



2010 Piedra Hill Vineyard – Purple Label Howell Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon

THE VINEYARD:

Those familiar with Napa Valley wines know that the Piedra Hill Vineyard is synonymous with award-winning Cabernets. Sitting atop Howell Mountain, Bill and Joan Smith own, farm, and make wine from this stunning six acre vineyard. It is dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon, primarily clones #337, #191, #341, #338 and BV4. Four other Bordeaux varieties are also planted: Merlot, Petit Verdot, Malbec and Cabernet Franc. Piedra Hill Vineyards sits above the fog line, so average temperatures are five to ten degrees cooler than on the valley floor. This creates higher natural acidity in the grapes and leads to even ripening of the fruit. The hallmarks of the Piedra Hill wines continue to be fruit intensity and balance.

THE WINEMAKING:

The focus of Piedra Hill Cabernet Sauvignon is on the fruit, richness and perfectly integrated tannins. The magic is in the removal of seed tannin. Grape seeds are removed at every step along the way – during the long, cold soak (6-8 Days at 40degrees) and during fermentation via a process called ‘rack and return’ or delestage. The result of this process is gorgeous, fruit driven wine, wonderful to drink in its youth yet quite age-worthy. Although we have often referred to Purple Label as our ‘barrel selection’, our winemaking team would actually call it a ‘fermentation selection’ as they are constantly evaluating the lots during fermentation, looking for the most intense floral and blackberry fruit. These selected fermentations eventually become the beginning of Purple Label. They blend from different barrels and continue to modify the blend by taste, not by recipe. Bill calls it ‘black magic’. We call it Purple Label!

THE WINE:

The 2010 vintage was the second mild growing season in a row. Although it was a cooler than average summer, intense heat just before harvest allowed picking at peak perfection. Our Piedra Hill Vineyard produced intense fruit which translated to intense full bodied Cabernets. Purple Label is an elegant and sophisticated wine with a great balance of acidity and fruit. Save it for a special occasion or make an occasion special by sharing it! Stunning deep garnet color releases aromas of ripe blackberry and cherry fruit with wonderful bursts of vanilla and crème brulee. Dark fruit fill the palate with a rich velvet finish. A stellar wine showing all the traits of an age worthy Cabernet.

APPELLATION: Howell Mountain, Napa Valley

VARIETALS: Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Malbec

HARVEST: October 16th - 20th

AGING: 2 years in 60% new oak barrels (Boutes, Radoux, Taransaud, Ermitage and Treuil)

ALCOHOL: 14.2%

BOTTLED: August 5, 2013

PRODUCTION: 437 cases

RELEASE DATE: September 10, 2013