



Cima Collina

HELLER VINEYARD  
Riesling

2017

— Organically Farmed —

**APPELLATION**

Carmel Valley

**VINEYARD DESIGNATION**

Heller Vineyard

**VARIETALS**

100% Riesling

**AGING**

Tank fermented & aged

**ALCOHOL**

12.9%

**BOTTLED**

July 23, 2019

**PRODUCTION**

126 cases

**WINEMAKER**

Annette Hoff

**SUGG. RETAIL PRICE**

\$33

**VINEYARD NOTES** – In 2017 I had the opportunity to purchase fruit from this historic vineyard. I did not intend to source Riesling (I had no idea that they even grew Riesling there) but the old vines (planted on their own roots in the mid-1970's) offered some interesting flavors, really great acidity and structure so I chose to bring a few tons into the winery.

This vineyard has been farmed organically since the early days. It's a beautiful piece of property with southern exposure and the soil is sandy loam/river rock and is irrigated with spring water. I'm generally not a fan of California Riesling as true Riesling -- gravelly, wet stone, diesel characters -- in my mind is often out of reach of generally our warm climate. But I've come to understand that the climate of Upper Carmel Valley (aka Cachagua) is a peculiar one in California. It has a reputation for being hot in the summer but most do not understand the other extremes of the climate there. Cachagua Valley is about 900-1100 feet in altitude but is surrounded by the coastal mountains that rise steeply all around it to 2000+ feet, creating a bowl and cold sink in the winter. Summer temperatures can reach over 100 degrees F but can also decrease sharply to lows in the mid-40's to 50's at night. Wintertime can be cold -- many times into the low 20's or even less and the growing season can be short. Cachagua can experience frost as early as September and as late as the beginning of June. This can make for a challenging environment in which to grow wine grapes but Riesling seems to thrive in otherwise challenging conditions.

I admit I'm partial to old vines -- it's an appreciation for plants that have survived and even thrived for multiple decades, pushing their roots further and further down into the soil to discover and then take up the minerals and elements that have remained undisturbed for millennia. It is undeniable that grapes from old vines express their character in nuance and grace, in whispers and hints of nature's wisdom and generosity. Perhaps this is also a factor in this Riesling's unique expressiveness?

**WINE STYLE** – So -- what does all of this mean for this wine? That it is a unique, thoroughly cool-climate classic, unexpected expression of California Riesling. Firm structure, elusively aromatic, bone dry. This will be a wine to age and enjoy how it develops over the next decade.