

RIDGE 2014

MONTE BELLO

Monte Bello Parcels: 92.1 tons from 65.4 acres
MONTE BELLO ESTATE VINEYARD 13.5% ALCOHOL BY VOLUME
MONTE BELLO VINEYARD 75% CABERNET SAUVIGNON,
18% MERLOT, 5% CABERNET FRANC, 2% PETIT VERDOT

HISTORY

In 1886, high in the Santa Cruz Mountains, the first Monte Bello vineyards were planted, and winery construction begun. A first vintage from the young vines followed in 1892. During Prohibition (1920-1933), the vineyard was not fully maintained; some vines survived into the late 30's, but by the 1940s they were effectively abandoned. Eight acres of cabernet sauvignon were replanted in 1949. These were the source of the first Ridge Monte Bello (1962) and subsequent vintages until 1974 when younger blocks replanted in the 1960's were considered for inclusion. Since then, the historic vineyards on the ridge have gradually been replanted.

FIRST RIDGE MONTE BELLO 1962

GROWING SEASON

Rainfall: 11.8 inches (40% of normal)

Bloom: Mid-May

Weather: Very dry December & January; most of the rain fell February through April. Overall above average temperatures at Monte Bello.

VINTAGE

Harvest Dates: 2 - 24 September

Grapes: Average Brix 25.2°

Fermentation: Grapes destemmed, 100% whole berries. Automated berry sorting followed by hand sorting. Fermented on the native yeasts. Pressed at ten days. Natural malolactic.

Selection: Nineteen of twenty-six Monte Bello parcels

Barrels: 100% new air-dried oak, 97% american oak, 2% french oak; 1% hungarian oak

Aging: Seventeen months in barrel

WINEMAKING

Sustainably farmed, hand-harvested, estate-grown grapes; destemmed and sorted; fermented on the native yeasts; full malolactic on the naturally occurring bacteria; 0.29 g/L calcium carbonate added to moderate the high natural acidity in ten of the twenty-one parcels; 2.2% water addition to six of twenty-one lots during fermentation; oak from barrel aging; minimum effective sulfur 25 ppm at crush, 109 ppm during aging; pad filtered at bottling. In keeping with our philosophy of minimal intervention, this is the sum of our actions.



RIDGE
VINEYARDS

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Exceptional single-vineyard wines since 1962.

2014 Monte Bello, bottled June 2016

Lack of winter rain affected both vines and cover crops, limiting available nutrients. Still, the vines carried a decent-size crop, which ripened in September. Fermentations progressed slowly; extraction was decided by careful tasting. Malolactics started in tank, and finished by February. Merlot, which suffered in 2013, was strong in 2014. Petit verdot remained challenged by drought. This elegant vintage shows intense fruit, limestone earth, and firm acid. It will be enjoyable over the next fifteen to thirty years. EB (2/16)



Monte Bello Vineyard is located in the Santa Cruz Mountains, a stand-alone appellation separating the North Coast from the Central Coast, but not a part of either. We overlook San Francisco 32 miles to the north and the Pacific 15 miles to the west.

Elevation: 1300' to 2760'

Soils: Fractured limestone soils overlaid with decomposing Franciscan green stone mixed with clay/loam.

Age of Vines: Cabernet Sauvignon planted 1949-1995, 66.4 acres; Merlot planted 1968-1997, 12.8 acres; Cabernet Franc planted 1969-2008, 3.2 acres; Petit Verdot planted 1988 and 1990 at Torre vineyard, 2.1 acres; and planted 2008 at Rousten vineyard, 1.2 acres.

Training: Head-trained, cane pruned, on vertical trellis, vertical shoot positioned

Yields: 1.41 tons per acre

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