



WILLIAM KNUTTEL

William Knuttel's winemaking journey began at Saintsbury, where he was winemaker from 1983 to 1996 and established that brand as an international leader in high-end Pinot Noir and Chardonnay in the Burgundian style. William Knuttel was also Vice President and Winemaker at Chalk Hill Winery from 1996 to 2003, specializing in ultra-premium Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Gris. From 2003 to 2011 Knuttel was Executive Winemaker at Dry Creek Vineyard, where he completely re-honed the styles and quality of that winery's extensive portfolio. Knuttel was also ZAP's winemaker in 2005, producing their Heritage Zinfandel, and President of the California Cabernet Society from 1999-2003.



2018 CABERNET SAUVIGNON ATLAS PEAK, NAPA VALLEY



Over the years William Knuttel Winery has produced Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon from many small vineyards throughout the valley, but this is the first time we've used the Atlas Peak designation. Two of my consulting clients brought in fruit from the appellation, and one of them asked if I would trade my consulting fees for wine. The decision was not finalized until early 2019 when the wine was in barrel—and at that point it was pretty easy to figure out what a marvelous blend could be made. So, while the exact parcels cannot be identified, the client's bottling, albeit a slightly different final blend, has already been released with quite a high price tag, and it immediately scored a Double Gold in the Bay Area's most prestigious wine judging!

Our Atlas Peak Cabernet Sauvignon was hand-harvested from three small blocks averaging 2.3 tons per acre. These were separately crushed into one-ton fermenters, and fermentation with wild yeasts began after two days. The cap was punched down three times daily, and then the bins were sealed up for an additional two weeks of maceration before pressing. Only free run portions were used in the final blend, which was aged in 100% French oak (40% new – medium+ toast) for 20 months and is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Only 134 cases were produced.