

Cakebread Cellars



2014 Vaca Napa Valley

Our third vintage of Vaca, a red wine blend which is a blend of 96% cabernet sauvignon and 4% cabernet franc. The fruit came from two of our three Napa Valley hillside estates – Doggwood (52%) and Suscol Springs (48%) – on the western slopes of the Vaca Mountain Range, which forms the eastern boundary of Napa Valley. Both are high-elevation sites with steep, angled slopes that provide ideal sun exposures, and both boast well-drained, rocky, volcanic soils that yield grapes with deeply concentrated flavors.

Vineyards

Suscol Springs Vineyard, east of the town of Napa, is the coolest of our three Vaca Range estates. (Doggwood and Dancing Bear are the others.) Its vines are planted amidst rocky outcrops overlooking the Napa Valley floor. Doggwood Vineyard is located further north above Conn Dam near Napa's eastern ridgeline in a warm, bowl-like valley boasting multiple sun exposures. The elevation and thin, rocky soils of these sites naturally limit grape yields and produce small clusters with intense, powerful flavors.

Vintage 2014

2014 was another in a series of excellent vintages in northern California. After a rainy February, which rejuvenated the vines, a warm, dry spring led to early bud-break, flowering and grape set. Summer was mild with few heat spikes, allowing our cabernet sauvignon and cabernet franc grapes to ripen slowly and evenly while developing impressively concentrated flavors.

Winemaking

Our 2014 Vaca is a blend of multiple lots of wine from our Doggwood and Suscol Springs vineyards. Each lot was separately harvested, cold-soaked (to enhance color, flavor and tannin extraction), tank-fermented and barrel-aged prior to blending. Tank size, yeast strain, fermentation temperature and barrel type were tailored to the fruit character of each lot. The 2014 Vaca spent a total of 21 months aging in French oak barrels, 62% new, prior to bottling on July 21st, 2016.

Tasting Notes

Our 2014 Vaca displays wonderfully dense, layered aromas of ripe boysenberry, blackberry, blackcurrant, black fig and dark plum, with whiffs of loam, savory dried herbs and sweet oak. The sumptuous, deeply concentrated palate delivers plush, mouth-filling flavors of boysenberry, blackberry, black cherry and black plum supported by ripe, fleshy tannins and culminating in a long, harmonious finish featuring bright fruit, spice and mineral tones. This lush, delicious red is hard to resist now, but it will handsomely repay 8-10 years of cellaring.

Composition: 96% cabernet sauvignon, 4% cabernet franc

Vineyards: Napa Valley: 52% Doggwood, 48% Suscol Springs

Harvest dates: September 24th – October 8th, 2016

Fermentation: 100% in stainless steel tanks

Barrel aging: 21 months in French oak barrels, 62% new

Alcohol: 15.1

Total acidity: 0.66

pH: 3.71

Bottled: July 21st, 2016

Winemaker: Julianne Laks