



Harvest & Varietal Information

VINTAGES: 2015, 2016

VINEYARD LOCATIONS: 41% Spring Mountain District, 59% Valley Floor, 100% Napa Valley

RELEASE DATE: August 1, 2020

The back label says it all: *Harvested, Vinified, and Blended for Freshness, Lightness, Complexity and Balance*. Our intention with the Cain Cuvée hasn't wavered since the very first, more than thirty years ago. And in 1998, it became even more focused with the inception of blending two vintages.

The NV16 illustrates perfectly the way in which two vintages blended together can complement one another. 2015 was a moderately warm year with very low yields, while 2016 had higher yields and was cooler. 2016 gave us some lovely, light, perfumed wines, while 2015 plumps it up with roundness and warmth. The signature of the Cain Vineyard comes through clearly, while the vineyards in Rutherford, Oakville, and Carneros each contribute their part.

The result, NV16 Cain Cuvée, has a bouquet of raspberries, red cherries, forest, and earth, but the best is the palate. This one steps lightly and with elegance—mouthfilling without being heavy, it slips down easy to a delicate, clean finish. Exactly what we want.

Lately, I've been writing about Nature and Nurture. So far here, I've just talked about Nature. Here, I'll focus on Nurture.

Perhaps most important, is the choice of when to harvest. For our Cain Cuvée, we always watch the ripening carefully, and focus to grab those grapes just in time, before the freshness fades and it's too late. The growers we work with are always pleasantly surprised when Cain is often the very first to pick. For Cain Cuvée, this is *de rigueur*—it's the rule.

And then, just as important, is the way we handle the grapes, the vinification, and the *élevage*.

It's all about delicacy—no push to create intensity here—true intensity resides in the vineyard—and then to handle a delicate wine, delicately.

In the end, we can see that both Nature and Nurture contribute to the whole, which is why the Cain Cuvée can be like no other. It stands alone.

Christopher Howell, Wine-Grower