

January 31, 2020

98 Points - 2016 Oakville Ranch Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon

This vineyard on the east side of Oakville continues to produce brilliant wines and the 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville Ranch is another fine example. Deep purple-hued with a sensational bouquet of crème de cassis, lead pencil shavings, liquid violets, and wet stone-like minerality, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, world-class purity and elegance, building tannins, and an awesome finish. This is one of those wines that stops you in your tracks and it builds with time in the glass, showing flawless integration of its fruit, tannins, and acidity, a layered, multi-dimensional mouthfeel, and nothing out of place. While the Georges III release is a bigger, more powerful wine, this is more complete, with a Chateau Lafite like elegance. It needs an hour in a decanter if drinking anytime soon and should benefit from 3-5 years of bottle age and keep for 30 years or more. Hats off to the team at Sojourn Cellars for this brilliant wine!

95 Points - 2016 Beckstoffer Vineyard Georges III Cabernet Sauvignon

This iconic site in Rutherford can produce mixed results (it's a big vineyard), yet the 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Beckstoffer Vineyard Georges III from Sojourn is a killer bottle of wine. Revealing a deep ruby/plum hue as well as loads of crème de cassis, earthy spices, cedar, chocolate, and new leather, it has an old school, focused, almost Pauillac-like style, full-bodied richness, and a great finish. It's going to benefit from 4-5 years of bottle age and drink spectacularly well for 20-25 years.

94 Points - 2016 Oakville Cabernet Sauvignon

Looking first at the 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville, it's a smoking introduction to the estate and reveals a deep purple hue as well as tons of mulled blackcurrant fruits interwoven with cedary herbs, dark chocolate, and hints of tobacco. This is a beautiful, full-bodied effort that has sweet tannins, a rounded, sexy mouthfeel, and a great finish. It's a winner to drink anytime over the coming 10-15 years. It competes with wines three times the price.

93 Points - 2017 Gap's Crown Vineyard Pinot Noir

Lastly, the 2017 Pinot Noir Gap's Crown Vineyard is the clear standout and offers plenty of dark cherry and black raspberry fruits interwoven with hints of chocolate, toasted spices, and dried earth. Beautifully textured, medium to full-bodied, with integrated acidity and fine tannin, it shines both for its terrific complex as well as textural richness on the palate. Drink it anytime over the coming decade.

91 Points - 2017 Ridgetop Vineyard Pinot Noir

From a Sonoma Coast site and seeing the same 50% new oak regime, the 2017 Pinot Noir Ridgetop Vineyard has a bright, focused bouquet of black cherries, black plums, scorched earth, dark chocolate, and burnt spices. It has more precision and focus than the Rogers Creek, as well as a darker, more masculine style. It too is ideal for drinking over the coming 5-7 years.

91 Points - 2017 Rodgers Creek Vineyard Pinot Noir

Mostly destemmed (20% whole clusters) and brought up in 50% new oak, the 2017 Pinot Noir Rodgers Creek Vineyard offers a medium ruby/translucent hue as well as a great Pinot Noir nose of spiced mulberries and raspberries intermixed with plenty of dried flowers and forest floor notes. It's clean, medium-bodied, incredibly pretty, and elegant. It's slightly fleeting on the finish but this is a classy Pinot Noir that should evolve nicely for 5-7 years.