

# Lineage

## LINEAGE | VINTAGE 2015 | WINE MAKER'S VINTAGE NOTES

STEVEN KENT WINERY'S *LINEAGE* ASPIRES TO BE ONE OF THE TRULY GREAT CABERNET SAUVIGNON-BASED WINES IN THE WORLD. THIS SINGULAR WINE IS THE MARRIAGE OF THE *GRAND CRU* QUALITY OF THE LIVERMORE VALLEY'S FINEST VINEYARDS AND THE VISION OF SIXTH-GENERATION WINEMAKER, STEVEN MIRASSOU. A BLEND OF THE CLASSIC BORDEAUX VARIETIES, *LINEAGE* IS A WINE OF GREAT BEAUTY AND ELEGANCE.

EACH VINTAGE OF *LINEAGE* BEGINS WITH THE EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUAL LOTS OF WINE AFTER MALO-LACTIC CONVERSION IS FINISHED IN LATE WINTER THE YEAR AFTER HARVESTING. THIS PROCESS WILL TAKE MANY MONTHS AS EACH BARREL IN EACH LOT IS TASTED BLIND SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE IT IS DEEMED OF GREAT-ENOUGH QUALITY TO BE CONSIDERED PART OF THE *LINEAGE* BLEND. SCORES OF MOCK BLENDS LATER, THE FINAL ASSEMBLAGE IS MADE, REBARRELED FOR ABOUT SIX MONTHS SO THAT THE WINE'S COMPONENTS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO MARRY INTO AN ELEGANT WHOLE, THEN BOTTLED. IN 2014, *LINEAGE* COMPRISES ONLY 200 CASES AND MORE THAN 95% OF OUR BORDEAUX-VARIETAL PRODUCTION WAS DECLASSIFIED.

UNLIKE THE THREE PREVIOUS VINTAGES THAT WERE MADE UNDER THE MOST TEMPERATE OF HARVEST CONDITIONS AND WHICH SHOWED THEIR VITICULTURAL FELICITY IN THE RELATIVE STRAIGHT-FORWARD, TROUBLE-FREE QUALITY OF THE ASSEMBLAGE, 2015 REQUIRED SUBSTANTIALLY MORE PROBLEM-SOLVING THAN ANY VINTAGE SINCE 2011. THE VINTAGE BEGAN INAUSPICIOUSLY WITH A WEATHER EVENT IN MAY THAT REDUCED YIELDS SIGNIFICANTLY THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA. SOME OF OUR CABERNET SAUVIGNON LOTS PRODUCED ONLY 50% OF AVERAGE, AND THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE HARVEST WAS LOWER THAN 2014 AND 2016. MANY OF THE WINES WE EVALUATED FOR *LINEAGE* PRESENTED WITH FRUIT FLAVORS THAT WERE SLIGHTLY MORE RED THAN IN OTHER VINTAGES, AND, EARLY IN THEIR LIVES, THE WINES SEEMED LESS BALANCED AND VOLUPTUOUS AS WELL. AS *LINEAGE* IS AN EXERCISE IN FITTING TOGETHER VERY SMALL PIECES INTO A COHESIVE AND BEAUTIFUL WHOLE, OVER THE COURSE OF ABOUT 18 MONTHS WE WERE ABLE TO FIND THE EQUIVALENT OF THE BEST SIX BARRELS OF WINE TO CREATE OUR 2015 OFFERING. AS A WINEMAKER, THE MORE DIFFICULT VINTAGES ARE THE MOST FUN AND REWARDING WITH WHICH TO WORK. AS 2015 TOOK SHAPE, AND THE WINES STAYED A BIT LONGER IN BARREL, WE WERE REWARDED WITH A BLEND THAT CONTINUED TO EXPAND IN RICHNESS PAST THE OUTLINES WE HAD ORIGINALLY BELIEVED TO BE THE LIMIT. 2015 IS A BLEND OF 80% CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 10% CABERNET FRANC, 5% MERLOT, AND 5% PETIT VERDOT. CONSISTENT WITH OUR THOUGHT PROCESS ABOUT WHAT *LINEAGE* IS AS A WINE, WE LOOK AT CABERNET SAUVIGNON TO PROVIDE THE TANNIN AND SHAPE TO THE WINE, THE STRUCTURAL SCAFFOLDING. UPON THE FRAMEWORK, MERLOT CONTRIBUTES PLUSH FLESHINESS, CABERNET FRANC – THE ACIDITY AND VERVE, THE SEXINESS, AND PETIT VERDOT OFFERS EXOTIC ORGANOLEPTIC NOTES. THE *LINEAGE* WINE COMPANY'S 2015 OFFERING NEEDS SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE IT BEGINS TO SHOW ALL ITS INTRICACY AND DELICIOUSNESS. WITH PROPER STORAGE, IT WILL EASILY AGE 10-20 YEARS. DRINK FROM 2022-2035.

**HARVEST DATES:** SEPTEMBER 14 – OCTOBER 16, 2015

**CÉPAGE:** 80% CABERNET SAUVIGNON (SMITH RANCH, CLONE 8); 10% CABERNET FRANC; 5% MERLOT, 5% PETIT VERDOT; HARVESTED FROM THE SMITH RANCH AND GHIEMMETTI VINEYARDS IN THE LIVERMORE VALLEY. ALCOHOL 13.9%

**FERMENTATION:** AFTER DESTEMMING AND CRUSHING, EACH VARIETAL WAS FERMENTED SEPARATELY IN 1.7 TON OPEN-TOPPED FERMENTERS. FERMENTATION AND EXTENDED MACERATION LASTED FROM TWO TO FOUR WEEKS. MALO-LACTIC CONVERSION WAS INDUCED IN BARREL.

**AGING:** 40% OF THE BARRELS INCLUDED IN THIS BLEND WERE NEW FRENCH OAK (LE GRAND, DOREAU, AND FRANÇOIS FRÈRES.) TOTAL AGING TIME WAS 22 MONTHS.

**TIME IN BARREL:** 22 MONTHS | **BOTTLING DATE:** MARCH 14, 2018 | **RELEASE DATE:** OCTOBER 6, 2018

**BOTTLES PRODUCED • VINTAGE 2015:** 1,506 BOTTLES, 60 MAGNUMS, 5 DOUBLE-MAGNUMS, AND 5 FIVE-LITERS

LIVERMORE VALLEY • RED WINE