2015 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon

In the late 1960s we bottled a few cases of Cabernet Sauvignon for friends and family. Those first few cases of homemade wine inspired the vision for our estate winery, Alexander Valley Vineyards and our flagship wine Cabernet Sauvignon.

The western drought continued in 2015 and was once again the topic of much discussion. A cool spring, rain at bloom and hot July along with the continued effects from the lack of rain contributed to lower yields. As a result the grapes had terrific concentration and superb fruit flavors at harvest. After harvest the different lots were de-stemmed, fermented separately, then aged in 25% new American and French oak barrels for 14 months.

The 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon is a classic Alexander Valley wine with medium body, great fruit flavors and smooth, structured tannins. Winemaker Kevin Hall added 11% Merlot for structure, a touch of Cabernet Franc for floral notes and Malbec and Petit Verdot for color.

There are aromas of black cherry, cassis, plum, slight blueberry vanilla, oak and chocolate. In the glass there are rich flavors of cherry, cassis, blackberry, spice and chocolate. This is a fruit forward wine with nice balance and a long, juicy finish.

Food Pairing: Grilled or pan seared beef, lamb or tuna is a classic. For an unexpected pairing serve with a caramelized onion and blue cheese tart as an appetizer.
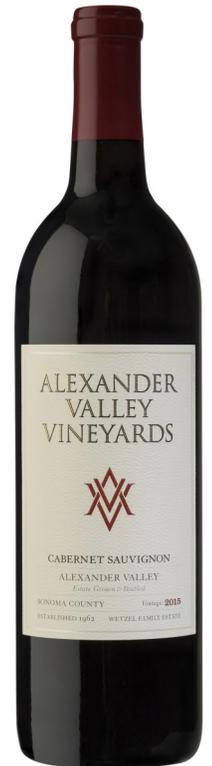
Accolades: 2015: **94 points** - *Beverage Dynamics*

2015: **Most Popular Cabernet Sauvignon -** *Wine & Spirit Annual Restaurant Poll*

Profile:
- **Loads of dark spicy fruit**
- **Polished, yet structured**

About Alexander Valley Vineyards:

Harry and Maggie Wetzel purchased the 600 acres that is home to AVV in 1962 from the heirs of valley namesake Cyrus Alexander. The Wetzel Family Estate stretches from the banks of the Russian River to the Mayacamas Mountains and today the 4th generation of the family calls it home. From the beginning the family has celebrated the unique place they call home by producing wines showcasing the terroir of the Alexander Valley.   We are proud to be celebrating our 40th anniversary at the winery in 2015.

Technical Data:

Grapes: Cabernet Sauvignon 83%, Merlot 11%, Cabernet Franc 2%, Malbec 2%, Petit Verdot 2%

Harvest: September 4 - October 7, 2015

Closure: 750ml cork   375ml stelvin

Alcohol: 14.0%   **pH**: 3.61 **TA:** 6.7 g/L

First Vintage: 1975   **SRP:** $22

UPC: 0-85798 02872-6 750ml

0-85798 02871-9 375ml

ALEXANDER VALLEY VINEYARDS

So how did AVV make a Cabernet back in the '60s prior to the start of the winery? Early on the Wetzels planted Cabernet Sauvignon on the property and sold it to other growers. But, there was always a desire to make their own wine from their grapes.   From the beginning Harry and Maggie Wetzel decided that this was to be a family made wine that reflected their unique property. Katie recalls one of her first crushes: " I had to de-stem the grapes and then pull any I missed from the basket press".   Hank remembers an early trade of their Cabernet grapes with a neighboring winery for one of their first barrels. Filled with AVV Cabernet Sauvignon the barrel aged in the cool adobe.

When time to bottle, the adobe "cellar" was converted to the adobe "bottling line". Family and friends were called in to hand bottle and cork those early vintages.   Harry and Maggie made sure that all pitched in, learning as they went.   John started out filling bottles as a nine year old on the small bottling line set up in the   historic adobe. Everyone looked forward to working those early bottling lines and eventually Linda would convince college roommates to come and help with later vintages. One just wrote and reminded her of how much fun they had during those early bottlings. Finally, everyone helped to apply the first of the Alexander Valley Vineyards labels.

So what varietals did the family bottle prior to the 1975 start of AVV? Just one: Cabernet Sauvignon.   Not a day goes by without someone asking the Wetzel Family about their favorite wine. Now you know why they always answer: "Cabernet Sauvignon is our sentimental favorite".

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