

RIDGE 2015

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

ESTATE

Monte Bello Parcels: 60 tons from 41.7 acres
 MONTE BELLO VINEYARD SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS
 81% CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 16% MERLOT, 2% PETIT VERDOT,
 1% CABERNET FRANC 13.5% ALCOHOL BY VOLUME

HISTORY

In 1886 the first blocks of the Monte Bello vineyard were planted and construction on the winery begun. The first vintage was the 1892. In the early 1940s, the last of the old vineyard was abandoned; in the late forties a few blocks were replanted. Those cabernet vines—now over sixty-five years old—produced the first Ridge Monte Bello (1962) and subsequent vintages until 1974. By then other abandoned blocks had been replanted and their fruit considered for use in the Monte Bello. A number of those consistently produced a more accessible wine that developed its full complexity earlier and these were combined as the “Santa Cruz Mountains.” With the 2008 vintage the name of this stylistically distinct wine became the Ridge Estate Cabernet Sauvignon, stressing the principal varietal and the Monte Bello estate vineyard as its source.

FIRST RIDGE SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS: 1978
 FIRST RIDGE ESTATE CABERNET SAUVIGNON: 2008

VINTAGE

Rainfall: 24.4 inches (below normal)

Bloom: Early June

Weather: Wet December & driest January on record; spring rains were below normal with warm temperatures. End of spring was cool with ocean fog and drizzle adding 3+ inches of rain allowing the vines to grow nicely. Moderate summer resulted in early ripening and we began picking in early September.

Harvest Dates: 9 September – 9 October

Grapes: Average Brix 24.2°

WINEMAKING

Fermentation: Grapes destemmed, and sorted; 100% whole berries fermented on the native yeasts. Pressed at six days. Natural malolactic initiated in tank, finished in barrel with additional 18 weeks of lees contact.

Selection: Seventeen of twenty estate parcels.

Barrels: 100% air-dried american oak barrels; (45% new, 17% one year old, 38% two and three years old).

Aging: Eighteen months in barrel

Sustainably farmed, hand-harvested, estate-grown grapes; destemmed and sorted; fermented on the native yeasts; full malolactic on the naturally occurring bacteria; 0.18g/L calcium carbonate to moderate high natural acidity in four of twenty distinct parcels; minimum effective sulfur (35ppm at crush, 59 ppm during aging); pad filtered at bottling. In keeping with our philosophy of minimal intervention, this is the sum of our actions.

2015 Cabernet Sauvignon, bottled 5/17

A dry, warm, winter brought an early start to the growing season but late spring storms severely cut yields. Warm days and nights through summer ripened the grapes for a September harvest. Pump-overs, during fermentation, were reduced to maintain balanced tannins. The most sensuous lots were selected during the assemblage tasting in January. The intense fruit of this fine vintage will support further development over the next fifteen years. EB (3/17)



SITE

Our Estate Vineyard is located in the Santa Cruz Mountains, a stand alone appellation separating the North Coast from the Central Coast, but not part of either.

Elevation: 1300' to 2670'

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

Age of Vines: Oldest 1949; further plantings in 1968/9, 1972, 1982, 1987/8, 1990, 1995, 1997/8, 2008.

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

Irrigation: Non-irrigated. (New vines receive drip irrigation until fully established)

Yields: 1.4 tons per acre

