

2014 STAR LANE 'ASTRAL'

STAR LANE VINEYARD, HAPPY CANYON OF SANTA BARBARA

\$120



92 points Wine Enthusiast

ALCOHOL
14.5%

AGED
22 months

OAK
50% New French

HARVESTED
Sept-Oct 2014

BOTTLED
June 2016

CELLAR LIFE
18-28 years

VINTAGE

2014 continues the trend (since 2012) of limited moisture, marked by warm springs and moderate summers. While 2014's ripening period was earlier and warmer than others - finishing maturity in August/September instead of September/October - grape quality developed evenly. In fact, the hang time from flowering to full maturity was no different than years past as everything started earlier. Limited moisture improves overall concentration and structure in wine. Across our entire portfolio we observe a precision and refinement to 2014 that presents itself as purity and reticence hinting a longevity.

WINEMAKER NOTES

2014 was a wonderful vintage in Santa Barbara County across all its terroir. The consistent and moderate ripening period blessed us with plenty of time to pull the ample yields provided by the vintage. It was also a year that demonstrated the exquisite qualities of own-rooted Cabernet Sauvignon - the backbone of Astral. Jeff Connick, our Associate Winemaker, often describes wines he enjoys as having "drive". By it he means a certain precision or energy that exist from start to finish in the wine. 2014 wines were full of drive, but what we observed with the own-rooted Cabernet was drive with greater substance. From the get go fermentations expressed added characters we did not observe from other blocks. While driven, and though rich, extended time on the skin was permitted as the tannins that continued to extract added a silky fullness that was quite attractive. Oak is often used to add a touch of mid-palate. With Astral Cabernet blocks the fruit provides this, however it also provides a touch more herbal quality and we leverage select barrels to complement those characters.

93% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petite Verdot, 1% Malbec

TASTING NOTES

Purity is a wonderful word to describe 2014 wines. And 2014 Astral is a pure example of own-rooted Cabernet aromatic expression. It expresses a lovely dark fruit core, but what makes it seductive seems to be all the added layers of spice and herb integrated with that core of ripe fruit. The "drive" mentioned above along with the substance often provided by these Cabernet Sauvignon blocks converge to produce what is a wonderful example of "sensual tension." The wine is rich without be heavy, fresh without being lean, serious without losing balance. Enjoy, and enjoy more with plenty of age.

