



2016 OLD VINES CARIGNAN

Old Vines | Mendocino County

"I am quite happy with this wine. It is so juicy, fruity, brambly, spicy, but serious at the same time. In this day and age, people do not cellar wines for long periods of time, but this baby will age for 20+ years beautifully. The tannins may stick out when young, but in a year or two, they will turn to velvet." – Joel Burt, winemaker

General thoughts on Carignan...Carignan is such an intriguing variety for us at Las Jaras. It is juicy, brambly and spicy when it is at its best. At its worst it is tannic, sour, and tastes like cabbage. It can also be quite difficult to grow. They are generally old vines that stand 7-8 feet tall and can be vigorous. The vine is extremely prone to powdery mildew infection, so it needs meticulous canopy management to avoid disaster. Site location is important for this variety to perform at its best. It needs to be on bench land, with properly draining sandy loam soils and a hot climate. This is because the acids can be absolutely searing on this variety, so you need to have it in a place where it can burn off some acid without over-ripening the fruit to get it into balance.

Vineyards: 100% Carignan sourced from Gary Venturi's vineyard in the Calpella area of Mendocino County near Ukiah on the benchlands to the west of the valley. He and his dog Kelsey tend the vines. These old vines were planted in the mid-50's. The vineyard is dry farmed. The soils are Yokayo series sandy loam and when they are dry, it is like walking on the moon. It is a super clean vineyard due to Gary's fastidious suckering and canopy management. I think this is also due to it being the right soil for Carignan. It only gets 1-2 sulfur dustings per season. Carignan is very prone to mildew, so most vineyards can't get by without constant dusting every 7 days.

Winemaking: We picked the vineyard at 23.5 brix. Gary has a few vines of Golden Chasellas growing on the property so I had him add them in with the pick. When the hand-picked grapes arrived at the winery, we tipped half of the bins into the fermentor whole cluster and we destemmed the rest. We added 25ppm SO₂ and kept the tank jacket set a 72°F. We were very gentle when handling this variety because it can be really tannic, especially with this very concentrated fruit. We did one punchdown a day until the native fermentation kicked off and then did two punchdowns a day once it was going. After the mid-point of fermentation, we backed off to one or no punchdowns. Once the tank was dry, we drained it overnight and pressed the skins and intact clusters in the morning in a basket press. We aged the free drain and the press separately in 228 liter Burgundian barrels; none of them were new. We aged the wine in a cool room where the wines underwent native malo-lactic fermentation. We racked the barrels about a month before bottling and then back to clean barrels. We racked again a few days before bottling and the wine was limpid. This is our method of creating wines that are clean without being filtered. We bottled unfiltered and unfined.

Production: 225 Cases Alc: 13.50%

TA: 6.9 g/L

pH 3.29

Total SO₂: 66 ppm

VA: 0.6 g/L

RS: 0.31g/L