

vinous

Napa Valley's Extraordinary 2016 Cabernet Sauvignons

Pahlmeyer Estate Vineyard Reviews by Antonio Galloni.



Pahlmeyer Wine

Napa Valley enjoyed an extraordinary vintage in 2016. The bottled 2016s are every bit as viscerally thrilling as they were last year when I tasted them from barrel. Best of all, 2016 is a captivating vintage from top to bottom, with a bevy of stunning wines for every palate and budget, as well as a number of bottles that are destined to become icons.

Pahlmeyer 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Piece de Resistance

98

The 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Piece de Resistance is a gorgeous, vivid wine. Graphite, lavender, menthol, licorice and dark spices add myriad shades of nuance to a core of inky blue/blackish fruit. A powerful, virile wine, the 2016 captures all the best qualities of the year in its brooding, potent personality.

Pahlmeyer 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Raison d'Etire

98

The 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Raison d'Etire is dense and unctuous in the glass. Red cherry, iron, incense, tobacco, cedar and smoke show all of the savoriness that is such a signature of Atlas Peak. Even with all of its obvious concentration and power, the 2016 has plenty of structure, but the tannins are nearly buried by the sheer intensity of the fruit. Time in bottle will allow the wine to be at its most expressive. Next to the Piece de Resistance, the Raison d'Etire has more of a red fruit and savory-leaning profile.

Pahlmeyer 2016 Proprietary Red

97

The 2016 Proprietary Red is fabulous, just as it was from bottle. Silky, supple and also quite structured on the palate, the 2016 is a stunningly beautiful, vivid wine. Dark cherry/plum jam, bittersweet chocolate, rose petal, lavender, spice and menthol build into the huge, unctuous finish. There is so much to like.

Pahlmeyer 2016 Chardonnay Savoir Faire

94

The 2016 Chardonnay Savoir Faire is powerful, structured and savory, just as it was from barrel. Lemon confit, white flower, mint, chamomile and a dash of new French oak all run through this potent, dense Chardonnay from Pahlmeyer. I would give it another year or two in bottle. This dense, oily barrel-fermented Chardonnay has a lot to offer.

Pahlmeyer 2016 Merlot

94

The 2016 Merlot is fabulous. Rich, deep and explosive, with tremendous structure, the 2016 has a lot to offer. Black cherry, graphite, chocolate, lavender, mint, spice and savory herbs imbue the Merlot with stunning nuance. Far from an easygoing wine, Pahlmeyer's Merlot is deep and tannic, with plenty of mountain intensity. I would give it a few years in the cellar to allow some of the tannins to soften.