

KIVEL STADT CELLARS

2016 Native Son – Charbono

Overview:

Years ago, Kivelstadt Cellars was only an idea: the idea that people deserve to drink wines with soul. These wines would come from vineyards with heritage, farmed with the utmost respect for nature, and fermented with low intervention. A combination of these ideals has evolved into a lifestyle. A lifestyle which, vintage after vintage, results in delicious wines which pay homage to California's terroir.

A unique varietal, Charbono was widely planted all over California in the beginning of the 20th century. While it has been ripped out or grafted over in favor of more mainstream varietals, there is a small amount remaining in the North Coast. We were lucky enough to get our hands on a two-acre block at Venturi Vineyard and never looked back! We make this rare and unique variety in a light and fun way in order to combine its brooding strength with a light and fun style.

Varieties:

Charbono (100%)

Production:

318 cases

Vineyards:

Venturi Vineyard, Mendocino County AVA

Grape Details:

Charbono or, as ampelographers (those who study grape morphology and varietal characterization) call it, Douce Noire was one of the most widespread red varieties of Savoie until the 19th century. It is famous for producing a deeply colored wine, which caused many to think it was Dolcetto from Italy, but DNA analysis has shown it to be different and hail from France. This late ripening varietal traditionally was used for blending due to its color, but we prefer to have Charbono express its individuality.

Soils:

Venturi Vineyard is located just north of Ukiah, in the Calpella Valley, on predominantly Pinole gravelly loam soils. Containing a mixture of sandstone, shale and quartz, these deep, well-drained soils were formed from alluvial flows, depositing fist-sized stones along the way. Highly deficient in organic matter, the moderately acidic soil pH allows for optimal nutrient uptake to allow the vines to thrive. Pinole soils are some of the most sought-after soil types in Mendocino County.

Farming:

Larry Venturi is a third generation farmer tending to vines planted on his family's historic site in Calpella (Ukiah), in Mendocino County. Planted in the late 1940's, this nearly 70-year-old vineyard is still amazingly healthy and productive, with much more life to go! The vines are head trained and have been dry farmed since inception. Farming is certified organic.

Vintage:

2016 was another in a string of very hot vintages. This was tempered by very heavy rainfall in the autumn. This was a great relief from the multi-year drought that California vines had been struggling against. A cooler than average August allowed for steady ripening.

Vinification:

The grape was fermented with ambient yeast and underwent ambient malolactic fermentation in barrel. Half of the grapes are thrown into an open top fermenter whole cluster; the other half are de-stemmed and thrown on top. The whole clusters on the bottom give the wine a semi carbonic maceration, which minimizes tannin extraction from this notoriously tannic grape. The wine has a vibrant color as a result, and explodes out of the glass. The fermentations were punched down only once a day in order to wet the cap. The idea is to gently extract flavor and tannin, while coaxing along a passive carbonic fermentation. This brings a combination of subtle and lifted flavor and aroma with a masculine backbone brought on by the whole cluster. Ten months of aging in neutral French oak helps to soften tannin and gives the wines some time to evolve.

Tasting Notes:

This wine has been described as electric Kool-Aid purple. The bright color, which is due to the wine's partial carbonic maceration, leads you into the high-toned fruit flavors. Next comes an intense hit of earthy spice and forest floor. The wine finishes with acid and integrated tannins. A fantastic food pairing wine that will only get better with a few years of age.

Analysis:

EtOH: 12.5%

PH: 3.67

TA: 6.3g/L

VA: .82

ML: 100%