

PINE RIDGE

VINEYARDS

2023 CIRCLE HILL CABERNET SAUVIGNON

CIRCLE HILL ESTATE VINEYARD SITUATED IN THE NORTHWEST SECTION OF THE STAGS LEAP DISTRICT IS IDENTIFIED BY THE HILL ENCIRCLED WITH VINES THAT CROWNS THE PROPERTY. IT IS THIS GENTLY SLOPING BLOCK THAT TYPICALLY FORMS THE FOUNDATION FOR OUR ICON WINE, FORTIS. LOCATED IN A MINIATURE “VALLEY WITHIN THE VALLEY” THIS SITE TYPIFIES THE FRUIT EXPRESSION THAT THE STAGS LEAP DISTRICT IS SO WELL KNOWN FOR, WHERE SLIGHTLY COOLER PORTIONS OF THE VINEYARD PROVIDE EXUBERANT FRESH FRUIT CHARACTER AND WARMER SECTIONS OF THE VINEYARD PROVIDE RICHNESS, DEPTH AND SILKY SMOOTH, YET CONCENTRATED TANNINS.

VINTAGE

The 2023 growing season began with heavy winter rain, replenishing our reservoirs and lakes. Bud break was delayed due to a cooler than usual season, typically occurring once every 10 to 15 years. Despite this, we enjoyed a lengthy season with yields from average to 10% above average. With no disease pressure, increased soil water, and extended hang time, 2023 is destined to be legendary. Our vines thrived with healthy canopies, and the grapes ripened slowly, ensuring this “once-in-a-decade” vintage provided fruit that could perform at the apex of quality.

VITICULTURE & WINEMAKING

The 2023 vintage was harvested on October 10th & 11th. The grapes were hand-harvested at night when temperatures often dip to 50°F to capture vibrant acidity and fruit expression in the wine.

We first cold-soaked the must (crushed grapes) for gentle extraction and then ferment in stainless steel, concrete and oak barrel fermenters at 88°F. Rigorous pump-overs, increasing during the peak of the fermentation, developed deep color, rich varietal character and fine tannins in the wine. The wine was aged in 71% new French oak barrels to meld the bright fruit expression with oak spice nuances. After three months of aging, we blended the vineyard components allowing them to marry for a total of 20 months of barrel élevage. This wine was bottled unfined and unfiltered to present the attributes of the vineyard in the purest form possible, from the dirt to the glass!

ANALYSIS

VARIETALS	ALC	pH	TA	PRODUCTION
99% Cabernet Sauvignon	15.5%	3.72	5.5 g/L	1,078 cases
1% Petite Sirah				



TASTING NOTES

What wafts from the glass of the 2023 Circle Hill Cabernet Sauvignon is reminiscent of a fruit pie cooling on your grandparents' windowsill. Graham cracker crust and fresh blueberry mingle with vanilla, milk chocolate, and shortbread. Mineral and savory notes flicker in between, in the form of graphite, pencil shavings and just-picked green olive. The palate is sleek, as evidenced by the dialed-in length and tannin structure. It enters with flavors like raspberry before becoming more robust on the mid-palate with fruity notes that are at once fresh, juicy, and plump. The oak influence is there but heeds generously to the fruit. Throughout, there's compelling tension between acidity and tannin, making for a resonant wine that points to an aging window that should peak in 17 to 22 years. This wine is a perfect accompaniment to a warm plate of duck confit accompanied by Rancho Gordo lentils.

