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Schramsberg and Davies Vineyards: 50 Years of Exploring Ideal Vineyard Sites

From J. Davies Estate Diamond Mountain District to Napa Valley and Beyond

ST. HELENA (October 26, 2015) — 50 years of intensive vineyard site exploration in the Napa Valley and throughout the North Coast provides the Davies family and its winemaking team with an extraordinary range of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon with which to craft fine wines, sparkling and still.

Since the beginning, when Jack and Jamie Davies set out to produce sparkling wines of character and distinction using low-yielding premium Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes sourced from growers in the northern Napa Valley — Calistoga, St. Helena and Spring Mountain — the famed California sparkling wine house has never relented in its search for vineyard sites that are best suited, in terms of soil types and microclimates, to its signature grape varieties. This ethos is clearly illustrated in the family's commitment to improving and building the scope of the Schramsberg Vineyards viticulture program.

The winery furthered its sparkling wine program in the 1960s and 1970s, first replanting the estate vineyards on Diamond Mountain to these specific varieties, then seeking out fruit from other vineyard sites to produce even more refined and balanced styles. Schramsberg's stable of vineyards extended first to the south — Yountville, Oak Knoll and eventually the Carneros region — and later on in the 1990s to the cooler coastal pockets of Mendocino's Anderson Valley, the Sonoma Coast and Marin County in the west.

The deliberate and successful exploration of fruit quality in the vineyard continues with the second generation of the Davies family in the development of the Davies Vineyards brand, which celebrated its inaugural vintage in 2009 with single-vineyard Pinot Noirs from choice sites along the North Coast: Londer and Ferrington vineyards in Anderson Valley and Nobles Vineyards in Fort Ross-Seaview. In subsequent vintages, vineyard-designate Pinot Noirs from unique locations including Hyde and Hudson in the Napa Carneros as well as Joseph Phelps' Freestone on the Sonoma Coast have been added to the range, creating a line-up of wines that capture the singular expression of each site.

Excited by the resulting successes of the marriages between grape and soil with Pinot Noir, Schramsberg and Davies winemakers set out in 2012 to produce a range of vineyard-specific Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignons, increasing momentum for the red wine program that began in 2001 with the estate-grown J. Davies Estate Diamond Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon. The wine's first vintage followed the gradual replanting of the estate's Diamond Mountain District hillside vineyards to Cabernet Sauvignon and supporting red varieties, which were determined to be more suited to the site than Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

Today, the Winfield Vineyard under Calistoga's Palisades and Round Pond Vineyard in the heart of Rutherford provide fruit for the Davies Cabernet program, which will continue to evolve, highlighting the unique flavor characteristics that make each wine strikingly different and singular to the vineyard source.

The winery has evolved in other ways as well: In 2012, the family purchased a defunct car dealership property on St. Helena's Main Street to house its red wine production activity. Four years later, plans are being carried out for an accompanying tasting room and hospitality facility to allow consumers and trade alike the opportunity to explore the range of these extraordinary Cabernet and Pinot Noir vineyards.

Schramsberg's five decades of exploration has resulted in access to more than 120 individual vineyard blocks. Aiding in its success are the strong relationships forged between the Schramsberg/Davies teams, led by vintner Hugh Davies and winemaker Sean Thompson, and some of the best growers in Napa Valley and the North Coast, including: Carneros' Hyde, Jones, Tognetti, Schwarze, Hudson and Sangiacomo; Anderson Valley's Juster, Ferrington, Standish, Conzelman and Wiley; Sonoma Coast's Nobles, Keefer, Hawk Hill, Dutton and Phelps; and Marin's Redding Ranch, Skywalker, Grossi and Stevens. Strong ties with the trade and consumers have also helped to establish the winery's long-term sustainability, ensuring the continued search for the best sites, and therefore the best wine, in northern California.

About Schramsberg Vineyards

Located in Calistoga, California, Schramsberg Vineyards is dedicated to producing handcrafted wines using the méthode traditionnelle technique. Wines produced by the winery include the signature Reserve, J. Schram and J. Schram Rosé; the vintage-dated Blanc de Blancs, Blanc de Noirs, Brut Rosé and Crémant Demi-sec; and the multi-vintage Mirabelle Brut and Brut Rosé. Located in St. Helena, California, Davies Vineyards focuses on vineyard-designated Pinot Noirs and Cabernet Sauvignons. The J. Davies Estate Cabernet Sauvignon is wholly produced from the winery's replanted vineyards on its historic Diamond Mountain vineyard property. For more information, please visit www.schramsberg.com and www.jdavies.us. Schramsberg and Davies Vineyards are represented nationally by Wilson Daniels, 707-963-9661.

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