



August 2020 | Call of the Wild

What a year it has been, friends!

Never in our memories can we find anything like 2020 in our lifetimes. There have been swings left and right, valleys high and low, with life mirroring the picture above—a series of peaks and valleys with not a view to the Pacific Ocean to be found. There was a time when such a journey would be considered an “adventure” to be taken in stride. However, this path has turned out to be less adventure and more of a cut scene from *The Call of the Wild*—we feel like Buck the dog stolen from the comfort of home to be dropped into the abyss of uncertainty and overwhelming life challenges. While spurned by the weight of the challenge, we remain vigilant in our pursuit to find the path to resolution and a return to home, all the while knowing that home will never be what it once was.

Speaking of wild moments, we move into our Autumn Allocation featuring the 2018 La Cinghiale GSM Red Blend.

Both the tusked Eurasian boar and the domestic European pig were not indigenous to California, having been imported and subsequently left to roam feral to interbreed among the species, forming what is referred to today as the Californian wild boar. The tusked boar can be found deep in the West Sonoma County mountains and represents the rugged independence found in the heart of every Northern Californian winegrower. Ferocious protectors of kin and land alike, the wild boar is an animal to revere and steer clear, lest you get a run-down by a 1,000 pound beast.

Appropriately named, the new vintage of this wine is a monster effort not to miss, commanding attention from the onset and respect through time in glass.

Your Allocation

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as well.

(707) 595-3803

2018 La Cinghiale GSM Red Blend, Kick Ranch Vineyard, Sonoma County

Two decades ago, Healdsburg wasn't the glamorous or glitzy gentrified version the city is today, as it was more farming and winemaking family's moving at a slower pace in life, making good on more than a century of agrarian traditions. It was here where many the local farmers and winemakers gathered at a popular watering hole, John & Zeke's Bar, to dust off the boots, cool a warm brow, and engage in healthy debate regarding the day's dealings. The mix of characters alike was a reflection of the winegrowing culture where Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Zinfandel were king, and Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvedre were the rigour of traditional growers. A new generation of aspirant winemakers that took up the cause of producing the Rhone varieties (whites included!) in places like Dry Creek and the northern edges of the Russian River Valley AVA.

Small lot Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre and the blended GSM captured our hearts in those early days coming up in the industry. Grown to perfection and in the right locations, there was magic in the bottle of these off-variety productions that offered a range

of quaffable, aromatic beauties to hedonistic ink bombs that everyone seemed to pan at our *Full Moon* wine parties, despite not a drop being spared in the bottles of the heartier efforts. It was, particularly during the late 1990's, with Zinfandel and GSM productions that we witnessed a cultural shift in production from lower alcohol wines to more fruit forward, fully-ripened renditions. While we find great pleasure in debating the attributes of both style preferences, there is an argument to be established in any Northern California, wine-country bar that California began to define itself outside of traditional French-based wine-making practices during this period, and much to the flavorful benefit of the consuming public. That's where we come in with our version of GSM.

Croix Estate enthusiasts have come to recognize that we are not shy about growing fruit to its optimal ripeness. However, where there is ripeness, there is balance and harmony, and our Croix Estate 2018 La Cinghiale GSM Red Blend is no exception on both fronts.

To the Northwest of Cazadero Station lies a hidden foot trail that leads backcountry hikers on what is

perhaps the most breathtaking, yet dangerous, treks out to the Annapolis ridgeline overlooking the coast at Stuart's Point. Experienced hunters say the wild boar is more dangerous to hunt than most animals. Weighing in at 600+ pounds at full maturity, the males are territorial of all intruders and the females violently protective of their young. To the casual hiker, approaching the Kings Ridge section of the hike requires a soft shoe and keen hearing, lest you encounter the ferocity of these feral beasts. The boar was not indigenous to California, yet it has managed to survive and thrive untamed in the densely wooded, northern regions of the state. A testament to the strength and character of the species.

This wine is rich, powerful, and sure to be a crowd pleaser among the novice and the connoisseur alike. White-oak smoke, black pepper, ripe red fruit and Cape jasmine waft from the glass drawing one's curiosity. The palate is full bodied with balanced tannins, blackberry, sweet cassis, espresso and semi-sweet cocoa. Approachable now, yet capable of ageing gracefully for a decade. In a word: delicious!

8 Barrels Produced

List Price—\$60 | Your Privileged Price—\$54 | By The Case—\$51



94-96+ points

(Finished Barrel Sample)

“2018 La Cinghiale is a Southern Rhone-like blend of 43% Syrah, 39% Grenache, and the rest Mourvedre, all from the Kick Ranch Vineyard in Sonoma County, that was completely destemmed and spent 18% in 60% new French oak. This inky barrel sample delivers a knockout bouquet of blue and black fruits, ground black pepper, licorice, smoked meat, and violets. Rich and powerful on the palate, it has terrific balance, a light, elegant texture, good acidity, and present yet polished tannins. A gorgeous blend from this estate, it should benefit from a year or two of bottle age and drink brilliantly for 8-10 years. This is stunning stuff in the making!”

Jeb Dunnuck, 5/21/2020

In 2013, after being approached by Robert Parker to join The Wine Advocate team, Jeb wrote full-time for the Wine Advocate. Described as a younger version of himself by Robert M. Parker Jr., Dunnuck was the leading reviewer for California, Washington and Southern France from 2013 to 2017, publishing more reviews than any other professional reviewer. In 2017, Jeb decided to leave the Wine Advocate and go back to his roots as an independent wine critic, launching his own publication JebDunnuck.com



Croix Estate Is Now Open Seven Days A Week

Croix Estate is not open to the public. As an active client of our winery, you have the exclusive privilege of joining us for complimentary client tastings and, coming very soon, by invitation only events.

To book your next reservation with us, simply give us a call (707) 595-3803.

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