



2010 Negrette Calleri Vineyard

Appellation: San Benito County

Varietal: 100% Negrette

pH: 3.73

T.A.: 0.61 g/100mL

R.S. : 0.049%

Malic: 8mg/100mL

VA: 0.07 g/mL

Bottling Date: January 16, 2012

Cases Produced: 603

Suggested Retail: \$28

In The Vineyard

Negrette is the principal grape of the Cotes Du Fronton appellation of southwestern France, north of the city of Toulouse. Negrette is reputed to have originated on the Island of Cyprus where Cypriot Christians gave cuttings of Negrette to the Knights Templar returning to France from crusades in the Middle East. It was believed that the consumption of Negrette imparted valor during battle.

Ken Volk held out hope as to the truth of this legend based on the existence of the Cypriot grape Mavro (black) and the long history of the Knight Templar's real estate holdings in south central France. Unfortunately, genetic testing does not indicate a relationship to Mavro or other indigenous grapes of the island of Cyprus. Genetic research indicates that Negrette is an ancient Gallic grape variety which is related to Malbec, Valdigue, Duras and Prunelard.

Negrette, as its name implies is a deeply-colored red wine. Despite its brooding purple color, Negrette is a soft and supple wine. Ken Volk has produced Negrette since 1991 from vineyards in San Benito County: he's a huge fan of the variety. The grape was formerly known as Pinot St. George in California. Pinot St. George bottlings were more common in California in the late 1960s and 1970s prior to the varietal wine label change in 1983 requiring that a bottle contain 75% of the listed varietal. Many of the old vineyards that were used to produce Pinot St. George were mixed variety plantings that made complying with the 75% varietal requirement (1983) nearly impossible. In 1997 The BATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives) in its ultimate wisdom adopted the French name "Negrette" in their attempt to comply with EEC (European Economic Community) requests to ban American wineries from using names of European viticulture regions.

Negrette grape clusters are small with small berries and extremely thin black skins. The wines tend to be deeply pigmented with light tannins and flavors of cherry, rhubarb, and anise. The aromatics can range from ripe berry, violets and roasted almonds to leather, humus, and *herbs de Provence*. There is a hard-to-define rustic character to this grape that is somewhat reminiscent of Syrah and Pinot Noir. Our Negrette comes from the Calleri Vineyard in San Benito (1995) started from cuttings from Charles Le Franc's original El Gavilian Vineyard of the Cienega Valley AVA (1845) prior to its demise by bulldozers.

In the Glass

Our 2010 Negrette has aromas of hummingbird sage and turned earth with flavors of blackberry, cranberry, and blueberry and a creamy finish. This wine may be enjoyed on its own or can complement a range of dishes. This wine pairs well with venison, duck confit, pork roast and other savory cuisines.

Produced and Bottled by: Kenneth Volk Vineyards 5230 Tepusquet Road Santa Maria, CA 93454 805.938.7896

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