



MARIETTA CELLARS

Winemaker Scot Bilbro has been at the helm of Marietta since 2012; his father, Chris Bilbro, founded the winery in 1978.



Game Trail Cabernet Sauvignon 2017

Yorkville Highlands, California

ESTATE

Starting with only a handful of purchased grapes in 1978, Marietta Cellars has been a standout winery in Sonoma and Mendocino since the very start. Founded by Chris Bilbro, a Sonoma native with winemaking roots dated back three generations, Marietta rose to prominence with its revolutionary Old Vine Red, a California red blend that essentially created the category. The winery has slowly expanded its estate holdings over the past thirty years, evolving into a beacon for high quality, balanced Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, and Rhône variety blends.

WINE

The Yorkville Highlands are the mountain pass between the north end of Alexander Valley and the west end of Anderson Valley. From a high elevation site with coastal influence and large diurnal shifts, the Game Trail Cabernet offers an intense, fragrant, savory, and fresh style of Cabernet that speaks of site and demands to be paired with food. This area, with trails worn by mushroom hunters and wild game that travel through the woods, was a refuge for Chris Bilbro, who hunted here and searched for Chanterelles. The mushroom on the label is a tribute to this unique place and its significance.

VINEYARD

The small block of Cabernet Sauvignon used for the Game Trail Cabernet is perched looking south from 1,400 feet elevation up on the ridge. Coastal influence and large diurnal swings create small berries, thick skins, deep pigmentation, and tons of structure. Clone 6 Cabernet sets sparingly with berries the size of blueberries and no fruit to fruit contact, so it is cane pruned and left to hang as many clusters as possible.

Farming: The Game Trail Cabernet Sauvignon 2017 is made from 100% estate fruit, all of which is organically farmed

WINEMAKING

Variety: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Fermentation: In stainless steel tanks
Aging: 20 months in neutral barrel
Alcohol: 14.7%

VINTAGE

Game Trail is always the latest pick of the year and 2017 was no exception. Though skies had stayed clear and without smoke in Yorkville, we were still concerned and tested the wine after a year in barrel just to be safe and were thrilled that the clean chemistry matched our experience tasting the wine. After two late years in a row, 2017 progressed smoothly with perfectly timed budbreak and fruit set. Harvest was early and relatively low yielding, although small berries brought excellent concentration. Picking decisions were difficult as the acid was slow to decrease, but in the end the early pick lead to delightful brightness and depth without over-ripe flavors.

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"The 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon Game Trail is decidedly aromatic and peppery in its flavor profile, much of that a reflection of the personality of this site planted at 1400 feet. Hints of spice, licorice and chocolate add complexity to the dark-toned flavors, but the wine's overall feel leans towards the more savory side of Cabernet." - Antonio Galloni, 4/2020

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