

IRON HORSE VINEYARDS

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Russian Cuvée 2017

Green Valley, Russian River Valley, California

ESTATE

Started in 1976 by Audrey and Barry Sterling, Iron Horse is a standout producer of Sparkling wine in America. Nestled in the cool microclimate of the Green Valley AVA, Iron Horse's 300 acre estate is home to 164 acres of vineyard, split evenly between Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. The second generation, Joy Sterling and her brother Laurence, oversee the estate, and have dedicated their time and attention to improving vineyard practices, implementing regenerative agriculture and sustainability initiatives, and advocating for their community and the environment.

WINE

Russian Cuvée has multiple layers of meaning. Originally named for the historic Reagan-Gorbachev Summit Meetings in 1985, it also refers to the vineyard's unique location in the Russian River Valley. The Russian Cuvée is the "richest" in the Iron Horse line up, though it is still technically brut-level dry. A perfect toasting wine, served at White House State Dinners for six consecutive Presidential Administrations, it boasts aromas of caramel apple, nutmeg and orange zest, flavors of ripe red apple, lime, brioche and brown sugar on the palate. It is equally comfortable at the end of the meal with dessert as at the start of the meal for a toast.

VINEYARD

Soils: The Iron Horse estate is in the heart of Green Valley's cool and foggy climate, 13 miles from the Pacific Ocean. The predominant soil-type is called "Gold Ridge", a sandy loam that has excellent drainage and is perfectly, inherently balanced, making it one of the most coveted soil types, especially for growing Pinot Noir. *Farming:* The certified sustainable estate features 160 acres under vine, planted exclusively to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir across a patchwork of gentle, rolling hills. Each of the 39 blocks has been planted with site-specific rootstock and clonal selections, enabling Iron Horse to farm, harvest, and vinify each block separately.

WINEMAKING

Harvest: Hand harvested in the chilly fog of early morning

Variety: 73% Pinot Noir, 27% Chardonnay

Fermentation: Gently pressed as whole clusters yielding base wines of great delicacy. A long, cool ferment at 62° to 65° F retains vibrant fruit esters. Individual lots of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay were selected for their shy nose and clear varietal character. After 3 years aging on the yeast, they now exhibit wonderful complexity and creaminess.

Dosage: 16 mls of BDN LEX, 4mls 2018 Rued Chardonnay, and 2ml of 2017 Gold Ridge Pinot Noir.

Alcohol: 13.5%

TASTING NOTE

Toasted sugar, caramel apple, nutmeg and orange zest on the nose and ripe red apple, lime, brioche and brown sugar on the palate make this wine an excellent pairing with medium-sweet desserts, cheese boards, or as a toasting wine.