

Leo Steen

2017 Ascona Vineyard, Cabernet Franc - Santa Cruz Mountains

Release Date: Spring 2019

Production: 110 cases

Vineyard: Ascona Vineyard is located on a sloping plateau at an elevation of 2,400 feet in the Santa Cruz Mountains (home to such famed wineries as Ridge and Mt. Eden). Though Ascona gets abundant sunshine, its elevation keeps it cool. This, and the site's well-draining decomposed sandstone and shale soils, provide ideal conditions for growing Cabernet Franc, allowing the grapes to ripen without getting overly sweet.

Harvest: Though yields were low and the harvest was early, the 2017 growing season produced another exceptional vintage. To preserve the high natural acidity we prize in our wines, we picked our 1.5 acres of Cabernet Franc on September 27th at 23.7 Brix.

Fermentation: We fermented our Cabernet Franc in open-top tanks, using native yeast, and 30% whole cluster to underscore the varietal's herbal, savory side. We pressed using a basket press, and aged the wine for 10 months in 2/3 concrete egg to preserve freshness, and 1/3 French oak barrels for structure and mouthfeel.

Cellar Notes: This wine was bottled unfinned and unfiltered, in August of 2018.

Technical Notes:

Alcohol: 12.5%

pH: 3.78

Total acid: 5.8 g/l

Malolactic fermentation: 100%

Tasting Notes: This expressive wine displays a gorgeous nose of black Cherry and bitter sweet chocolate, as well as layers of menthol, lavender, and graphite. On the palate, ages worthy tannins underscore a savory mix of dark fruit, dried flowers and Kirsch.

Vision: This wine takes its inspiration from the wonderful Cabernet Francs of the Loire region. After looking for an ideal vineyard site for many years, I found what I was looking for at the family-owned Ascona Vineyard—an ideal mountaintop site for growing a savory and sophisticated expression of Cabernet Franc.