Napanook

Upon his discovery of the 124-acre Napanook vineyard in 1981, Christian Moueix founded Dominus Estate to produce one of Napa Valley's most acclaimed cabernet sauvignons. The vineyard's volcanic, well-draining soils are specifically suited to growing Bordeaux varietals, and winemaker Tod Mostero vinifies each dry-farmed parcel separately. Attention to detail is unparalleled, with minimal intervention allowing the terroir to fully express itself in the wine.

VARIETALS:
92% Cabernet Sauvignon
4% Cabernet Franc
4% Petit Verdot
NEW OAK: 20%

NAPANOOK 2023

OVERVIEW

Napanook is made solely from grapes grown at the historic Napanook Vineyard in Yountville, Napa Valley. The wine is blended from blocks in the vineyard that were carefully selected for their lively fruit, soft tannins and early maturing characteristics.

WINEMAKING

Enjoying a temperate climate, the vineyard's volcanic, well-draining soils are specifically suited to growing Cabernet Sauvignon and the other Bordeaux varietals which compose the Dominus Estate wines. The soil is gravelly and clay loam. Meticulous efforts are made throughout the seasons to produce grapes of the highest quality for Dominus Estate wines.

During the winter season, precise cane pruning ensures ideal cluster spacing for optimal fruit ripening. Dry farming relies on a deep root system to take advantage of natural water sources from rain and underground supplies. Cluster thinning optimizes quality through yield regulation.

Rinsing the grapes 10 to 15 days before harvest removes dust and enhances the purity of the fruit. Hand-picking with small french shears instead of harvest knives minimizes bruising and vine damage. Small harvest baskets preserve the integrity of the clusters as they are transported to the winery. The sunny side of the vines is picked a few days before the shady side respecting perfect maturity.

Minimal intervention and restraint throughout the process of grape berry selection, fermentation and aging preserve the character of the fruit. The resulting wines convey the very personality of the vineyard. Dominus winemaking includes separate lot-by-lot fermentation. Cluster sorting by hand is complemented by an optical berry sorting system. Gentle pumping-over extracts aromas, color and tannins. Vertical wine press at low pressure delicately releases components from the skin. Racking barrel to barrel in 100% French oak removes sediment and assures clarification of the wine during aging.

97 POINTS
JAMESSUCKLING.COM

Aromas of blueberries, ash and stones with hints of blackberries, orange peel and chocolate. It's medium-bodied with medium-round tannins that are polished and velvety but always in check. Cedar and baking spices like nutmeg on the palate. Lovely soft and silky texture with a long finish. Enchanting and delicious. 92% cabernet sauvginon, 4% cabernet franc and 4% petit verdot. From organically grown grapes. Drink now or hold.

94 POINTS
THE WINE PALATE

The 2023 Napanook is composed of 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Cabernet Franc, and 4% Petit Verdot. Deep garnet-purple in color, it strides confidently out of the glass with bold notes of black cherries, warm cassis, and tilled soil, giving way to hints of wild sage, graphite, black pepper, and underbrush. Full-bodied, the palate delivers a solid backbone of grainy tannins and plenty of freshness to back up the muscular black fruit layers, finishing long and earthy.

93 POINTS
vinous

The 2023 Napanook is deep, bold and luscious right out of the gate. Black cherry, lavender, dried herbs and graphite fill out its mid-weight frame quite nicely. I expect the 2023 will drink well with minimal cellaring, as it is already quite open and doesn't quite have the tannic palate presence of more important years.

92 POINTS
JEB DUNNUCK

Deep purple-hued and the second wine of this reference point domaine, the 2023 Napanook offers classic currants, leafy tobacco, graphite, and underbrush notes in a medium-bodied, very pretty, pure, elegant, and graceful style. Based on 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Cabernet Franc, and 4% Petit Verdot and aged 20 months in 20% new French oak, it has ripe and polished tannins, perfectly integrated acidity, and a great finish. This classic, classy Cabernet will keep for 10-15 years. Drink 2025-2040.