

2021 JORDAN ALEXANDER VALLEY

Vintage Report



“This classic vintage brought a welcome return to normalcy following back-to-back years rife with nail-biter challenges. To put it simply: 2021 is an intensely flavorful stunner of a vintage.”

– Maggie Kruse, winemaker

GROWING SEASON

For the second year running, winter brought exceptionally low rainfall to our region. Sonoma County saw an average of 12 inches of rain during the season—and most of it fell in December and January. Even in dry years, we typically receive a few inches of rain during the spring to help get us to early summer. In 2021, however, all of it came in the winter months, which forced us to irrigate the vines much earlier in the season while trying to ration water. Fortunately, excellent spring weather led to a balanced bud break and healthy shoot growth. High winds during flowering significantly affected the merlot crop, blowing the young blossoms right off the vine. The lower number of blooms resulted in less fruit for the merlot, but fortunately, our cabernet sauvignon vines were not impacted.

VINEYARDS

The final blend for the 2021 Jordan Cabernet Sauvignon began with 55 vineyard blocks from Jordan Estate and 17 family growers. We select our vineyard sites for their well-drained, gravelly soils in the warmer Alexander Valley, which allow the grapes to gain physiological maturity without sacrificing pure varietal character, bright acidity and moderate sugar levels. It is this necessary combination of climate, soil and husbandry that shares a common thread with the Grand Cru Classé Bordeaux that inspires our style of winemaking.

VITICULTURE

As the 2021 growing season progressed, we noticed that our cabernet sauvignon berries were unusually small due to the extreme drought conditions. Since the grapes' tannins all come from the skins and seeds, we worried that a higher skin-to-juice ratio in the grapes could make the finished wine more tannic than in a typical year. We knew we were going to need more merlot to soften the cabernet sauvignon tannins, so our grower relations manager sprang into action and procured some exceptional merlot grapes from the Sonoma and Dry Creek valleys. These new merlot blocks brought rich, cherry flavors with silky, soft tannins—essential to the elegant house style of Jordan Cabernet Sauvignon.

HARVEST

As summer faded into fall, we experienced wonderfully mild temperatures. We began picking cabernet sauvignon and the rest of our red Bordeaux varieties on Sept. 9 and brought in the final grapes on October 14. Merlot yields were down 20%-30% compared to an average year and cabernet sauvignon came in slightly below average. We were thrilled to discover that the drought and lower yields led to beautiful complexity in the fruit. The resulting wine is deep and complex, with notes of mixed berries, earth and spice. We're excited to see how the 2021 Jordan Cabernet Sauvignon evolves through the decades.

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