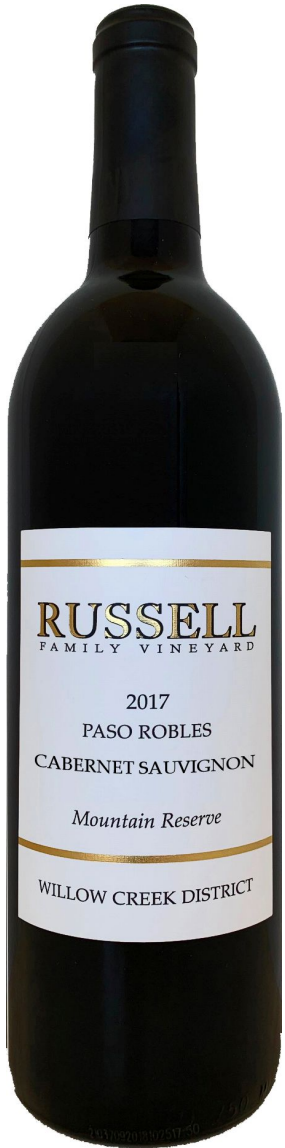


Cabernet Sauvignon 2017 *Reserve*



The Russell Cabernet Sauvignon is only produced in the very best vintages from grapes grown in the Willow Creek District on our Live Oak Road Vineyard off Highway 46 West in Paso Robles. We have not produced this wine since the 2013 vintage. The 2017 was a very unique vintage in that, by all rights, it should not have been a good vintage. In fact, for many varieties of grapes, 2017 was not a good vintage. Just as the grapes were maturing, Paso Robles was hit with a severe heat wave. It was over 103 degrees for 10 straight days. Many people rushed to get their grapes picked. Instead, we watered our grapes in short intervals every 4 hours giving the vines 2 gallons of water 24 hours per day to help them survive the heat. We were able to manage six blocks of grapes per day at this rate. This short watering allowed the grapes to survive and not fry, or have the grapes turn into raisins or start losing their canopy. As a result, we were able to let the grapes hang on the vines and fully ripen and mature.

GRAPES: 100 % Cabernet Sauvignon

VINEYARD: Willow Creek District / Live Oak Vineyard. The Live Oak Vineyard is our best vineyard, and also the location of our home which allows us to keep watch over the grapes on a daily basis. The Willow Creek area is probably the most desirable area of Paso Robles with some of the best wineries and vineyards located here. The vineyard is very tightly spaced with over 2200 vines per acre and planted on meter by 2-meter spacing. The soil is very rich in limestone with a PH of around 8.0. Willow Creek is also the coolest area of Paso Robles as it is on a direct line with the coastal winds off the ocean less than 20 miles away. The hillside is also one of the steepest in Paso Robles with shallow rocky soils that force the grapes to struggle and develop great character.

HARVEST: Because of the early heat, harvest started on August 28th, 2019. However, because of our watering program, we were able to let our Cabernet Sauvignon grapes hang and mature on the vine until October 5th allowing the optimum sugar level of 26.0 Brix.

VINIFICATION: The grapes were immediately crushed to a stainless steel tank and chilled to 40 degrees to retain all the fruit character. The grapes were kept at 40 degrees for 15 days of cold soaking to extract all the Cabernet Sauvignon characteristics so many Cabernet connoisseurs' desire. During the cold soaking phase, Erich pumped over the grapes once a day to keep the top of the tank of grapes wet and to further extract flavor. After 15 days the grapes were yeasted. After yeasting, the grapes were pumped over up to five times a day to push the cap back into the juice to further extract color and flavor. After fermentation, the grapes were kept on the skins for another three weeks of extended Maceration. The wine was finally pressed on November 14th, 2019 after spending 40 days on the skins.

BARREL AGING: After the wine was pressed it immediately went into some 4 year old American Oak barrels for the lees to settle out. After a couple of weeks, the wine was siphoned by hand, one barrel at a time, to brand new French Oak barrels. These are not just any French Oak barrels, but are very special 100% hand made from start to finish from the "pink wood" found at the heart of the tree. This "heartwood" is then aged 40 months before crafting. The barrels even have a pink tint to them. There are only 250 to 300 barrels produced from this wood each year. The wine was aged in these barrels until it was pumped out and blended for bottling.

BOTTLING: The 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon produced just over 3 pallets (183 cases), and 24 bottles of Magnums. The wine was bottled on June 24th, 2019 and is 100% natural with nothing artificial added—no acid additions, nothing for color, and nothing to enhance the flavor.

ANALYSIS: Alcohol—15.47 % PH—3.66 TA—0.63

TASTING NOTES: Full-bodied, rich and polished with layers of concentrated cherry, chocolate, and cedar notes. The balance is remarkable- starting with an amazing mouth-feel and moving into an unforgettable lingering finish. This wine is one of the most impressive wines of the 2017 vintage.