



THE STEVEN KENT WINERY

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“LA VENTANA” BARBERA LIVERMORE VALLEY

HARVEST NOTES

2012 & 2013 was an ideal year to farm wine grapes as I have seen in the Livermore Valley in nearly 20 years. Clement weather from budbreak to harvest and no precipitation in August and October produced some of the highest yields California has ever seen. More importantly, the quality of fruit was uniform and extraordinarily high. The lack of rainfall in 2013 (only 4.50 inches compared to 14.66 in 2012) did have its negative consequences, however. Lowering water tables caused an increased concentration of dissolved minerals that raised soil pH levels and led to the early senescence of canopy and the concomitant lowering of fruit ripeness levels in certain blocks.

WINEMAKER NOTES

On occasion, when we find the resulting blends to be of particularly fine quality, we will put together barrels from more than one vintage into a non-vintage offering for our club members. Most of the famous Champagne houses create a “house style” of their wines by continually blending several vintages together to create a flavor profile that is consistently “Moet” or “Bollinger,” for example. Blending of multiple vintages is also done routinely in Port and in Jerez where the great Spanish Sherries are made. Non-vintage blending has been slow to catch on with still wine producers, and with this La Ventana, the style of the wine was more important to us than was the expression of the vintage.

TASTING NOTES

La Ventana, our first Collector’s Circle offering of 2016, is a blend of 100% Barbera from the 2012 and 2013 vintages. 2012 started a string of three of the finest vintages in the last 20 in the Livermore Valley (capped off by 2013 – perhaps the greatest yet). Long seasons, highlighted by temperate climates throughout summer, led to perfectly ripe fruit and significant volumes of it. La Ventana is marked by plum and garnet hues (perhaps slightly richer in color in 2012), with a brightness befitting its structure. Replete with the aromas of fresh plums, dried cherries and just the right amount of background toasty oak, this version of Barbera is remarkably consistent in structure with previous releases from our estate vineyard. Acid is THE hallmark of Barbera, and this offering shows that freshening acid streak from the moment the wine enters one’s mouth. Plumpness from 2012 with a little more tannin from 2013 combine nicely to highlight the abundant plummy fruit (which is also a hallmark of the variety grown on our Home Ranch Estate vineyard). When farmed for high-end wines, the acidity serves to carry fruit forward with alacrity through the palate and gets the drinker prepared for the next bite of food (which this wine goes wonderfully well with). In about 50% new oak for the first year, much of the wine was moved into more neutral wood for the last year-and-a-half in order to balance it with fruit.

VINEYARD SOURCE(S)

100% Barbera from the first of our estate vineyards: Home Ranch, located in the center of the 7-mile axis of the premier sites in the Livermore Valley. 75% 2013, 25% 2012.

HARVEST DATA

October 2012 & 2013 | pH 3.50 | TA .68 | Alcohol 14.4%

FERMENTATION

After destemming and crushing, the fruit was fermented in 1¾ ton open-topped fermenters using BRL97, L2056, and D254 yeast strains. The wine was pressed off skins after about 10 days.

COOPERAGE

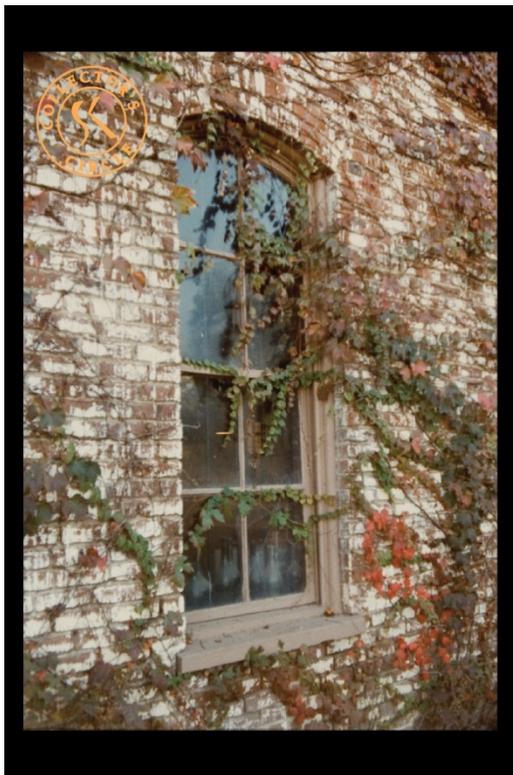
6 barrels: 50% new French, and 50% second-use and neutral for 24 months.

CASES PRODUCED

144 cases

RELEASE DATE

January 9, 2016



ARTIST

“La Ventana” is a photograph taken by our own Thom Roberts. He says it is amazing how looking at a photograph one took long ago can transport you back to that time and place when you captured the moment. This picture was taken in the early 80’s when Thom was in his “windows & doors” phase. It is of a building up in Yountville, California.