

CORNERSTONE
STEPPINGSTONE
NAPA VALLEY & WILLAMETTE VALLEY
vineyard - vintage - variety

2009 Howell Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon

Composition: 95% Cabernet Sauvignon, Ink Grade Vineyard, Howell Mountain, 5% Merlot
Harvest: Each of the vineyards were harvested in September and October in perfect conditions.

Bottling Date: July 14th., 2011 Cases Produced: 400 cases

Bottling Analysis: Alcohol 14.9% v/v, pH, 3.82, T.A. 0.550 g/100mL

Howell Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon has been the signature wine of Cornerstone Cellars since our first vintage in 1991. Being one of the most sought after, ultra-premium winegrowing regions in the Napa Valley this wine reflects our vision of a classic mountain grown Cabernet Sauvignon.



Vintage driven and through individual barrel selection the Cornerstone Cellars Howell Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon is an expression of the unique mountain climate and distinguished for its immense concentration and powerful structure while retaining a sublime elegance. The principle factor that defines the Cornerstone Cellars Howell Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon is the vineyard source - Ink Grade Vineyard.

An organically certified vineyard, Ink Grade is located on the eastern side of Howell Mountain at an elevation of 1800 feet. At this elevation with its steep slopes and volcanic tufa soils, root growth is restricted resulting in Ink Grade Vineyard's hallmark small berries with intense fruit flavors, structure and robust tannins that makes wines from this vineyard so unique. To further enhance this wines incredibly rich layers of complexity a precise addition of our elegant Oak Knoll District Cabernet Sauvignon was made, balanced with a little lift from our Cameros Merlot which brings a unique harmony and adds even more depth and complexity.

Have you heard that every year is the same here in the Napa Valley? Don't you believe it! After the drama of the 2008 vintage with its roller coaster of weather-related challenges, we enjoyed a remarkably mild, blissfully uneventful 2009 growing season. That is until "Mother Nature" tossed us a curveball mid-October. We had the heaviest rainfall since the early 80's. This caused some concern, but for the most part, the tough-skinned, loose-clustered varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon weathered the storm. Beautiful Indian summer weather followed the rainy, humid conditions, allowing the grapes to reach optimum maturity. Presence of forward, bright fruit flavors with varietal character and phenological ripeness of the tannins was achieved without excessive ripeness. The corresponding wines have beautiful ripe fruit aromatics and flavors and are impeccably balanced with good acidity and alcohol levels.

Our 2009 Howell Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon is abundant in fragrant, ever-changing aromatics of concentrated dark fruit notes laced with cinnamon, forest floor and sweet cocoa. The palate is awakened with a full-bodied richness and texture giving a layered mouthfeel balanced with a lifted acidity. Lingering, complex tannins broaden out the finish to display the formidable structure and power of this Cabernet Sauvignon. Although quite approachable now, bottle ageing will further develop the bouquet and complexity. This wine possess immense concentration and power while retaining sublime elegance and will continue to age superbly over the next two decades.