

THE
STEVEN KENT
WINERY

2008 Cabernet Sauvignon
LIVERMORE VALLEY

The 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon, Livermore Valley, our twelfth vintage, is a blend of 100% Cabernet Sauvignon (from Ghielmetti Vineyard, Home Ranch, and the Smith Ranch). This wine is consistent with most releases in this tier in that it is a pure expression of Cabernet from the Valley's best vineyard site. The 2008 Cabernet offers complexity of flavor and aroma, integrated structure, and the ageability one expects in world-class Cabernet.

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 2008 Cabernet. 38% of the wine is from Clone 4, 33.3% from Clone 191, and 4.8% each from Clones 30 and 337. The remaining wine is 4.8% Home Ranch and 14.3% Smith Ranch. Ghielmetti Cabernet provides a range of dark fruit (Clone 4), elegance (Clones 30, 337) and structure (Clone 191). The Home Ranch produces Cabernet of intense aromatics and idiosyncrasy; and the Smith Ranch tends to produce a wine with great mid-palate tannin expression and less overt fruit than the other two sites. 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 70% 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 22 – 30, 2008

Fruit: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon from the Ghielmetti Estate vineyard (80.9%); Home Ranch (4.8%); and the Smith Ranch (14.3%). The fruit came in with brix levels of just over 25° and a complex, ripe flavor profile. Alcohol 14.2%.

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.

Ageing: Final barrel selection resulted in 70% new oak, a blend of 52% French, 43% American, and 5% Hungarian barrels.

Time in Barrel: 24 months

Release Date: May 26, 2011