

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2026



PERMISSION TO CROSS

Growing up in Rutherford and Oakville, Napa Valley, there wasn't much of a neighborhood in the traditional sense. Vineyards stretched farther than streets and, on most days, the land itself felt like my only companion. Before the modern distractions of today came easily, I learned early how to entertain myself by *setting out*. That meant leaving the house with no real plan beyond curiosity and adventure, trusting that the day would take shape once I was in it.

When I was young, I set out on bicycle. I would cover miles of quiet, dirt roads, with the smell of soils and fast growing vines, making an impressionable mark in memory. I found fishing ponds tucked behind rows of Cabernet, places I only discovered by riding until something caught my eye. When I grew older still, riding an ATV with a .22 rifle in hand, the sense of independence deepened. The pursuits changed—targets, squirrels, jackrabbits—but the purpose was the same: motion, solitude, and the freedom of wide-open space. There, I was present.

Our home on Rutherford Road offered little in the way of land to explore. There were no back acres to envelop me, no creeks or hills that belonged to us. So, freedom to pass from place to place came by way of asking permission from the many people who owned land like us throughout Napa Valley.

I learned the names early: Andy Beckstoffer. Chuck Carpy of Freemark Abbey. Pat Garvey at Flora Springs. Justin Meyer of Silver Oak. Dennis Groth. Stan Teaderman. Lori Woods of Woods Ranch. Tony Peju. Legendary Cabernet farmers, yes—but to me, they were gatekeepers of possibility. They didn't have to say yes. But as the valley was then, they always did.

With a nod, a wave, or a simple “careful out there kid” their vineyards opened up into entire worlds for me. Rows became corridors. Creeks became hiding places. Dirt roads became so familiar, I would see a map in my head, as though it were my vast territory and I was its guardian. I rode, walked, fished, hunted, and wandered




across some of the most important ground in American wine—not as a future winemaker or farmer, but simply as a curious, adventurous, outdoors kid.

Those days were an education no classroom could offer. I learned respect for land that belonged to us. I learned patience. I learned how silence can be a companion and a teacher. And I learned that generosity—especially quiet, unspoken respect—has a deliberate way of shaping a person long before they realize it’s happening. This is where my sense of adventure was born and has remained. Nothing makes my work day better than starting out at dawn in the vineyards.

Looking back now, what felt like asking for permission to cross was a lesson in trust and respect. It was an incredible upbringing—one rooted in land, and in a Napa Valley that still allowed a kid to roam and dream. That memory inspired me to name Venge’s newest Cabernet Sauvignon, “Permission to Cross” – internally known as PX2.

This is a wine that ushers in a moment in our winery’s history as we are entering an era of great vintages in a row. Not in the history of the valley have I witnessed three vintages of greatness. In addition to the new PX2 Cabernet Sauvignon, I am very excited to announce that Scout’s Honor is coming back to its roots and now sourced 100% from Napa Valley! Oh I cannot wait for you to taste the 2024 vintage as it is simply spectacular! Finally, included in your club member shipment, is the 2024 Old Vine Zinfandel from my home ranch at Signal Fire Vineyard. Friends, this wine is a wine of heart and soul as it reminds me of my roots.

Nostalgia is seeping into my bones as I write this newsletter having hit the milestone age of fifty years old. As I look back, I am most grateful for all of you coming with me on this winemaking journey. Thank you for supporting our dreams. Without you Venge Vineyards is not possible.



Kirk P. Venge

2023 PERMISSION TO CROSS “PX2” CABERNET SAUVIGNON | Stags Leap District, Napa Valley

DEBUT VINTAGE!

Long before Napa Valley became famous around the world, there was a rugged stretch of land along the eastern side of the valley where the mountains seemed to leap straight out of the earth. The Wappo people who lived there told stories about a great stag that once leapt from the cliffs to escape hunters, and the place became known as Stags Leap.

The legend stuck.

Centuries later, when settlers arrived and began planting vineyards, they noticed something unusual about this narrow strip of land beneath the Stags Leap Palisades—the towering volcanic cliffs that rise dramatically from the valley floor. The soil was rocky, volcanic, and well-drained. During the day, the cliffs soaked up the sun’s warmth. At night, cool breezes drifted down from the mountains and through the vineyards. The grapes grew slowly, building flavor while keeping their balance. Then came the moment that made the region legendary. In 1976, during the famous Judgment of Paris, wines from California were secretly tasted against the greatest wines of France. Many experts believed the French wines would easily win. But when the results were revealed, a Stags Leap District Cabernet Sauvignon from Stag’s Leap Wine Cellars took first place. The wine world was shocked. Suddenly everyone realized that this small district in Napa Valley could produce wines as great as the most famous vineyards on Earth. Today, Stags Leap District is considered one of Napa’s most special places for Cabernet Sauvignon because its wines have a rare combination: Power from the warm sun and volcanic soils. Elegance from the cooling mountain breeze. Silky tannins that make the wines smooth even when young.

Winemakers often say the wines have “an iron fist in a velvet glove.”

So, when someone opens a bottle from Stags Leap District, they’re tasting more than just Cabernet. They’re tasting legend, geology, and history—all from a place where, according to the old story, a stag once leapt from the cliffs and gave the valley its name.

265 Cases Produced.

SCOUT COMES HOME—WELCOME BACK TO NAPA VALLEY OUR BELOVED ONE

2024 SCOUT'S HONOR PROPRIETARY RED | 100% NAPA VALLEY

DEDICATION: First produced in 1996, this wine is dedicated in memory of my beloved, yellow Labrador Retriever, Scout. We immediately recognized that he was an exceptional Lab when we first met him in 1989 at the Napa County Animal Adoption Center. Rescuing Scout proved to be a destined decision! He was a loyal and loving companion who helped us welcome visitors to our winery for seven memorable years.

Over the last few years, we have had to move a great deal of the wine sourcing for Scout's Honor to Sonoma County. Fires, replanting, contract redevelopments and on it goes. Today we are proud to bring Scout back home, 100% magical Napa Valley Zinfandel. There is nothing like it in all of California. We dare you to blind taste a \$40 bottle of wine against this wine and tell us it is better. Because it simply does not exist. Challenge accepted?

WINEMAKER'S Record

Come on people, this is NAPA VALLEY ZINFANDEL!!!

This wine opens with black plums, raspberry preserves, hints of Chinese five spice and refreshing vanillin. The color purity and visual weight in the glass is something to behold. Yes, it is rich and full-bodied on the palate, yet remarkably balanced, with plush texture and hearty backbone supporting the generous fruit, finishing long and spicy. This wine is made to drink right out of the gate! A cult favorite among members.

PRODUCTION Essentials

Method | Hand Picked and Destemmed Via *Pellenc* Sorting System, Gravity Flow to Stainless and Open Top Fermenters, Utilizing 100% Native Yeast Primary and Secondary Fermentations Over 12 Days, Diaphragm Air Pumps (Forced Air Pressure)—*Bulldogging*—and Transfers Via Gravity Only, Gentle Barrel-To-Tank Racking

Aging Regimen | 70% New American Oak, 30% Used French

2024 SIGNAL FIRE VINEYARD, OLD VINE ZINFANDEL | Calistoga Estate, Napa Valley

We won't make apologies to the 2023 vintage because it is stellar, but there is one thing it is not: the 2024 vintage. It's a rare moment in a winemaker's life when greatness is achieved and seeing the 2024 come alive with vibrance, depth and a gorgeous beauty not witnessed in a decade brings tears to my eyes. Balanced and bold with glass coating color and viscosity, this is old-vine Zinfandel at its best. Wonderful, blue herbs, honeysuckle and exotic spices fill the glass and lure you into mouthwatering anticipation. Fresh espresso, blackberry jam, cherry cola, and white pepper fill the mouth with pure pleasure. Full-bodied and very balanced with a lengthy and refreshing finish. Our 2023 vintage gets back to its original groove of providing daily, guilt free enjoyment at an exclusive, club member price you will come to appreciate, as this wine opens up in the glass! At just 515 cases produced, this wine is sure to sell out in record time, so stock up.

These dry-farmed, gnarly head-trained vines are a rare breed here in Napa Valley and we feel blessed to possess 8 acres of the good stuff! At the turn of the century this location was known as the "signal point" for early frost warnings—if the frost pots were fired up and billowing on this site, all vineyard owners in the surrounding area would act accordingly to protect their vineyards. 97% old-vine estate Zinfandel is interplanted in old-world style with 3% old-vine Petite Sirah. This coupling brings a base into the wine while honoring classic Zinfandel nuances.

2025 JEWELL VINEYARD SAUVIGNON BLANC | Russian River Valley, Sonoma County

Spring A La Carte Feature! This Wine Will Need To Be Added To Your Shipment Or Ordered During Your Repurchase Selections

I love Russian River Valley Sauvignon Blanc, especially when produced from the Musqué clone utilizing a perfect balance of neutral barrel and stainless-steel fermentation. It leaves me with a warm contentment that I am drinking something that brings me great satisfaction.

Located in the heart of Russian River Valley, the Dutton family farms this vineyard to perfection. This section of the valley has a diurnal variance of warm days and crisp nights, perfectly situated for a consistent growing season that leads to optimal ripening. This climate aids in the balancing of acidity and lifting tropical aromas in the fruit, and thus, in the finished wine. Once to the winery, a slow, cold fermentation took place over 45 days, allowing the development of aromatics in the wine. Upon completion, the wine was moved to 100% neutral French Oak barrels. Here at Venge, we use a light hand with oak influence in this wine, aging our Sauvignon Blanc in 100% used, neutral French oak. Ageing on the lees was employed to further develop refined richness and length of body to the mid-palate, while keeping the wine clean and fresh. The wine opens with a pale hue, ripe white peaches, nectarine, Asian pear, with hints of honeysuckle and jasmine. The entry on the palate is brimming with citrus, stone fruits, a touch of minerality, and a long, layered finish featuring delicious, island ripe pineapple and a touch of savory melon. Mouthwatering and refreshing, this wine provides immediate drinking pleasure.

Club Member Repurchases Are Under Way!

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Need More Of The Good Stuff? Your Repurchase Allocation Awaits

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