



FROG'S LEAP

## 2021 ESTATE GROWN CABERNET SAUVIGNON RUTHERFORD

### A BRIEF HISTORY

For decades, it has been our goal to produce a Rutherford AVA, estate-grown Cabernet Sauvignon. Inspired by the early Cabernets of Inglenook and BV, we've spent the past 30 years finding, farming, and obtaining highly sought-after land in Rutherford—with particular attention to the Rutherford bench—to perfect our craft. Years of effort with organic viticulture, dry farming and minimal cellar intervention yield a wine that could not be produced outside of the 10 square miles that define its appellation.

### ABOUT THE WINE

While the winter of 2020-21 gave us a chance to put the madness of 2020 in the rear-view mirror, it didn't give us much rain. And while it's easy to sound like a cranky old farmer, complaining about the misfortunes of agriculture, the story of the 2021 vintage—in all its glory, as well as all its pain—begins and ends with drought. With only about 40% of normal rainfall, the vines woke up in the spring of 2021 to dry soils and an urgent need to adjust their plan for the year.

We often talk at Frog's Leap about the virtues of farming without irrigation, and paradoxically the strengths of our approach to farming were borne out in this driest of years. The key to understanding this lies in understanding how our vines adjusted to meet the demands of the year—instead of setting their usual crop level and growing their usual quantity of shoots and leaves, the vines downsized. Small canopies, small clusters, and small berries were the order of the day, and those adjustments allowed our vines to reach full ripeness with beautiful balance and exceptional concentration. As a side note, many of our neighbors, a bit puzzled as to why our grapes hadn't simply shriveled up, started to ask questions. The success of the vintage has spurred a valley-wide conversation on dry farming and water resilience that is challenging long-held assumptions about grape growing in Napa. We couldn't be happier.

To be sure, yields were low—50% of normal—but they were also wonderfully reflective of the terroir of this drought year. We wish we had more of the wine to go around, but I am extremely excited about the future for this wine, which I intend to come back to with pleasure for the rest of my life. Rich black fruit combines with a seriously savory streak of tobacco, dust, graphite and black olive, but this is no clunky NapaCab™. Instead, our signature balance and restraint shine through these powerful flavors, giving the wine tremendous freshness and lift, amplified by our usual inclusion of Cabernet Franc. That balancing act—which is the specific virtue of any “old school” Rutherford Cabernet—makes this wine incredibly exciting now and for many, many years to come. —RW



BALANCE, RESTRAINT AND DEEP RESPECT FOR THE NATURAL EXPRESSION OF THE VINE



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2021 ESTATE GROWN  
CABERNET SAUVIGNON  
RUTHERFORD

WINEMAKING

There is very little that is fancy about our Cabernet winemaking. All lots were destemmed and fermented on the strength of their native yeast over the course of 10-15 days, with thrice-daily pump-overs. Free-run and press lots were combined early on. All lots completed ML naturally in French oak (25% new) and were gently racked twice before bottling. The 2021 was bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

THE BLEND

91% Cabernet Sauvignon,  
9% Cabernet Franc

42.5% Chavez-Leeds vineyard, Rutherford  
38.5% Williams-Rossi vineyard, Rutherford  
19% Red Barn vineyard, Rutherford

THE VINES

Vines: 100% Certified organic and dry farmed. Our vines average 20 years of age, and are planted in the gravelly loams of the Pleasanton and Cortina soil series.

STATISTICS

harvested: September 4th - September 25th  
harvest chemistry: 24.1° brix 6.3 g/L total acidity, 3.51 pH  
final chemistry: 14.0% alcohol, 6.15 g/L total acidity, 3.65 pH, 0.03% RS  
bottled June 30th 2023  
7,100 cases produced

WINEMAKERS

John Williams  
Rory Williams  
Pablo Polanco

VINEYARDIST

Frank Leeds



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