



FROG'S LEAP

2022 SAUVIGNON BLANC
CONCRETE AGED
RUTHERFORD NAPA VALLEY



A BRIEF HISTORY

The genesis for our Concrete Aged Sauvignon Blanc combines two threads of history, both starting in 1981. That spring, Ray and Louise Rossi planted a brand-new stand of Sauvignon Blanc at their family's ranch, looking to capitalize on the newfound popularity of the variety. That same spring, my family founded Frog's Leap, choosing for their first wine Sauvignon Blanc, a variety that my dad, John, had fallen in love with by tasting the great Loire wines of Sancerre and Pouilly-Fumé. About 15 seasons later, Frog's Leap was introduced to the Rossi family by our vineyard guru, Frank Leeds, and we began to help farm and purchase the fruit from the 1981 block of Sauvignon Blanc, which we simply called "Cane," in reference to its pruning style.

In 2007 Frog's Leap purchased the vineyard from the Rossi family, and by 2015 that block of SB that had come to be known as "Old Cane" provided the fruit for the first wine that Frog's Leap ever fermented and aged entirely in concrete. We worked with a local specialty concrete manufacturer to source a 500-gallon concrete "egg" so that we could ferment the block on its own, as an experiment. We knew that concrete had been used for centuries in combination with SB, and we thought the egg looked kind of cool and funky, so why not have some fun?

That experiment has become a launchpad for a new way of approaching our Sauvignon Blanc. What started with one egg for Old Cane has become nine eggs, allowing us to explore the subtle variations in soil, terrain, clonal selection, and vine age across our 44 acres of estate-grown, certified organic, dry-farmed Sauvignon Blanc vines from the now-named Williams Rossi Ranch, Galleron Ranch and from Frank Leeds' Chavez-Leeds Vineyard. The fruit for each egg is selected from an area out in the field that we have identified as exceptional that season. Concrete has the effect of locking in the freshness of a wine, while still allowing it to mature and deepen in complexity; the cheery, lemon-grapefruit aromatic profile of youthful SB transforms into a lightning bolt of lemon curd, orange blossom, and flinty smokiness. The extended time on the lees adds tremendous umami—or depth and richness—born directly from concrete's tendency to keep lees in suspension for months on end. The result is a mineral-driven, complex Sauvignon Blanc that captures the full potential of a plot of soil—the same qualities that attracted my father to the grape over 40 years ago.



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ABOUT THE WINE

Higher rainfall than in 2021, combined with a warm but steady summer ripening season, meant that the Sauvignon Blanc vines entered the 2022 harvest with a more balanced profile and crop load, with great freshness to back up fully developed flavors (the SB dodged the crazy September heat wave that complicated later picks in 2022). Rossi and Leeds came in with lots of high-toned mineral and savory flavors supported by very strong acidity—many blocks that have made the blend previously are here in '22. This vintage, however, marks the debut presence of a small part of our Galleron vineyard in the blend. The old part of the southernmost block had lots of exuberant fruit and a ripe, broad profile that developed well in the concrete egg, and fit well with the high acidity of the vintage. The finished wine shows off some of this additional depth, while remaining true to the savory, mineral-driven profile that I love about this wine. RW

THE BLEND

1/6 Old Cane block, Williams Rossi Ranch, Rutherford – Harvested August 16. *Planted 1981 in gravelly loam, Emmolo clone on St. George.*
1/6 North Creek block north end + SW triangle, Williams Rossi Ranch, Rutherford – Harvested August 13. *Planted 2008 in a unique white-flecked subtype of Adobe clay, Emmolo clone on St. George.*
1/6 South Creek block west end, Williams Rossi Ranch, Rutherford – Harvested August 12. *Planted 2008 in a unique white-flecked subtype of Adobe clay, Emmolo clone on St. George.*
1/6 Old Long Rows block, Chavez-Leeds Vineyard, Rutherford – Harvested August 16. *Planted 1984 in Adobe clay, old-vine Mondavi TK clone on St. George.*
1/6 North Long Rows block, Chavez-Leeds Vineyard, Rutherford – Harvested August 15. *Planted 1988 in Adobe clay, Emmolo clone on St. George.*
1/6 Old Block 4 East, Galleron Ranch, Rutherford – Harvested August 22. *Planted 2000 in deep Yolo series river loan, Clone 1 on St. George.*

STATISTICS

harvest chemistry: 22.8 ° brix, 7.4 g/L total acidity, 3.27 pH
final chemistry: 13.4% alcohol, 7.36 g/L total acidity, 3.30 pH,
0.02% residual sugar, 7% ML+
bottled July 18 2023
1,139 cases produced, from 6 concrete eggs



WINEMAKERS

John Williams
Rory Williams
Pablo Polanco

VINEYARDIST

Frank Leeds