



THE STEVEN KENT WINERY

2010 Cabernet Sauvignon LIVERMORE VALLEY

The 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon, Livermore Valley, our 14th vintage, is a blend of 85% Cabernet Sauvignon (from the Home Ranch, Ghielmetti Estate, and Smith vineyards), 12% Petit Verdot, and 3% Merlot. This wine is consistent with most releases in this tier in that it is meant to be an expression of Cabernet that is pure Livermore Valley: rich, dense fruit on entry, an expansive mid-palate, and a structuring finish capable of aging. Where it differs from its immediate predecessors is in its more austere middle: harvest was extremely cold and rainy. When rains hit in mid-October, sugar accumulation stopped and the some of the Cabernet lots did not achieve a level of ripeness that is typical.

Good winemaking should reveal all the angles and elbows of a particular site (assuming that the site, like our Home Ranch Vineyard, has some inherent quality that should be showcased). This is one aspect that makes vineyard-designated wines so appealing to wine lovers. In revealing the *truths* about the particular site, the wine fixes a quality to a place in the wine lover's mind, and that wine ends up being like no other. What sometimes is overlooked, however, is that blended wines take the best qualities from each of their vineyard components, and in a synergistic revelation, the wine is more than the sum of its parts.

Since 2005 most of our Cabernet has been harvested from the Ghielmetti Estate vineyard, our second site. This wonderful vineyard is home to five blocks of Cabernet, each planted to a different clone. The amount of variation in flavor, aroma, and texture is quite astounding and provides great raw material for a blend such as the 2010 Cabernet, and with the addition of clones from the Home Ranch and Smith Ranch, the number of wonderful building blocks just keeps growing.

Of the 34 Cabernet barrels in this 40 barrel blend, 14 are Clone 30 and 4 are Clone 4 from Ghielmetti Estate; 14 are from Home Ranch; and 2 are from Smith Ranch. Home Ranch produces Cabernet of intense aromatics and idiosyncrasy; and the Smith Ranch shows a bit more focused entry and mid-palate with a nicely austere finish. The Ghielmetti mix of clones shows both elegance (Clone 30) and sauvage fruit (Clone 4). Petit Verdot adds wonderful exotic aromas, great color, tannin and acid; and Merlot adds plushness to the mid-palate and nicely high-toned fruit in its black cherry essence. Taken together—as with this offering—one finds a wine with classic aromatics and flavors of cassis, cedar, bittersweet chocolate, graphite, and black cherry. In the mouth, the wine enters with dense fruit, shows a viscous, tannic mid-palate, and finishes with a balance of tannin and acid that creates both nice length and age-worthiness.

Each lot of wine was made separately then blended about 6 months prior to release. A strict selection of barrels resulted in a wine that spent a total of about 24 months in about 75% new oak barrels.

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. Our experience working with Livermore Valley fruit has shown this varietal, grown here, to be a hallmark of both complexity and grace.

VINTAGE

Harvest Date: October 27 – November 17, 2010

Fruit: 85% Cabernet Sauvignon from the Ghielmetti Estate Vineyard; Home Ranch; and the Smith Ranch Vineyard; 13% Petit Verdot, and 2% Merlot from Ghielmetti Estate Vineyard. The fruit came in with brix levels of just over 23.5° and a complex, ripe flavor profile. Alcohol 13.9%.

Fermentation: After destemming and crushing each separate lot of fruit was fermented in stainless 1 ¾-ton open-topped fermenters. After a cold-soaking period, the must was inoculated with yeast. Fermentation and maceration lasted about from two-three weeks. Malo-lactic fermentation was induced in barrel.

Aging: Final barrel selection resulted in 75% new oak, a blend of 52% French, 43% American, and 5% Hungarian barrels.

Time in Barrel: 24 months

Release Date: March 2013