



IMMORTAL ESTATE: 2017 SLOPE

VINEYARD

The Hidden Ridge vineyard lies within an enclosed valley on steep mountainside slopes with mostly eastern and southern exposures at elevations ranging from 1100 to 1700 feet. The soils are a complex mixture of uplifted alluvium and decomposed volcanic material typical of the Mayacamas Range, and vary throughout the vineyard. The vineyard is on steep mostly terraced slopes. The lean soils and steep slopes naturally limit vine vigor and give remarkably small berried fruit. Although the vineyard is usually above the fog and sees warm days, the site is protected from inland heat and receives ocean cooling from early morning and late afternoon breezes that maintain our moderate growing temperatures to somewhat cooler than Spring Mountain directly to the east. The extended growing day at moderate temperatures gives the fruit well developed tannins and rich texture yet preserves the complex fruit characters and natural acidity lost in warmer locations.

VINTAGE

Significant winter rains brought relief to both growers and vines throughout the North Coast after several years of drought. Our work this growing season was focused on using cover crops to dry down the vineyard after April rains and a cool spring, and managing and balancing vigorous canopies to insure properly exposed fruit. Despite the cool start and moderate summer, the late season turned warm a few real heat spells, particularly over labor day weekend. The weather remained warm through September and October, and an extreme windstorm on Sunday night October 8th, coupled with downed power lines, led to fires that ravaged the North Coast for weeks. The fires for us were a serious risk and concern, threatening us from North, South and East. We had planned to begin picking the night of the fires, but our crews fled to safety before the roads were closed and the area was evacuated. Four days later we were able to safely access the vineyard. We were remarkably spared direct impact thanks to the efforts of the CDF and our terroir defining breezes from the Pacific Ocean, which was a continuous river of fresh air keeping the smoke at bay. We restarted harvest in earnest, and continued to pick over the following 17 days while the fires burned on, watching wind direction reports and working with the CDF and Sonoma County to maintain safe access. Our final picks were made while helicopters drew water from our reservoir to subdue the burning forest on the adjacent hills. It comes as a profound surprise and joy that our wines were unaffected by smoke, and we can offer this glorious vintage.



WINEMAKING

Vineyard blocks were selected for harvest by taste, selecting subsections of rows for any harvest day. The vineyard was harvested into twelve lots over two and a half weeks, responding to the varying development of different aspects, elevations and rootstocks. Hand harvested and meticulously sorted, the fruit was allowed to cold soak prior to fermentation and further post fermentation maceration on the skins for a total of 30 to 40 days depending on the lot. Given the smoke blowing through as a result of the nearby fires, we processed only when the air cleared, and dry ice was used to keep tanks under positive pressure and the smoke out. Normally we introduce ambient air into the fermentations to moderate tannins and feed the yeast; understanding the risk of this action, we used bottled air and compressed oxygen to feed the fermentations. The wines were pressed to 75% new french oak where they underwent malolactic fermentation. Individual barrels from eight lots were selected for the final blend. These wines were racked a total of three times during elevage and bottled unfined and unfiltered in July of 2020.

(continued)

TASTING NOTES

The 2017 is a powerful, dense wine whose immediate aromas are of black fruit and sweet spice. The wine cascades with effusive flavors of boysenberry, blackberry cordial, violets, spice cake, interwoven with sweet tobacco, brown sugar, black tea, clove, and raspberry leaf. Lusciously rich, it entices with its sweet fruit, massive palate and rich complexity. Mountainside tannins unfold with air, but carry the fruit, weight and power. Accessible in its youth, it will continue to evolve for decades.

VARIETAL:	97.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2.5% Petit Verdot
VINEYARD:	Hidden Ridge Vineyard
CAB CLONES:	4, 8, 337
HARVEST:	October 9, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 30
PRODUCTION:	4,710 cases (ópk)
SRP:	\$80
RATING:	94pt - Jeb Dunnuck