

# PRIDE

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## MOUNTAIN VINEYARDS

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#ONERANCHTWO COUNTIES

SPRING 2021



PRESENTING

## 2020 VIOGNIER

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While Pride's mountaintop estate is revered for our red wines, our sumptuous and elegant white wines garner their fair share of praise from those in the know. We understand why members of the trade may not be aware of our textured and vibrant whites - globally, a mere 150 cases of Viognier and 400 cases of Chardonnay make it into the trade each year. There is hardly enough wine to go around. Their exclusivity adds to their mystique. This is particularly true of our estate Viognier.

Credit for widely introducing Rhône varieties to California belongs to the Rhône Rangers and John Alban in particular. Alban began planting some of the first Viognier in California in the mid-80s after a stage in Condrieu. It is less known that Viognier was first planted in the Napa Valley by Bill Smith of La Jota Vineyards on Howell Mountain as early as 1981. He brought back cuttings from his first visit to Condrieu and grafted a small segment of Cabernet vines to the variety. He influenced Pete Minor of Spring Mountain's Ritchie Creek Vineyards to do the same. At this point, there were fewer than 50 acres of Viognier in the world.

Some 10 years later, in 1992, [wait for it...] after a visit to Condrieu, Jim Pride was inspired to plant Viognier. Jim was in France for Steve Pride's wedding. At the time, Steve was a geophysics professor in Paris, where he met his also-scientific-genius wife, Laurence. After the ceremony, the family took a trip to the Rhône Valley. Upon returning to Napa, Jim was discouraged to plant Viognier by other growers. On a good day, Viognier is finicky, low yielding, and only barely behaves itself. Nevertheless, Jim persevered and planted Pride Mountain's first 1.24 acres of Viognier in

our "Lower Mountain" vineyard block in 1993. Our cuttings came from Joseph Phelps, whose cuttings came from the original La Jota suitcase clones. It's OG Condrieu material.

Some California producers will tell you that Napa is too warm for Viognier. Indeed, those first pioneers at La Jota and Ritchie Creek no longer produce the wine. But at Pride, we're all in. We can do this because of our dynamic terroir. Those south-facing "Lower Mountain" vines planted in 1993 provide the mid-palate of our estate Viognier. They produce a dense, oily, and textured wine. Finding success with the variety on our mountaintop, in 1999, Jim planted an additional 2.29 acres in our "North Terraces" block. As the name indicates, these vines are not only on the Northern part of our property, but they are also north-facing. This allows the grapes to ripen slowly while retaining the acids that Viognier is so quick to give up. The juice from this vineyard is vibrant, lifted, and floral. This past winter (2020), Steve Pride added 3.1 acres of vines when replanting the "Wind Whistle" vineyard. When these vines mature, we anticipate that their east- and north-facing orientation, partially shaded by Douglas fir trees, will contribute perfectly balanced grapes to the estate blend.

There is another reason Pride is able to continue to craft what has become one of the most recognized new world Viognier. Our Rhône varieties have been Steve's dominant preoccupation for the last decade despite their small volume in our overall portfolio. Over the last 6 or 7 vintages, alongside vineyard manager David Orozco, Steve has experimented with various ways of training the Viognier clusters across the trellis to get more uniformly-perfect dappled sun exposure on the fruit. The goal has been to enhance the bright and juicy acidity of the harvested grapes. The mix of shade and sun has achieved the desired results, with vibrant acidity and a panoply of flavors that have inspired critic Jeb Dunnuck to remark, "It will easily pass undetected in a lineup of top Condrieu."

Making great wine is as much about great farming strategy as anything else. When you visit us at the ranch and walk the vineyards, you will see some of the most unique and anomalous trellising and canopy management. There is no textbook with a name for it. It's the Pride method. And it is born out of trial-and-error over 30 years of farming our unique mountaintop ranch. When you have the opportunity, please seek out our prized white wines. Feel free to send us an email and we will do our best to find, if not a case, at least a couple bottles for your restaurant wine list or cellar. When we have the opportunity to come see you, we'll pop a bottle of our Viognier next to a Vernay, Cuilleron, or Villard so we may experience the best that the noble grape has to offer. Until then, here's to drinking well...





PRESENTING

## 2019 CHARDONNAY

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After purchasing the Summit Ranch, Jim Pride crafted the first bottles of Pride Chardonnay from estate vines in 1991. Like Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, we have been growing Chardonnay from the very beginning. With time and a changing climate, most of our Chardonnay vines have been replanted with Bordeaux varieties that are more suitable to the mountaintop. Nevertheless, we have a deep love for elegant Chardonnay, not to mention a huge following for the green-labeled wine we affectionately call our "Napa Chard." While there is still some Sonoma fruit from the estate in the blend, we have looked further south, off the mountain for most of the grapes.

In order to maintain a Pride-style of Chardonnay - textured and floral with bright acidity, leaning towards the tree and stone fruit spectrum of flavor - we sought out some of the coolest climate vineyards in the Napa Valley. Our farming partners include Materra Vineyards in the Oak Knoll District and Poseidon's Vineyard in Napa's Carneros region.

Materra is a family-owned, certified Napa Green vineyard off Big Ranch Road. It sits adjacent to some of the Valley's classic estates, including Monticello and Robert Biale. We love the Oak Knoll District for Chardonnay because fog and maritime breezes off the San Pablo Bay extend the cool climate growing season. Like our mountaintop, the daytime temperatures are roughly 10° cooler than those found up valley. Additionally, Oak Knoll experiences significant diurnal swings at night, up to 30° cooler than the daytime peaks, making for refreshing wines. On the eastern side of the district, Materra's terroir is influenced by the gravel and silty clay-loam of the Napa River. The gravel helps with warmth and drainage, while the clay retains moisture and ensures the overall microclimate doesn't get too hot. Between the two sites, according to winemaker Sally Johnson, Materra provides ripe, beautiful fruit and floral lift to the Pride cuvée.



Complimenting the gorgeous Materra fruit is organically-farmed Chardonnay from the family-owned Poseidon's Vineyard in Carneros. Carneros is the coolest of Napa's AVAs with less diurnal variation - summer temperatures rarely exceed 80°. It is influenced by marine winds that blow through the San Pablo Bay and Petaluma Gap. The soils are primarily calcium-rich clay and we all know that Chardonnay loves calcium! The bayside influence is particularly profound at Poseidon. Here, a stone's throw from Cuttings Wharf and the banks of the Napa River, the vines grow on an elevated gravelly geological bench

created by the former riverbank of Carneros Creek. The wines produced are mineral and taught with racy acidity that provides the backbone of this glorious Chardonnay.

Chardonnay is both a reflection of place and the winemaker's hand. Our Chardonnay is hand-harvested and whole cluster pressed. After settling, the juice is exposed to a small amount of oxygen at the start of fermentation so that the most volatile phenols oxidize and the resulting wine is less sensitive to oxygen. Fermentation takes place in neutral French barrels,

with up to 10% new wood included. Far from over-oaking the wine, barrel fermentation results in a more harmonious integration of oak flavor and a more wholistic textural experience. Only a portion of the wine goes through malolactic fermentation, which we stop at about 30% conversion with the addition of SO<sub>2</sub>. This partial malo preserves the vibrant acidity in the finished wine.

We know there is a lot of good Chardonnay out there. With the 400 cases released to the trade, globally, each year, we don't make enough wine to be on everyone's wine list. But with any luck, this wine speaks to you and your passion for family-owned, handcrafted, small lot cuvées. We hope that you enjoy the newly released 2019 vintage of this stellar bottle of wine. See you on the mountain or table side at your restaurant as soon as possible.



EST. 1872

## *historic Summit Ranch*

You've probably noticed that our wines carry a Napa-Sonoma designation. For those of you not familiar with the backstory, our property sits at the crest of the Mayacamas Mountains on the Napa-Sonoma county line. Most of the wines are estate, but because we rest in two AVAs, we cannot put the "Estate" moniker on our wines. Far from regional blends, Pride wines are emblematic of our mountaintop terroir and unique position both within two counties and also as a place unto ourselves.

The property is rich in history. It was first planted to grapes in 1885 and construction of the historic Summit Winery was completed in 1890. With the stone ruins of this ghost winery, Pride is among the oldest winery sites on the Mayacamas Mountain ridge. It's hard to track the entire history of the property. Residing within two counties, each county assessor thought it was the other's responsibility to oversee the estate, resulting in long periods of



PRIDE MOUNTAIN VINEYARDS





lapsed record-keeping. The Summit Winery burned down sometime during prohibition - accidentally-on purpose - having been planted to orchards as the opportunities for wine production waned. Since roads to the top of Spring Mountain were not paved until the 1950s and 60s, it was a hard property to manage logistically and commercially. After a period of successive owners, the ranch was purchased by the Gamble family in the 1960s, who took it upon themselves to replant the property to vines. Thus the modern era of Summit Ranch farming was initiated.

The modern era of winemaking began shortly after Pride Mountain founders, Jim and Carolyn Pride, bought the ranch from the Gambles in 1990. Over the next 14 years, Jim and Carolyn grew the property into the iconic estate that it is today. Jim's passing and siblings Steve and Suzanne's purchase of the ranch took place in 2004. This coincided with the only winemaker transition that Pride has experienced. Today, Sally Johnson oversees winemaking with Steve Pride. Over the years, the style of wines has gone through a subtle yet important transformation. The use of new oak has been significantly reduced so that the nuances of place and varietal character are more present. They have Sally's hallmark wine growing all over them: sumptuous and generous, yet at the same time vibrant, floral, spicy, and savory with textured mountain tannins.









ABOUT

## OUR MOUNTAIN VITICULTURE

1

### HEAT SUMMATION + RIPENING

At 1800-2100 feet elevation, the altitude mitigates the diurnal tendencies of the valley floor. Thus, there is less day to night time variation in temperature, with a generally cooler overall climate, and a longer growing season

2

### PHENOLIC DEVELOPMENT

We receive about 25% more UV light than vineyards on the valley floor. Most of our vines are planted with some degree of southerly exposure, allowing the grapes to soak up the sun. This is what defines the "mountain character" of our wines: bold and elegant tannins and deep color extraction.

3

### FARMING TO SPECIFIC SITES

At the crest of the Mayacamas Mountain range, there is incredible diversity of soil. We divide the ranch into 34 different vineyard blocks and plant rootstocks and clones to best match each site.

4

### TEAM CONSISTENCY

Our vineyard crew of 15 is part of the multi-generational Pride family. There are no seasonal workers to train. We employ a full-time, year-round, knowledge-based crew to farm to Steve Pride's specifications.



# CABERNET SAUVIGNON

AS ONE OF SPRING MOUNTAIN'S STANDOUT CABERNETS, THIS BEAUTY EMBODIES PURITY, AROMATICS, CONCENTRATION, AND FINESSE. IT IS THE LINCHPIN OF OUR PORTFOLIO.

## 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon

*Black currant, Morello cherry, and just-ripe black mission fig dance with aromas of sage brush, nag champa incense, candied violets, star anise, and black truffle. The palate is dense and compact with incredible structure. The generous fruit of the nose gives way to power and intensity with aromas of the forest, while layers of complex black and red fruit, sandalwood, bay, and graphite linger with velvety tannins on the long and dynamic finish.*

91 POINTS, JEB DUNNUCK

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# MERLOT

THE QUINTESSENTIAL MOUNTAIN MERLOT AND AN ICON FOR THE CATEGORY, OUR MERLOT SHOWS THE SERIOUSNESS OF MOUNTAIN FRUIT WITH VOLUPTUOUS, SENSUAL TEXTURE AND REFINEMENT.

## 2018 Merlot

*Incredibly perfumed and lifted with black cherry, black raspberry, sage brush, garrigue, fresh tobacco, licorice, earl grey tea, violet, and lavender. The palate is round and chewy with a velvety middle and eternal finish. Hints of oak frame the wine and a strong bead of black volcanic minerality persists alongside the glorious fruit. Delicious now, this mountain Merlot will reward time in the cellar and evolve elegantly.*

93 POINTS, VINOUS



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# CABERNET FRANC

ONE OF PRIDE'S CULT BOTTLINGS, THIS LIMITED RELEASE SHOWS ALL OF THE FLOWERS AND SPICE OF FRANC WITH THE UTMOST GRACE. ALLOCATED TO STRONG SUPPORTERS OF THE ESTATE.

## 2018 Cabernet Franc

*The wine is intensely aromatic with ripe red raspberry and currant comingling with blackberry and black mission fig. Graphite, cedar, and bay leaf blend with hibiscus flowers, bergamot citrus, and exotic spices like star anise and Szechuan pepper. The palate is rich and layered without being heavy. The fruit is framed and balanced by textured and supple tannins. The finish is persistent and long, driven by vibrant fruit and spices.*

94 POINTS, VINOUS



# SYRAH

REDOLENT OF MOUNTAIN ROCKS, PURPLE FLOWERS, AND WILD GAME, OUR SYRAH TAKES IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL WITH DENSE FRUIT AND LAYERS UPON LAYERS OF FLAVOR AND AROMATICS.

## 2018 Syrah

*Inspired by the greats of Côte Rôtie, Viognier is cofermented with Syrah to amplify the aromatics and color. With notes of blackberry, mulberry, Niçoise olive, cured meat, truffle and black pepper, this wine has dense texture that is also lifted, with integrated tannins and lots of power.*



94 POINTS, VINOUS

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# VIOGNIER

A BENCHMARK FOR NEW WORLD VIOGNIER, THIS WINE SHINES ALONGSIDE THE CLASSICS OF CONDRIEU AND VIOGNIER THE WORLD OVER. ALLOCATED IN SMALL QUANTITIES SEASONALLY.

## 2020 Viognier

*Exotic scents of honeysuckle, orange oil, lemon curd, tarragon, and white peppery spice are layered with aromas redolent of the ocean breeze. The palate is pristine with ripe citrus, nectarine, and crunchy tropical fruits. Flavors of fresh cut garden herbs and candied ginger add complexity to the medium weight texture. The balancing acidity leaves your mouth watering with a long, savory, saline finish.*



NEW RELEASE - NOT YET RATED

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# CHARDONNAY

STEPPING OFF THE MOUNTAIN TO INCLUDE THE COOL SURROUNDS OF CARNEROS AND OAK KNOLL, OUR CHARDONNAY BALANCES LUSH AND ROUND WITH MINERAL AND BRIGHT TO REVEAL THE WHOLE PACKAGE.

## 2019 Chardonnay

*The 2019 Chardonnay hails from Napa's Carneros and Oak Knoll AVAs, where wind and fog contribute to much cooler growing conditions. Lemon curd and honey crisp apple are lifted by linden flower, a subtle flintiness, and zested ginger spice. White peach, fines herbes, and sweet cream covered brioche layer the mid-palate while bright lemon-orange citrus and mineral bring refreshing zeal to carry through the textured and sumptuous finish.*



92 POINTS, VINOUS



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