

2011 Cornerstone Cellars Napa Valley Syrah, Stepping Stone



Traditionally made, the Stepping Stone by Cornerstone 2011 Syrah Napa Valley is all at once luscious, elegant, exuberant and classic. Grapes for our Cornerstone Cellars, Syrah, Stepping Stone were sourced from the Mogambo Vineyard of the Oak Knoll District, Napa Valley's most diverse winegrowing appellation, producing exceptional fruit coveted for its bright character and elegant charm. Finding the sweet spot between Napa's warmer upper-valley appellations and the cooler Los Carneros region to the south, the Oak Knoll District Appellation benefits from an ideal climate featuring consistent morning fog and cool nights. These moderating influences produce one of the longest growing seasons in the Napa Valley. To further enhance the expressive elegance of this wine and its overall balance a precise addition of our Oakville Merlot was made which brings a unique harmony.

Numerous challenges were provided to viticulturists and winemakers throughout the 2011 vintage. What began with a wet winter and spring continued with rainfall into June that delayed bloom and disrupted fruit set. The mild, steady warmth of the summer months lacked any significant temperature spikes allowing the fruit to ripen slowly, but uniformly with fantastic flavor development. Unusually cool and wet weather returned September and October pushing the vintage even later, but we were rewarded in the end with weeks of amazing weather that provided needed ripening time.

Our Stepping Stone by Cornerstone 2011 Syrah Napa Valley bears the obvious hallmarks of cool-climate Syrah, there is also richness to the fruit and suppleness to the tannins. Complex, yet distinctly varietal aromatics of black raspberry and red cherry mixed with cream leap with abundance from the glass. With hints of baking spice, white pepper, floral notes and earth to produce a potpourri bouquet to marry with the rich fruit palate. Flavors mirror the exotic aromas, but feature more focused fruit and somewhat less pepper and earthy notes. Layers of lifted, bright red and black fruits are balanced beautifully between silky, elegantly structured tannins and the juicy, lifted acidity creating an excitedly playful palate that is broad and expands into a long, refined, expressive finish. Sumptuous and drinkable right now, this Syrah will definitely age with the melding of all components to evolve beautifully into something truly special and unique.

Composition: 95% Syrah, Mogambo Vineyard, Oak Knoll Appellation; 5% Merlot, Oakville Station, Oakville
Harvest: Each of the vineyards was harvested early to mid-October
Aging: 18 months in French Burgundy oak barrels, 40% new, bottled 5/15/13, Cases Produced: 220
Bottling Analysis: Alcohol 14.5 %, pH 3.87, T.A. 0.610 g/100mL