

vinous

*Pahlmeyer*



## Brilliance in Napa Valley

by Antonio Galloni | January 12, 2018

"The 2016s are some of the most brilliant, captivating wines I have tasted from Pahlmeyer. In her first full vintage at Pahlmeyer, winemaker Bibiana González Rave crafted a stellar set of wines. The reds spent 30-45 days on the skins, which is longer than normal. In tasting, the 2016s are lush and powerful, but also have an extra degree of precision that is quite appealing. Vintage 2015 was much harder. Yields were down sharply. As a result, Pahlmeyer only bottled the Merlot and Proprietary Red among their red wines. That said, the bottled 2015s turned out better than I had expected."

## **2016 Pahlmeyer Cabernet Sauvignon Piece de Resistance**

### **95-98 Points**

The 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Piece de Resistance is a total stunner. A wine of extraordinary beauty, the 2016 is wonderfully complete and expressive. Black cherry, plum, lavender and spice come to life in this intense, structured Cabernet Sauvignon. Even with its obvious power, the 2016 remains nuanced and very nicely delineated. The Piece de Resistance is mostly Stagecoach, with a dollop of fruit from Rancho Chimiles. This dark, brooding Cabernet is going to need time to be at its very best, but like all of the 2016s here, it is incredibly harmonious for such a young wine. In a word: Stellar.

-- Antonio Galloni

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## **2016 Pahlmeyer Cabernet Sauvignon Raison d'Etre**

### **95-98 Points**

The 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Raison d'Etre, from Pahlmeyer's estate vineyard, is fabulous. Soft tannins and voluptuous dark fruit give the wine much of its racy personality. Dark red cherry, plum, tobacco, gravel and smoke flesh out in this striking, richly-textured Cabernet Sauvignon from Pahlmeyer. The integration of fruit, mountain tannin and 100% new oak is impressive for such a young wine. The 17% Cabernet Franc seems to bring out a distinctly red-toned flavor profile.

-- Antonio Galloni

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## **2016 Pahlmeyer Chardonnay (Napa Valley)**

### **95 Points**

Pahlmeyer's 2016 Chardonnay (Napa Valley) is bright, precise and nuanced, even though it underwent full malolactic fermentation and was aged in 100% new heavy toast Francois Freres barrels. Apricot, honey, dried flowers and lightly buttery notes get a kick of energy from the freshness of vintage and the personality of the mountain sites (Estate and Antica) that inform this bottling. Winemaker Bibiana Gonzalez-Rave has brought an added level of finesse to the Pahlmeyer Chardonnay.

-- Antonio Galloni

## **2016 Pahlmeyer Proprietary Red**

### **93-96 Points**

The 2016 Proprietary Red is another superb wine from Pahlmeyer. Bright floral notes and hillside tannins confer energy and tension to play off the intense red fruit. Powerful and voluptuous in the glass, the 2016 is shaping up to be a beauty. Like all of the Pahlmeyer wines, the Proprietary Red exudes concentration, but it also has a super-appelling aromatic top register that adds lift. The Proprietary Red is a blend of estate and purchased fruit.

-- Antonio Galloni

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## **2016 Pahlmeyer Chardonnay Savoir Faire**

### **93-95 Points**

The 2016 Chardonnay Savoir Faire emerges from two specific parcels on the estate planted with Hyde Wenté clone Chardonnay fermented in puncheon. Oily, rich and viscous on the palate, the 2016 possesses superb depth and intensity. Stylistically, the Savoir Faire is richer and denser than the Napa Valley Chardonnay, but qualitatively they are pretty close to each other, at least today. Apricot, chamomile, tangerine and buttery notes infuse the creamy finish.

-- Antonio Galloni

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## **2016 Pahlmeyer Merlot Estate**

### **90-93 Points**

Pahlmeyer's 2016 Merlot is gorgeous. Dark, supple and juicy, the 2016 brings together terrific fruit density with expressive aromatics and plenty of mountain structure underpinning it all. The 100% new French oak is very nicely integrated for such a young wine. Even at this early stage, the 2016 exudes balance. Black cherry, chocolate, mocha, new leather and dark spice meld into the huge finish. Readers should expect a fairly intense, structured Merlot that speaks to the personality of Atlas Peak.

-- Antonio Galloni