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courtship and vigilant enology

fall 2019

Angier Vineyards in Knights Valley

Knights Valley is one of the five original Sonoma County AVA's (American Viticultural Area) first established in October of 1983, and consists of 37,000 acres, 2,000 of which are planted to vineyard. Being Sonoma County's easternmost AVA bordered by the Mayacamas Mountains on the east it is also the warmest AVA in Sonoma County.



Historically 17,742 acres in Knights Valley was titled Rancho Mallacomes by a land grant from Mexico in 1843. After the 1846 Bear Flag Revolt in the town of Sonoma most Mexican soldiers and settlers in the area went back to Mexico. That is when Thomas Knight purchased most of the Rancho, established a settlement and planted grapes, peaches, apples and wheat. Ultimately this valley was named after Knight.



Fast forward to the present day: current owners of Angier Vineyard are Gregg and Jennifer Abernathy. Gregg's maternal Great Grandfather, Melbourne Angier came to Northern California from France in 1884 where he operated a 50-acre vineyard in Lodi, CA. By 1900 he owned 500 acres in that area and became one of the first commercial vintners in Northern California. As time went on his vineyard holdings were whittled down and final disposition of the vineyard operation is lost in the family lore, likely a victim of prohibition.

In 2001 Gregg and Jennifer chose to continue the family legacy in vineyard operations by buying property in Knights Valley, planting Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay grapes (since grafted to Cabernet also) totaling about 2 acres, and building a country home.

Cabernet is King in Knights Valley where this variety performs extremely well. Long cloudless summer days and the warm-to-hot micro-climate make this a premier growing area for ultra premium Cabernet wine grapes. Rich intensely flavored fruit and complex tannins are hallmarks of KV Cab. In 2014 Pech Merle decided to source fruit from the best Cab Sauv area in the county so a search was begun. As our luck would have it Gregg had posted his grapes for sale at the same time and we were first to inquire. True to form the wines have true Cabernet black fruit character (think currant, cassis and black cherry), complex yet mellow tannins and that unique mild herbaceous earthiness Cabernet is famous for. Twenty-two months barrel aging in one hundred percent French oak adds the finishing touches of sweet vanilla, cedar and saddle leather notes to round out complexity and depth of flavor. This wine ages extremely well in bottle and will benefit from up to 10-12 years extended aging, depending on your personal preference.

Cheers!

John Pepe
John Pepe, Winemaker