



Clos Du Val's Estate Vineyards: Stags Leap, Carneros and Yountville

For more than 40 years, Clos Du Val's estate vineyards in Stags Leap District, Carneros and Yountville have been at the heart of the winery's winemaking program. Located on some of the finest winegrowing land in Napa Valley, and farmed by Clos Du Val for decades, these three distinctive vineyards reflect the valley's diversity, and provide a world-class palette of estate fruit for Winemaker Ted Henry. Beginning in 2014, Clos Du Val President Steve Tamburelli affirmed the winery's commitment to the importance of this estate fruit when he transitioned Clos Du Val's wines into being almost entirely estate-grown.

Hirondelle Estate Vineyard, Stags Leap District, Napa Valley

The crown jewel of Clos Du Val's estate program is the 150-acre Hirondelle Estate Vineyard in the heart of Stags Leap District, in the eastern portion of Napa Valley. Originally acquired in 1972, this coveted land is also home to the Clos Du Val Winery. Often referred to as a "valley within a valley," Stags Leap District was the first American Viticultural Area (AVA) in the United States to be approved based on the distinctiveness of its gravel and loam soils. The AVA, which is just three miles long, and one mile wide, is also celebrated for its ideal climate, which funnels cool breezes from San Pablo Bay through the Stags Leap District corridor. This lowers evening temperatures and allows the grapes to ripen slowly, producing velvety tannins and pure varietal flavors, while retaining ideal natural acidity—qualities that have proven perfect for making exceptional, age-worthy Cabernet Sauvignons.

Clos Du Val's Hirondelle Estate Vineyard features approximately 126 acres of vines, divided into 34 unique blocks, each with its own combination of clone, rootstock, vine age and soil type. 103 acres of these plantings are made up of nine different clones of Cabernet Sauvignon, with the remainder of the vineyard planted to Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Petit Verdot. The vineyard offers a uniform east-west exposure for even ripening throughout, with well-drained Haire loam and alluvial rock soils that limit yields, increase concentration, and add a signature streak of minerality to Clos Du Val's Cabernets. Largely replanted in the mid-1990s, all trellising uses vertical shoot positioning, and the average vine age is approximately 15 years.

Gran Val Estate Vineyard, Carneros, Napa Valley

Following the decision to select Stags Leap District as the ideal estate home for its Cabernet Sauvignons, in 1973, Clos Du Val purchased the 180-acre Gran Val Vineyard in Carneros to grow Burgundian varietals. Just as Stags Leap District became the first AVA recognized for its distinctive soils, Carneros became the first California wine region granted AVA status specifically for its unique climate in 1983. Situated at the southernmost parts of the Sonoma and Napa valleys, the climate of Carneros is shaped by cooling maritime breezes and fog off San Pablo Bay, resulting in conditions that have established the region's reputation for lush and complex Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays.

Carneros is the only California AVA to span two counties, and Clos Du Val's Gran Val Vineyard is located on the Napa Valley side of the appellation, neighboring such famed winegrowing sites as Brown Ranch and Hyde Vineyard. Of the site's 180 acres, 135 are under vine, with 56 acres and 10 clones of Chardonnay, 41 acres and 10 clones of Pinot Noir, and smaller amounts of Merlot and Cabernet Franc. The vineyard ranges in elevation from approximately 50 feet to over 300 feet, and has slopes as steep as 25%. The more hillside sections feature rocky clay loam over shale, while the lower sections predominantly feature Haire loam soils. Overall, the vineyard is divided into 33 unique blocks based on clone, rootstock and soil type. Through replanting, much of the vineyard has been designed to feature north-south row orientations for ideal sun exposure and airflow. Trellising primarily features vertical shoot positioning. While most of the vines have been replanted since 1997, the vineyard also includes three highly prized hilltop blocks of clone 4 Chardonnay planted in 1984.

State Lane Estate Vineyard, Yountville, Napa Valley

Though spanning a mere 8,000 total acres, with less than 3,000 planted to vines, Yountville has some of the richest winegrowing history in Napa Valley. In 1836, George Yount planted the first vineyards in Napa Valley, in the area that today is known as NapaNook. One of the defining elements of the Yountville AVA is its unusual combination of soils. While volcanic soils on the appellation's eastern flank are similar to those in the neighboring Stags Leap District, ancient coastal deposits with sedimentary and alluvial soils to the west are interspersed with sandy, gravelly loam and clay.

Clos Du Val's State Lane Vineyard showcases the diversity of Yountville's soils. As a result, even though it only has 17.5 acres of vines, there are eight separate blocks, with a total of 10.5 acres of Cabernet Sauvignon, 5 acres of Cabernet Franc and 2 acres of Sauvignon Blanc. In 2002, the entire vineyard was replanted to Clos Du Val's specifications. Because cool air and fog traveling north from San Pablo Bay get trapped by the Yountville Mounts, Clos Du Val's vineyard benefits from the region's "natural air conditioning," making it ideal for producing beautifully structured Cabernets, as well as exceptional Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc. The vineyard uses vertical shoot positioning, and is planted exclusively with an east-west orientation, with the exception of the Sauvignon Blanc.