

CHATEAU MONTELENA

Chateau Montelena's 19th century stone structure stands as a quality icon in Napa Valley, consistently producing some of the finest wines in California.



Potter Valley Riesling 2019

Mendocino County, California

ESTATE

Chateau Montelena's history is one of the deepest and most storied in the Napa Valley and California. Founded just north of Calistoga in 1882, it was one of the largest wineries in the state. Prohibition put an end to Montelena's winemaking, and the next major era began in 1968, when Jim Barrett purchased the estate. Jim fell in love with this exceptional property, blessed with a complex mix of soils, slopes and biodiversity of wildlife and fauna. He had a dream of creating wine at the level of the great First Growths of Bordeaux, and set about replanting the vineyard, outfitting the winery with modern equipment, and studying the processes necessary for farming and winemaking at the highest quality level.

WINE

This is a hidden gem in the portfolio. Chateau Montelena's take on Riesling certainly rewards some bottle age and culinary experimentation, and many are amazed at how easy it is to finish the bottle. The wine offers only a hint of sweetness, and opens up to pretty floral aromatics with orange zest and Bartlett pear elements. Balanced and lively, this is a terrific wine to enhance any occasion.

VINEYARD

Soils: Fruit is sourced from the floor of the tiny Potter Valley, which sits at 1,000 ft above sea level and benefits from alluvial fans that extend from the hillslopes above.

Farming: Chateau Montelena is committed to sustainable farming and produces wine in their solar powered winery. The Riesling vineyard is certified organic.

WINEMAKING

Grape Varieties: 100% Riesling

Fermentation: Temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks to allow the wines to ferment slowly and evenly.

Aging: 6 months in French oak and stainless steel.

Alcohol: 13.4% ABV

VINTAGE

The vineyard in Potter Valley tends to bud out slightly later than those in Napa Valley. Consequently, the late spring rains galvanized the period of growth as summer began. The excess moisture put a premium on managing the vine canopy to encourage dappled sunlight for ripening and discourage any unsavory pests as fall approached. Harvest was based primarily on flavor and balance in the fruit, and this year that balance was achieved at slightly higher ripeness compared to previous vintages. The result is an opulent, voluptuous, but still fresh and dynamic wine.

TASTING NOTE

"What a difference a year makes. Deciding not to harvest the 2018 Riesling due to smoke exposure in the vineyard was agonizing but it was the correct decision. For the first time since 1972, Chateau Montelena did not make Riesling, but the 2019 was well worth the wait. Not only is it delicious and certainly fills the void from the missed vintage, but the entire episode, capped with the comeback of an amazing wine, serves as yet another example of our unwavering commitment to integrity and honesty. The rhetoric of "high standards" and "no compromises" is bandied about, but the idea of crafting a wine contrary to our values wasn't even considered. Welcome back Riesling."

-Winemaker, Matt Crafton