

Las Jaras Wines

2018 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Sonoma Mountain

Our dream when we started Las Jaras was to create an old-school Cabernet Sauvignon that harkened back to the Golden Age of California winemaking, the 1970s, before the era of “Big Flavor.” To achieve this, we had to find the perfect site: someplace with a low diurnal shift, where the daytime highs are warm but not scorching, and nights are reasonably warm.

We found our dream vineyard on Sonoma Mountain, a small, under-the-radar AVA that is better known for its Pinot Noir and Chardonnay because of its relative coolness. But we knew Sonoma Mountain had the potential for beautiful, elegant, long-lived Cabernet Sauvignon, with no jammy flavors and plenty of fine-grained, supple tannins.

2018 is our fourth (and sadly) last vintage of the Sonoma Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon, and it has vibrant aromas of blackberry and plum with subtle notes of oak, licorice, tar, and earth. On the palate you’ll find bright and intense boysenberry, blackberry, and crushed rock lined with cocoa and violets. Then on the midpalate, it’s all cocoa and cherry, with tannins that are a bit crunch now, but will soften over the next several years. This beauty will only improve over the next eight years, and will drink well far beyond that.

Vineyards

100 percent Cabernet Sauvignon sourced from Fred Berger’s Oak Shade Ranch, high atop Sonoma Mountain. The vineyard is sustainably farmed with no synthetics by Ken Moholt Siebert. The soils are primarily Spreckles clay loam on sloping hillsides. The vines were originally planted in the 1970s and display the era’s long, quadrilateral cordons and beefy, drought-tolerant Saint George rootstock. The yields are painfully low at this site, sometimes yielding less than 1 ton per acre.

Winemaking

We hand-picked the fruit, then destemmed the grapes destemmed into a single 4-ton tank for fermentation. We warmed the tank to encourage native fermentation and punched down the must once a day until it started fermenting, at which point we moved to two light punchdowns per day and turned off the heat. Later in the fermentation, we avoided punching down to prevent over-extraction. We drained the wine at dryness and pressed the skins in a horizontal press. We kept only the free-drain wine for this bottling and aged it in four 255-liter Bordeaux barrels, three of which were new. It is hard to believe there is 75% new oak on this wine; you certainly can’t smell or taste it. We aged the wine for 22 months 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 un-fined.



Production: 102 Cases

Alc: 13.2% | TA: 7.71 g/L | pH: 3.67 | VA: 0.84 g/L | RS: 0.57 g/L
Total SO₂: 81 ppm | Turbidity at bottling: 13 NTU

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