



# 2021 STRATUM RED WINE

## 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

The 2021 Stratum Red Wine displays a dark ruby hue in the glass. Its lively and dynamic nose opens with black cherry, blackberry, and raspberry and a hint of flintiness, evolving into a bouquet of fresh sage, wild herbs, and delicate rose petals. These aromas are grounded by a pronounced sanguine quality, reminiscent of crushed, iron-rich volcanic rock. On the palate, layers of ripe plum and pomegranate deliver a vibrant and harmonious character. With a focused tension on the front and mid-palate, the energy and sapidity of the wine's structure extend into a finish shaped by tightly knit, chalky mineral tannins. While approachable in its youth, the wine is structured and will gracefully age over the next seven years.

## INFORMATION

Variety	53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 32% Merlot, 14% Cabernet Franc, 1% Zinfandel		
Vineyard	58% Nuns Canyon Vineyard, 41% Hamel Family Ranch, 1% Armor Plate Vineyard		
Appellation	Sonoma Valley	Harvest Dates	9.1.21 – 9.20.21
Vintage	2021	Bottling Date	6.15.23–6.16.23
Production	3,000 cases	Alcohol	14.1%
Fermentation	65% in Stainless Steel Tanks, 35% in Concrete Tanks		
Aging	12 months in 19% New French Oak Vats and Puncheons, 81% Neutral French Oak Barrels and Vats followed by 6 months in Concrete Tanks		



## ACCOLADES

# 94 POINTS

### ROBERT PARKER WINE ADVOCATE

...“wafts of cassis and violet...bright, floral flavors...and a long, mineral-driven finish.”

– Erin Brooks, October 2024

# 95 POINTS

### DECANTER

Stratum is the gateway to Hamel’s Cabernet-driven reds, with Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot forming the backbone of this blend in 2021... Aromatically, it’s rich with notes of currants, pressed flowers, and a dusting of spice. On the palate, the wine is generous with an earthy, iron-like character, but fine powdery tannins, and a lingering mineral edge.

– Ana Carolina Quintela, July 2025



CURRENT RELEASES

# CRITICAL ACCLAIM



2023 ESTATE  
SAUVIGNON BLANC  
SONOMA VALLEY

93 PTS

WINE ENTHUSIAST

"Aromas of kafir lime leaf, pineapple, sage, pithy citrus, lemon blossom and candied ginger mingle and dance on the nose of this concrete egg- and neutral-oak-aged wine. The palate brings nervy freshness and minerality that persists with flavors of lime peel and tart pineapple in a framework of generous acidity that vibrates along the finish."

—Tom R. Capo  
June/July 2025



2021 STRATUM  
RED WINE  
SONOMA VALLEY

94 PTS

Robert Parker  
WINE ADVOCATE

"The 2021 Stratum is a blend of 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 32% Merlot, 14% Cabernet Franc and 1% Zinfandel. It has ferrous scents of cast iron and deeper wafts of cassis and violet. The medium-bodied palate is more open at this stage, offering bright, floral flavors, clay-textured tannins and a long, mineral-driven finish."

—Erin Brooks  
June 2024



2021 ISTHMUS  
RED WINE  
SONOMA VALLEY

95 PTS

Robert Parker  
WINE ADVOCATE

"The 2021 Cabernet Sauvignon Isthmus, matured in 15% new French and Austrian oak, has slowly unfurling scents of black plum, cassis, lilac, cast iron and beef. 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."

Drink Date: 2025-2040."  
—Erin Brooks  
October 2024



2019 NUNS  
CANYON VINEYARD  
SONOMA VALLEY

97 PTS

Robert Parker  
WINE ADVOCATE

"...exceptional for its embrace of both the full, ripe fruit of California and the classic herbal touches of the Cabernet grape. ...it offers generous waves of floral perfume—violet and lilac—with a core of blueberry and black cherry jam and wafts of tobacco, pepper, and graphite. The full-bodied palate embodies power and weightlessness, with ultra powdery tannins and refreshing acidity that draws out its fragrance. Its flavors are pure yet complex."

—Erin Brooks  
March 2023