PAUL HOBBS

2023 Coombsville Cabernet Sauvignon

Vineyards

- Clonal selections: 337, 4, 169, See, 400, Hyde, 181, 347, 214, and 32
- Rootstock: 101-14, 110r, and 3309
- Sites: Various exposures, and soils including Haire Loam and Sobrante Loam

Growing Season

If one were obliged to condense the '23 growing season to a one-word descriptor, that word would be 'water.' After several years of persistent drought, our vineyard team radically modified farming practices to handle the vigorous growth stimulated by abundant winter rains. Indeed, years like 2023 remind us why it is important to stay nimble and adaptable. By so doing, despite nature's overabundant gift of rainfall, our team's flexibility and skill aided in garnering a standout vintage.

A series of 'atmospheric rivers'—long narrow bands of water vapor in the atmosphere that move concentrated amounts of moisture from the tropics to the poles—in January and March refilled rivers, lakes, and reservoirs to capacity and replenished aquifers while saturating soils.

Wet and cool conditions through early April delayed bud break by several weeks, and lower than average temperatures coupled with additional rainfall in May further delayed phenological development. Despite these less-than-ideal conditions, fruit set was remarkably strong for all our varietals.

July brought warmer weather and by late month 'veraison' started in earnest. However, plummeting temperatures in August ushered an atypically thick and persistent marine layer onshore, wetting canopies and causing a significant increase in berry size and weight. To counteract this phenomenon, and to secure good phenolic concentration in the fruit, we performed additional crop thinning across all vineyards. Harvest began September 20—the latest start in over a decade for Paul Hobbs Winery—was well-paced throughout, and concluded in early November.

In summary, 2023 is notable for its long, slow physiological development cycle, providing the winery with beautifully balanced, nuanced fruit, rendering bright, energetic wines of good structure, length, and elegance.

Harvest

- Hand-harvested at night, shears only
- October 18-November 1

Winemaking

- Varietal composition: 86% cabernet sauvignon, 7% petit verdot, 5% cabernet franc, 3% merlot
- Hand-sorted while still cold from the field
- Indigenous yeast fermentation
- 29-day total maceration
- Pumpovers and délestage
- Spontaneous malolactic fermentation in barrel
- Aged 20 months in French oak barrels; 51% new
- Bottled unfined and unfiltered; June 2025

Tasting Notes

A saturated deep garnet hue, this wine balances focus with layered depth. Aromas of huckleberry, cassis, and blackberry are complemented by dark chocolate, graphite, and tobacco leaf. The palate is precise and well-delineated, framed by fine-grained, supple tannins and supported by graceful tension. A long, expressive finish carries through with elegance and persistence.