

95 | Jordan

2015 Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

While many contemporary California winemakers promote ripe, fruit-forward cabernets, powerfully extracted and richly oaked, Jordan has held to an elegant style since Tom and Sally Jordan's first vintage, made by Rob Davis, in 1976. Davis was still on board in 2015, working with Maggie Kruse on this wine—Kruse would become the lead winemaker after Davis's retirement in 2019. The vintage marked a turning point at Jordan, achieving a ten-year goal set by John Jordan, Tom and Sally's son, when he took charge in 2005. He worked with the team to build a grower network in the hills, while planting the winery's own hillside vineyards to replace the family's valley-floor vines doomed by phylloxera. He also invested in French oak barrels, shifting from Jordan's 50-50 French-American barrel regime to reach all French oak in 2015. Together with the hillside and mountain fruit, the aging in French oak might suggest a shift in style. This wine comes in at 13.8 percent alcohol, the fruit of small berries and reduced yields due to cool temperatures through a long flowering. Davis and Kruse played the vintage for subtlety, using the amplitude of that ripe fruit to fill out the wine's cedary, tobacco-scented tannins. Honestly, when we tasted this wine on release last year, its austerity earned it 88 points. Now, in re-release out of magnum, the structure has fleshed out, transforming that austerity into delicate plummy richness. John Jordan offers library releases of all the vintages back to 1977, highlighting the age-worthy nature of these wines. This 2015 out of magnum will be one of the high points in that timeline. —
Reviewed by Joshua Greene.

