

Headhunter | Old Vine Carignan

Mendocino AVA



The Story: Virginia natives, Brian and Sarah Grzybowski, make single-varietal, single-vineyard wines in Berkeley, California. They use native yeasts and very minimal intervention in the cellar. Oak is seldom used and the wines undergo no fining or filtering. They work with organic farmers to source the fruit they use to make a very different style of California wines. The winemaking is greatly informed by the time Brian spent in France as a youth. Unfortunately, production is tiny.

Vineyard: Trimble Vineyard in Hopland, California. Vines were planted in 1942, goblet trained, dry-farmed, and certified organic. There's a huge ridge that begins just north of Cloverdale and ends just before Old Hopland and that ridge really protects this area. The pass that carries Hwy 101 and the Russian River creates a fairly constant breeze and the ridge collects cloud cover. This area is cooler than the rest of Mendocino proper and harvest begins about 3 weeks later than most folks taking into account that grapes are picked around 21-22 Brix and lots of people still harvest around 28 Brix. Harvest was the 3rd week of September.

Vinification: Fermented whole-cluster in stainless steel with indigenous yeast for 10 days. Shallow punchdowns three-times daily allow clusters to stay whole and a little carbonic maceration.

Ageing: 18 months in half neutral oak and half stainless steel.

Everything else you want to know about this wine: In Brian's opinion, California is so warm that oak barrels allow too much oxygen into the wine which makes wines even fatter than they are already apt to be, hence his choice to age half of the wine in tank. 2014 was a dry, hot year so harvest was early, but definitely not as early as others in the area. Overall sulphur is low at around 50 ppm total, but by now there's probably no active Sulphur.

Varietal: 100% Carignan

Region: North Coast AVA, CA

Winemaker: Brian and Sarah Grzybowski

Vines Age: 58 years

Production: 1,920 bottles

Farming: Working Organic

Soil: Hopland Loam

Le Storie
Wines