



2021 ISTHMUS CABERNET SAUVIGNON

VINTAGE NOTES

2021 was the second dry growing season in a sequence of historic drought years. Fortunately, our vines responded well, achieving balanced growth and yielding a high-quality crop thanks to the water-deficit tolerance developed through five years of dry farming. We received 12 to 14 inches of total rain between Hamel Family Ranch and Nuns Canyon Vineyard—less than half our typical amount—with peak precipitation in December 2020 and March 2021. After a cooler-than-average spring, summer and late-season conditions were typically warm and dry. Our red-grape harvest began August 30 at Hamel Family Ranch and August 31 at Nuns Canyon Vineyard and concluding on September 20, marking 2021 our earliest finish on record. With a smaller crop load reflecting the vintage conditions, the wines show balanced fruit, tremendous natural intensity, and power.

TASTING NOTES

A dark ruby hue in the glass, the wine's bouquet unfolds dynamically with notes of fresh plum, black cherries, and cassis intertwined with layers of fennel, sage, violet, and a hint of crushed graphite, with a distinct sanguine flintiness that is characteristic of our iron-rich basalt terroir. The palate has a pronounced vertical tension supported by tightly knit tannins and a chalky, mineral finish. The wine can be opened and enjoyed in the near term but will continue to gain complexity in the cellar over the next fifteen years.

INFORMATION

Variety	76% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Cabernet Franc, 7% Mourvèdre		
Vineyard	51% Hamel Family Ranch, 49% Nuns Canyon Vineyard		
Appellation	Sonoma Valley	Harvest Dates	9.6.21–9.17.21
Vintage	2021	Bottling Date	5.22.23 – 5.23.23
Production	1,289 cases	Alcohol	14.1%
Fermentation	60% stainless steel tanks, 33% concrete tanks, 7% oak tanks		
Aging	12 months in 15% new French and Austrian oak casks, 18% neutral oak casks, and 67% neutral oak barrels, followed by 7 months in concrete tanks		



ACCOLADES

95 POINTS

ROBERT PARKER WINE ADVOCATE

"...slowly unfurling scents of black plum, cassis, lilac... The palate is powerful yet elegant. Its mineral-laced fruit is structured by dusty tannins and bright acidity, and it has a long finish laced with violet perfume."

– Erin Brooks, October 2024

95 POINTS

DECANTER

"The nose is vivid and layered, offering notes of sage, currants, juicy black plums... On the palate, the wine is generous and expressive, featuring ripe, dark fruit and spice notes. Despite the generous mouthfeel, the tannins are elegantly integrated with a nice acidity, carrying a perfumed long finish."

– Ana Carolina Quintela, July 2025