

2018 ROBERT CRAIG WINERY

HOWELL MOUNTAIN CABERNET SAUVIGNON



WINEMAKER: Jason Price
REGION: Napa Valley, California
VARIETALS: Cabernet Sauvignon (90%), Malbec (9%), Merlot (1%)
MATURATION: 18 months in 65% in new French oak
ANALYSIS: 14.7% alc/vol | TA: 5.9 g/L | pH: 3.71

VINTAGE: February saw abundant rains, followed by lots of filtered light in spring and early summer. Both bud break and flowering occurred a bit late, but under ideal weather conditions, creating plentiful and even fruit set. Summer brought generous sun during the day and cooler marine influences, virtually uninterrupted by major heat spikes. The relatively mild summer followed by extended fall sunshine and moderate heat created near-ideal conditions for winemakers to allow their fruit to accumulate flavor complexity with gradual increases in sugar levels.

TERROIR: Sourced from two Howell Mountain vineyards, the nine-acre Winery Estate Vineyard and Candlestick Ridge Vineyard. The estate vineyard is complex with huge variation in soils and microclimates. The yields extremely low, but the fruit possesses a rare power and expression of site. Just down the road, Candlestick Ridge is slightly warmer than the summit ridge where the Winery Estate vineyard lies. Candlestick is influenced by warm air from Pope Valley to the east and - at its slightly lower elevation - it is protected from the constant wind that hits the ridge line.

TASTING NOTES: The Howell Mountain Estate Cabernet shows the typical thorny stem fruit that is a Howell Mountain hallmark. Deep, dark nuances of iron, graphite and crushed rock dance around the core of black fruit that coats the palate. The 2018 exhibits the racy energy of the vintage in every way, and this wine should easily cellar for decades despite the balance that makes it possible to enjoy while young.

CRITICAL ACCLAIM: 94 pts Vinous

ABOUT ROBERT CRAIG WINERY: With a passion for Napa Valley Mountain Cabernet, Bob Craig founded his eponymous winery on Howell Mountain with three friends from business school. In 2004, CEO Elton Slone joined the winery and became a full partner in 2007. Following Bob's retirement and departure from the wine business in 2012, Slone has continued to move the business forward with the other three founding partners. Known for producing small-lot, site-expressive wines from high elevation vineyards, Robert Craig Winery consistently garners high scores and positive accolades from the wine press.

