



Harvest & Varietal Information

Vintages: 2022, 2023

Vineyard Locations: 40% Oakville, 25% lower slope of Mt Veeder, Napa Valley
25% Alexander Valley, 10% Spring Mountain District

Release Date: June 30, 2024

Those who don't know the Cain Cuvée might be surprised to discover a taste profile atypical of Napa or indeed, most North Coast reds. Here's a red wine that sits lightly on the tongue and is refreshing to drink with a meal. Completely dry, with nicely structured natural acidity, together with just enough bitterness and palate-cleansing tannins to prepare your mouth for the next bite of whatever you might be having for lunch, dinner or even just a midday snack. Another surprise: Indeed, it is truly less than 14% alcohol.

Those who do know the Cain Cuvée will know that, despite its relative lightness, this is a wine of complexity and one that ages gracefully for a decade and more. In a word, it is a serious wine. They'll also tell you that the "NV" stands for "Non Vintage," because, since 1998, the Cain Cuvée has been a blend of vintages – predominantly just two – and that the numerals are sequential, denoting each successive bottling of Cain Cuvée. Two last points that most will know: Merlot usually makes up a plurality of the blend; and a significant proportion of the Cain Cuvée has often been grown in the Cain Vineyard, contributing to its distinctive exotic herbal and forest perfume.

The Cain Cuvée is specifically harvested and vinified to be a lighter, more refreshing wine. That means we pick a bit earlier, and moderate the extraction of the grapes to get just what we need and nothing more. Then, too, the élevage is not about the flavor of oak, but rather it's about the slow, gentle development of the wine as it breathes and clarifies in the barrel. These days we often hear that our colleagues in Napa and Sonoma are now (finally) picking for freshness – as opposed to those heavy rich sweet wines of their very recent past....in some cases, this might be true.

The NV23, the 26th iteration of our NV series of Cain Cuvée, takes a walk beyond the confines of Napa Valley proper, to include two distinct vineyards of Cabernet Sauvignon, one grown on the cool, west-facing lower slopes of Mount Veeder, still within the Napa Valley AVA, and another grown in the warmest part of Alexander Valley, Sonoma County. Overall, the bulk of this wine grew in Napa, including a tasty bit grown up on Spring Mountain, mostly in the Cain Vineyard. The result is a wine of which we can truly write the words: Lightness and Freshness.

While we abjure any attempt to inform others of what they could taste for themselves, we might suggest that you look for aromas of fennel, licorice, motor oil, roses and violets, all flowing across the palate with a gentle, sweet entry that evolves surprisingly toward a clean, crisp, mouthwatering finish. This is what Cain Cuvée is all about. I only wish we had more.

Chris Howell Wine-Grower

About Cain Vineyard & Winery

Cain Vineyard & Winery overlooks St. Helena from the top of Spring Mountain in the western mountains of the Napa Valley. The estate vineyard is planted to the classic set of five varieties : Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Malbec, and petit Verdot.