Hatton Daniels | Dornfelder

Mokelumne Glen Vineyard | Mokelumne River AVA

The Story: This is a true story of expecting to kiss a frog and finding beautiful wines and great people. Hatton Daniels is a tiny Napa winery working with unusual varietals: Dornfelder, Blaufränkisch, Zweigelt, and Malvasia Bianco, in addition to Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon. Dan Fishman is the winemaker, who in 2007 worked at Calvert Woodley Fine Wine & Spirits in DC. He makes some of the most interesting California wines we have tasted in a long time. Production ranges from 25-115 cases so there is not much to go around, but they are worth seeking out.

Vineyard: Mokelumne Glen Vineyard in Lodi, CA. Viticultural practices include cane pruning (seldom used in the Lodi area) and expanded vertical trellis, and a dual irrigation system utilizing the most favorable benefits of both drip and sprinkler. Grapes were harvested at the same time as the rose picking.

Vinification: Half of the clusters were destemmed and placed in tank while the other half were pressed whole-cluster until 60% of the juice was released. What was left in the press was transferred into the tank with the other half allowing effectively a double skin-to-juice ratio and 50% of stems in the ferment. Maceration was 12 days, fermentation was with native yeasts, with daily pumpovers and without punchdowns to manage the tannins and color.

Ageing: Aged 4 months in neutral barrel.

Everything else you want to know about this wine: The wine was bottled without fining, filtration, or added sulfur. Due to daily pumpovers and no punchdowns, the wine is incredibly dark in color despite the early harvest and it is not overly extracted or tannic. Hatton Daniels describes this wine as their most unique red wine to date due to the picking of the Dornfelder for this wine at the same time as the rose harvest yet the result is robust, refreshing, and intriguing.

Varietal: 100% Dornfelder

Region: Lodi, CA

Winemaker: Dan FIshman

Vines Age: Various

Production: 576 bottles

Farming: Working Organic

Soil: Tokay Sandy Loam

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Wines