

2018 Rosé



90 points: The winery experimented for several years before releasing this first vintage of rosé. In the watermelon-hued 50/50 blend of Cabernet Franc and Merlot, the Cab Franc element really stands out. Aromatically, it shows off luscious floral aromas of roses and the intense, succulent red berry fruit flavours coat your tongue. This is a serious rosé that would go well with food.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2022

2016 Chardonnay



91 points: The vintage had a near perfect growing season, ideal for Smith-Madrone's Chardonnay style, a mid-point between California's opulent stereotype and a new, fresher, more vibrant one. Barrel-fermented and aged in 80% new French oak, it's spicy and succulent, with aromas of hazelnut and lemon curd and a creamy texture that doesn't weigh it down.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2025



2016 Cabernet Sauvignon

94 points: The estate Cabernet is from mostly dry-farmed vines grown at the top of Spring Mountain at an elevation of 1,800 feet and in this vintage the sense of place shines through, especially with only 45% new oak used for barrel aging. It's very much a mountain Cabernet, with classic structure, cassis and graphite aromas, and deep, savoury red fruit flavours with hints of mint. The tannins are powerful but very fine.

Drinking Window 2020 - 2036



2016 Cook's Flat Reserve

96 points: This limited production Cabernet blend is a selection of the best barrels and the vintage was a near perfect growing season. The dark, intense colour promises more density and concentration than the Estate Cabernet. Explosive aromas of violets, mint, lavender, and fruit waft out of the glass and reflect the high proportion of Cabernet Franc; the layered flavours are intense, and the texture is smooth and concentrated. Wow.

Drinking Window 2021 - 2040



2016 Riesling

91 points: The dry Riesling has long had a dedicated following, and the winery is one of the few producers of the varietal left in Napa - think Alsace style. This vintage shows a stand-out wet rock minerality, succulent limey, citrusy notes, juicy acidity, and round texture. It's also the first vintage available in hand-waxed magnums, which makes sense because the wines are surprisingly long lived.

Drinking Window 2019 – 2029



2015 Riesling

93 points: The 2015 version of this always-reliable wine is racier and more exciting than the 2016 vintage. Its bright honeysuckle aromas explode from the glass, and the savoury, citrusy flavours have notes of mint and minerals. Fermented and aged in stainless steel, it has a purity and complexity that truly reflect its dry-farmed mountain terroir. The grapes were picked at the end of August.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2030



2015 Chardonnay

92 points: Chardonnay yields were much lower than usual at this dry-farmed mountain estate thanks to very cool spring weather. Harvest took place over two and a half weeks, and the wine was barrel-fermented and aged in 80% new oak. This golden-coloured wine comes with heady scents of baking spices and toasted hazelnuts. It's earthy and brioche-flavoured with rich pear and yellow apple notes, and combines crispness with power, texture and structure.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2024



2014 Chardonnay

92 points: This is a big, rich Chardonnay that reminds me of golden apples, tarte tatin, and marzipan. It finishes long and very pure, and the fact that the grapes are mountain grown really shines through in the depth. The fruit is so intense that it can support not just 100% barrel fermentation, but also 100% aging in new French oak.

Drinking Window 2019 – 2026



2014 Riesling

92 points: What stands out in this vintage is the wine's elegance and layered flavours that mix citrus, flowers, and an almost slatey minerality. Add to that the wine's typical honeysuckle and citrus aromas, fresh, zingy acidity and a long, long finish. It has enough substance to match with a wide variety of dishes, especially baked ham and roasted turkey.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2029



2013 Cook's Flat Reserve

94 points: Only 194 cases of this Cabernet Franc-dominant blend were made. Black cherries, tobacco and herbs dominate the tantalising aromas, which spill out of the glass. Generous and open, it's not as floral or dense as the 2016 and shows a kind of savoury, briary style. Unlike the Estate Cabernet, it's aged in 100% new French oak.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2038



2013 Cabernet Sauvignon

93 points: The earliest harvest in 25 years along with a practically flawless growing season resulted in a very structured mountain red with freshness, plus a delicious richness and super soft tannins. Peppery aromas and flavours stand out among the complex melange of savoury leafiness, dark cherries and plums, mint, earth, tobacco and cassis, and it's practically bouncing with acidity. The finish is long and elegant and it has more raciness than the 2012.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2038



2012 Cook's Flat Reserve

95 points: The name refers to the first owner of the property, George Cook. The one word that describes this Cabernet Sauvignon dominant blend is seductive. It has the rich, dark, velvety fruit and power that characterises the best wines in this vintage. So much is going on in this dense, concentrated wine with textbook graphite aromas, laced with cassis, dark chocolate, mint and cedar. The taste is leaner and more elegant than the expansive aromas lead you to expect.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2035



2012 Cabernet Sauvignon

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Drinking Window 2019 – 2035



2010 Riesling

91 points: Smith-Madrone's first Riesling was the 1977. The winery is among the few in Napa that are still committed to the varietal. This one comes from a 2.5ha parcel of vines with eastern exposure. This vintage was one of the coolest seasons in more than 40 years and is crisp, dry and tangy, with aromas of wintergreen and a whisper of sweetness. The biggest indication of age is a change in the texture of the wine.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2034



2009 Cook's Flat Reserve

94 points: This Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated (64%) wine is very architectural, with a powerful structure, yet still almost juicy. This is very much a mountain Cabernet, but at 10 years of age has a delicious velvety texture. What stands out are the layers of aromas and flavours, lavender and violets, mint and damp earth. The vines grow at elevations of 1,800 feet at a slope of 35% in red volcanic soil.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2030



2009 Cabernet Sauvignon

94 points: At 10 years of age, this wine is both appealing and impressive right now, with a distinct black cherry character, an almost juicy finish, and under 14% abv! The wine spent 22 months in French oak, which has all been absorbed. The lovely mint, earth, and olive notes to the flavours would pair perfectly with herb-roasted lamb.

Drinking Window 2019 – 2032



2007 Cabernet Sauvignon

93 points: From the beginning, critics raved about this vintage in Napa, but later many found the wines overripe and monolithic. Not this one. It's true to year, with swashbuckling richness and a dense, sleek texture, and still boasts a rich dark colour. It's 97% Cabernet Sauvignon, which gives it a powerful mountain character with a berry rich nose and long savoury flavours. It still needs time.

Drinking Window 2020 - 2029



2007 Cook's Flat Reserve

94 points: This was the first vintage of Cook's Flat Reserve, a selection of the best barrels of the year, and aged 100% in new French oak. The blend is different from the Estate Cabernet and has more oomph. This vintage is dark, dense, and very classy, bears some telltale signs of aging — cigar box, leather, a browning rim. Still, it's alive, pulsing with energy, generous with blackberry, currant, liquorice and at the same time, restrained and delicate.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2028



2002 Cabernet Sauvignon

90 points: With a bit of air, the wine is ready to drink right now. You feel like inhaling the complex nose of cassis, cigar box, and spices, and the flavours show warm fruit tones, mint, and quite a bit of savoury acidity. This wine was aged for 23 months in new American oak barrels, and it seems to show more spiciness than recent vintages aged in French oak.

Drinking Window 2019 – 2028



2001 Cabernet Sauvignon

95 points: The 2001 vintage was a stunner for Cabernet in Napa Valley, and this wine was really singing. Harmonious, vivid, with a very long, wonderfully smooth finish, this is a generous and seductive mountain wine that's almost yummy. It was aged in all-new white oak from Missouri, which has totally tamed the tannins. One of my favorites in the tasting.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2032



2001 Riesling

92 points: Very golden, with an expansive orange blossom and apricot nose. This wine is big and rich, with roundness and weight, a combination of minerality and succulent apricot and peach fruit. It has a very long finish with a sweet hint. The style is very much a mid-point between the Rheingau and Alsace. At 18 years of age, it is going strong.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2030



2000 Cabernet Sauvignon

91 points: The first vintage to blend in Merlot and Cabernet Franc, this vintage is still very dense, dark, and intense, like a rich mouthful of crushed fruit and earth and a soft, sink-in-to-it texture. Less layered in flavour than the 2001, it has an enticing spicy ripe cherry, truffle and floral nose. Like many vintages up until 2002, it's aged in all new American oak.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2029



1999 Cabernet Sauvignon

90 points: The last vintage to be 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, this wine is from a cool, moderate year, which translates into a wonderful range of complex aromas: spice, tobacco, mint, rose petals, damp earth and more. It's a mid-weight wine, concentrated and structured, with smooth earthy pungent flavours with a core of ripe fruit underneath, and prominent acidity in the finish. Drink now.

Drinking Window 2019 – 2026



1996 Riesling

94 points: Amazingly bright, fresh and appealing for a 23-year-old wine, this illustrates the longevity of the winery's Riesling. Apricot coloured, it has ripe peachy verve and zingy acidity, with mineral notes in the background, enticing flavours of succulent apricots, and a mere 11.9% abv. The 1.5% residual sugar (more than later bottlings), gives the wine a ripe versus tart balance.

Drinking Window 2019 – 2029



1995 Cabernet Sauvignon

91 points: This was a year of weather drama, with floods, heavy rain, a hailstorm in June, and a late harvest, but turned out some surprisingly fine wine. This 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, aged for 27 months in American oak, seems the most mineral in the tasting. The aromas are dark and intense, with hints of iron, balanced with big, deep flavours and fine structure that's turned velvety.

Drinking Window 2019 – 2027



1994 Cabernet Sauvignon

94 points: Considered a great year in Napa, this vintage was fairly cool. It produced complex, fleshy, showy wines with striking aromas and a lot of freshness and elegance. There's a distinct taste of coffee and pronounced floral notes to the aromas. At the time, the Smiths were picking by blocks, using a variety of fermentation techniques, including trying 21 days of extended-skin contact in closed tanks.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2028



1989 Cabernet Sauvignon

95 points: This was a doom and destruction vintage, as pickers scrambled to save grapes from pelting rain in a mid-October harvest. At the time, though, the Smith brothers thought it might be their best yet. Today, I'm wowed by the layers of aromas, from lavender to graphite to a bit of cocoa. The wine still has tons of power but it's packaged so well and only 12.9% abv!

Drinking Window 2019 – 2026

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1979 Cabernet Sauvignon

96 points: Only the winery's second vintage, this 40-year-old Cabernet is from a cool year. Poured from magnum, it was the most youthful of the older wines and showed only a tiny bit of browning. Most wines from the vintage were lean and austere, but right now this Cabernet is amazing for its age, showing expansive dark-toned aromas and flavours of liquorice, spice, mint, and earth.

Drinking Window 2019 - 2027