



The Vineyards: This inaugural vintage of Helena comes from the Old Block at Korte Ranch and Oles Vineyard, both located in the heart of St. Helena where the Eastern and Western hillsides meet. The Korte Ranch vineyard located just north of St. Helena is one of the most distinctive Zinfandel vineyards in Napa Valley. The gnarly old head pruned, dry farmed vines date back to the late 1880's and are planted where the eastern and western hillsides meet. The beautiful property is perfectly suited for high quality grape growing from the cool morning and nighttime temperatures to the poor soils of rocky, loamy bench-land, which help make wine of unique, bold character. Owners Jack and Kathy Pagendarm are the fourth generation of their family to own and farm the ranch. Russ Oles, part grower, part Napa Valley historian, farms unique clones of Zinfandel and Petite Sirah with a tough love approach. His idea in his words is to "put 'em in the ground, strap 'em to a wooden stake and only the strong survive." The majority of his head pruned Zinfandel and Petite Sirah bush vines are 20 years old and extremely low yielding. The Draper Clone of Petite came from one of the oldest vineyard sites on Spring Mountain and has since been pulled out. The other phantom clone came from the ancient vines at Rattlesnake Acres in Calistoga, one of California's most celebrated Petite Sirah sites. The origins of these clones of Petite are long gone or strongly guarded family secrets.

Winemaking: The incredible grapes from Korte Ranch and Oles Vineyard are so unique and distinctively flavored our job in stewarding the grapes to wine is to capture that very essence with as minimal and gentle handling as possible. The grapes were hand picked in the early morning. We gently de-stemmed the fruit into 500-liter French Oak Puncheons for cold soak and primary fermentation using only native yeasts. The Puncheons were rolled three times a day for approximately three weeks after which the wine was pressed into French and American Oak Barrels, 30% new, for malo-lactic fermentation and aging. The wine aged on its lees in barrel for 14 months and was racked and bottled unfiltered.

The Wine: Displays a beautiful vibrant, ruby purple color. The wine features spicy black raspberry, blueberry and brambleberry fruit framed by hints of vanilla, cream, white pepper, cedar and toast. Intensely flavored, and brightly fruited, showing medium body and a rich texture with a racy acidity that carries the wine from the mid palate through the lengthy finish. The soul of the wine, which is clearly centered and focused on the purity of fruit shines through.



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