



# HIDDEN RIDGE

## EXTREME MOUNTAIN TERRAIN VINEYARD – EXCEPTIONAL, SINGLE VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON

### HIDDEN RIDGE THE ULTIMATE VINEYARD - A VIEW FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOP BY WINEMAKER MARCO DIGIULIO

In 1999 I was introduced to a vineyard that quite literally shifted the paradigm for me. A vineyard so steep, so well developed, so interesting in its planning scheme and with so much vision behind it that I could not help but be blown away.

Hidden Ridge Vineyard is located on the west side of Spring Mountain, in the heart of the Mayacamas Mountains, just inside the Sonoma County line and within a mile of Pride and Paloma - so far off the beaten path that most maps do not show it. It just so happens that the county line crosses at the wrong place, but this is essentially Spring Mountain.

Even though just a few miles from a historic stage coach route, early maps refer to this area as the “Impassible Mountains.” Still today Hidden Ridge is only reachable by 4 wheel drive up a rugged one-lane road. Just finding Hidden Ridge feels like a wilderness adventure.

This extreme terrain mountain vineyard is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon planted on 55 acres, in 21 blocks on slopes with elevations ranging from 900 to 1,700 feet and as steep as 55%. Deep volcanic basalt and sandy clay loam soils support four Cabernet Sauvignon clones: 4, 7, 169, and 337. By design, only Cabernet Sauvignon clones were planted. It was determined early on there was so much complexity in flavor and character among the four clones chosen that we decided not to plant any of the other Bordeaux varietals.

Three distinct microclimates make this rugged mountain property a once-in-a-lifetime winemaking opportunity. Variances in sun exposure, fog patterns, soils, elevation, rootstock and clones, all within the contiguous land that is Hidden Ridge Vineyard, can afford us up to 14 different lots that we ferment separately, each providing its own subtle flavor characteristics. Identifying these characteristic nuances according to the fruit’s location in the vineyard, studying the meso and micro-climates, fermenting the lots separately, and continuous blending trials all combine to create the challenge and the opportunity of this unique property and a winemaker’s delight. This vineyard offers an ongoing adventure of exploration and discovery with its amazing level of variety and complexity in the fruit. Dealing with an abundance of wealth in the vineyard, yet staying true to the Hidden Ridge character, is a wonderful dilemma to have.

By and large the vineyard is dry farmed. When there are heat spells, the vineyard is irrigated, but normally it is not. The challenging terroir stresses the vines and maximizes the flavor concentration within the small berries. The result is the ripe, lush, red-fruit-driven, big mountain Cabernet Sauvignon that is distinctly Hidden Ridge. The wine shows a balanced, complex structure, soft silky tannins, and is a robust yet decidedly elegant wine with the promise to age for years to come. Marco DiGiulio



**“...the challenge and the opportunity of this unique property is a winemaker’s delight.” Marco DiGiulio, Winemaker**



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## **MOUNTAIN FRUIT SPECIALISTS – TIMOTHY MILOS AND MARCO DIGIULIO, WINEMAKERS**

You might say that Hidden Ridge Vineyard is blessed with an embarrassment of riches when it comes to winemaking in that it enjoys the considerable talents of not one, but two, acclaimed mountain fruit specialists in **veteran winemakers Tim Milos and Marco DiGiulio**. Other Milos– DiGiulio projects include Spence Vineyards, The Bounty Hunter Rare Wines (Justice and Waypoint), Black Coyote, Girard Winery, Lookout Ridge, and Rubissow Wines. Their depth of experience and passion for their craft combine to maximize the rare opportunity of Hidden Ridge extreme mountain vineyard.

Both Milos and DiGiulio are known for minimalist, neoclassical winemaking techniques that showcase the unique character of the vineyard in each bottle. This includes meticulous sorting and gentle fruit handling, frequent, gentle pumpovers, extended maceration of almost 40 days and native fermentations in barrel to complete the process. 75% new French oak is implemented and the wine is bottled unfined and unfiltered.

**“I want the vineyard to be the star of the show.”**

**Tim Milos, Winemaker**

## **THE VISION - DARING, DEDICATION AND THE SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE**

Lynn Hofacket and wife and partner Casidy Ward purchased this remote property, an abandoned private hunting club, in 1990 and after 5 years began the adventure of transforming the untamed wilderness area into the magnificently terraced vineyard that is now Hidden Ridge.

In the early years, Lynn worked alone, personally running heavy equipment to prepare the land and lay the groundwork for what was to come - an amazing accomplishment considering the remote and extreme terrain. He later hired engineering guidance and even oversaw the creation of a reservoir on top of one of the ridges. Because of hillside ordinances this vineyard could not be developed today. It is truly the last of its kind.

Along with prestigious winemaker, Marco DiGiulio, Ward and Hofacket are dedicated to keeping production small and exclusively estate grown to secure for a long time to come the future of their unique and quite exceptional vineyard.

## **HIDDEN RIDGE - THE WINE**

Dark, fragrant, bold and concentrated, the core is lush with juicy red fruit from raspberries to an almost ripe black cherry. The red fruit driven flavors evolve in the glass continuing with ripe, dense currant, blackberry, and chocolate with nuances of spice and toasty oak. Well-structured, and well-proportioned, the wine finishes with amazingly soft tannins for mountain fruit. A stunning example of true, single vineyard Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon.

## **WHAT THEY ARE SAYING ABOUT THIS SONOMA MOUNTAIN CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

- **95 POINTS** STEVE HEIMOFF, WINE ENTHUSIAST, NOV 2009
- **“A HOT NEW CABERNET PRODUCER”**  
WINE SPECTATOR, ULTIMATE BUYING GUIDE 2008
- **“20 TO WATCH – EXCITING NEW CABERNET LABELS”**  
WINE SPECTATOR, MARY ANN WOROBIEC, NOV 2007
- **92 POINTS** JAMES LAUBE, WINE SPECTATOR, OCT 2007
- **92 POINTS** JAMES LAUBE, WINE SPECTATOR, JUL 2007

(RATINGS REFER TO 2003, 2004 AND 2005 VINTAGES)



**FAMILY OWNED-ESTATE GROWN-SMALL PRODUCTION-SINGLE VINEYARD-EXTREME MOUNTAIN CABERNET**