

2018 Cabernet Sauvignon

Atlas Peak
Napa Valley

Background

Over the years William Knuttel Winery has produced Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon from many small vineyards throughout the valley, but this is the first time we've used the Atlas Peak designation. Two of my consulting clients brought in fruit from the appellation, and one of them asked if I would trade my consulting fees for wine. The decision was not finalized until early 2019 when the wine was in barrel—and at that point it was pretty easy to figure out what a marvelous blend could be made. So, while the exact parcels cannot be identified, the client's bottling, albeit a slightly different final blend, has already been released with quite a high price tag, and it immediately scored a Double Gold in the Bay Area's most prestigious wine judging!

Winemaking

Our Atlas Peak Cabernet Sauvignon was hand-harvested from three small blocks averaging 2.3 tons per acre. These were separately crushed into one-ton fermenters, and fermentation with wild yeasts began after two days. The cap was punched down three times daily, and then the bins were sealed up for an additional two weeks of maceration before pressing. Only free run portions were used in the final blend, which was aged in 100% French oak for 20 months, with 40% new oak at medium plus toast. The wine was bottled unfiltered, and is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon.

Tasting Notes

The Atlas Peak 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon displays dense, India Ink color and voluptuous aromas of blackberry and ripe blueberry, tinged with wild bramble. Oak and toast mesh completely into the flavors, which add black cherry and wild berry, and ride a wave of firm but velvety tannins. While built for aging, this wine can be enjoyed now with heartier meals.

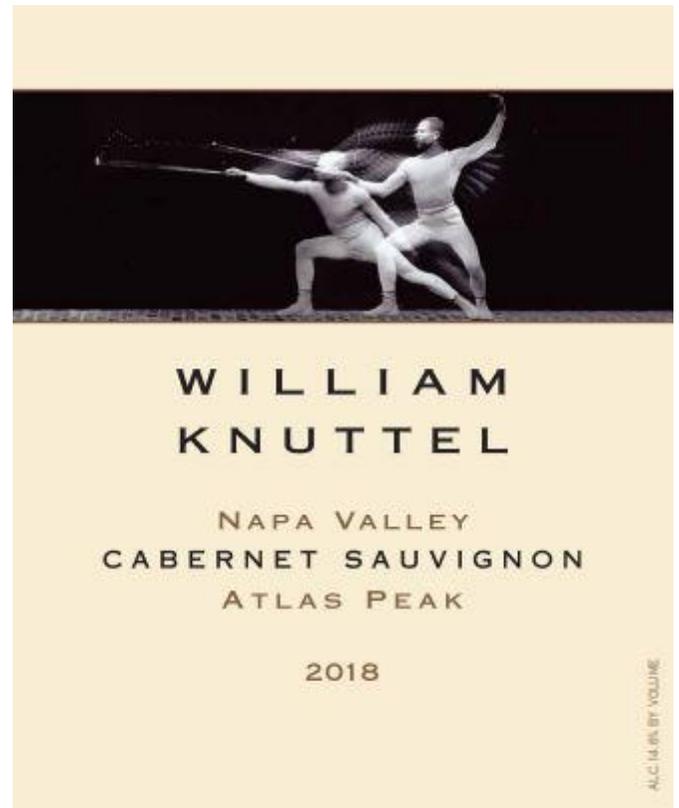
YIELD: 2.3 tons/acre

AGING: 20 months in French oak, 40% new, 60% 2 year-old

COOPERAGE: Tonnelleries O, Taransaud, Seguin Moreau

TA/pH: 5.6 g/L & 3.81 R.S.: 0.06 g/100ml

CASES: 188 (12 x 750ml)



William Knuttel was formerly VP & Winemaker at Chalk Hill Estate 1996-2003, specializing in ultra-premium Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, & Sauvignon Blanc, and Executive Winemaker at Dry Creek Vineyard 2003 to 2011. As proprietor of Tria, 1995 to 2003, he produced fine Pinot Noir and Zinfandel. And as Saintsbury's winemaker from 1983 to 1996, Knuttel established that brand as a leader in ultra-premium Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

ABOUT THE LABEL ART:

Designer Jeffrey Caldewey captured William Knuttel's kinetic wine world with Etienne-Jules Marey's 1890 "chronophotograph," in which multiple exposures are superimposed to show the complete motion of "le coup d'eepe." The image metaphorically highlights the balance, finesse, power and poise valued by the wine-maker.