



Napa Valley Sweet Vermouth No. 4

First off, our vermouth is primarily about the wine. The base wine. It is 80% Flora, which is a variety bred at UC Davis by the legendary Harold Olmo back in the 1950's. Flora is a cross between Semillon and Gewurtztraminer Though Olmo isn't with us any more to confirm our theory, our conviction is that he bred it specifically for fortified wines. The California industry moved away from these types of wines and Flora fell into obscurity. When we heard that Flora still existed in the organically farmed Yount Mill Vineyard we immediately begged for some fruit. This fruit is a rare exception for us—normally we try to grow all of our own fruit—but the temptation to make wine from this rare and historical variety was too much to resist.

For the Vermouth No. 4 we also used 20% Muscat of Alexandria, which we harvested as raisins and aged in barrel for four years.

Batch No. 4 is a non-vintage blend of the 2016, 2017, and 2018 vintages. The older wine gives the dried jammy fruit and nutty flavors, and the younger wine is more vibrant with fresh fruits. Since our Vermouth is always non-vintage we only make a new batch each two to three years.

Each year the fruit was picked very late, with some botrytis and raisins at harvest. Besides the natural high sugar, the must was sweetened further by chaptalizing with organic cane sugar, to around 45 brix.

The grapes were fermented whole cluster (skins and stems) in open-top fermenters with manual punch downs twice a day. We let the fermentation stop naturally, with 120-170 grams per liter of residual sugar remaining due to the high brix when the grapes were crushed, and pressed the wine into partially full used barrels.

We added no sulfites during elevage and didn't top, instead allowing the wine to slowly oxydize and develop the wonderful nutty and dried fruit flavors. The wines were barrel aged between 18 and 40 months.

To complement the natural grape aromas of the Flora we made infusions of our own home-grown blood oranges and sour cherries, along with coriander seed that we purchased. The infusions were made in a base of high-proof neutral grape spirits.

The bittering was mainly done by adding an infusion of our own home-grown cardoons, but we also purchased chinchona bark and blessed thistle to infuse for a little more complexity.

The three vintages were blended and the infusions added into the wine right before bottling.

The wine was bottled unfiltered. 469 cases of half bottles produced. 17.0% ABV.

The Napa Valley Sweet Vermouth No. 4 makes a great boulevardier, blood and sand, negroni, manhattan, or even better, can be served neat as an aperitif or to accompany dessert.