induced in barrel.

Aging: In an effort to highlight the complex fruit palette of Lot 549, mostly second-use barrels were used. Final barrel selection resulted in 84.6% second-use barrels and 15.4% new oak; 92.3% American oak and 7.7% French oak.

Time in Barrel: 24 months

Release Date: October 11, 2008

VINEYARD

Location: The Ghielmetti Vineyard is located about 3.4 miles east of the Winery on the corner of Reuss and Tesla Roads. The McGrail Vineyard is about 1.5 miles east of the Winery on Greenville Road.

Soil: Ghielmetti Vineyard is planted on sandy loam with intrusions of clay; McGrail Vineyard is planted on sandy loam.

Training: Both vineyards use the Vertical Shoot Position (VSP) trellising method.