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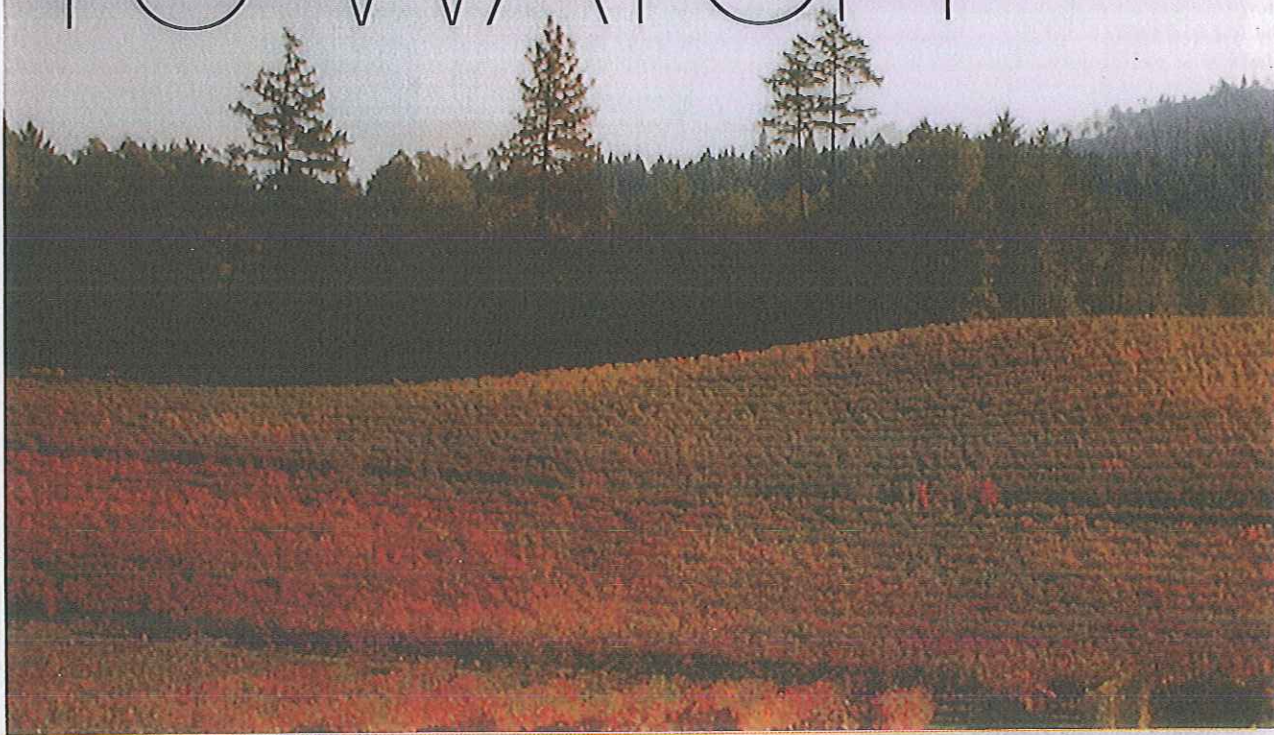
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# FOUR WINEMAKERS TO WATCH



## ANNE VAWTER

WINEMAKER—ZIATA AND OAKVILLE RANCH  
OWNER/WINEMAKER—RED MARE WINES

When Karen Cakebread started Ziata, she wanted the best winemaker she could find.

So Karen, who had married into the Cakebread winery family, turned to a vintner with a pedigreed apprenticeship. Anne Vawter had worked at Paradigm under superstar winemaker Heidi Peterson Barrett.

Vawter came to Ziata in 2009, crafting its Pinot Noirs, Cabernet Francs and Sauvignon Blancs, as well as her own brand, Red Mare. The Calistoga mom of two has come a long way in making a name for herself in a very short amount of time.

"I grew up in agriculture," Vawter says. "My dad was a dairy farmer."

When the family moved to Washington

State to take over a heifer business, Vawter was exposed to the wine scene around Walla Walla.

"My dad and my uncle were wine lovers and would bring home local wines," she says. "I'd taste them, and thought it was pretty cool."

Still, she didn't consider a career in wine until her father told her about the viticulture and enology programs at UC Davis.

"Dad thought it would be a good fit," Vawter says. "So I looked into it, and it just felt super-right. I knew I'd met my people."

Her first job was at St. Supéry. Peterson Barrett then brought her to Paradigm. She remained until 2008, when she started a consulting business.

"When I told Heidi what I was thinking, she was incredibly supportive," she says. "In fact, Heidi was one of the people who recommended me to every client I have. She gave me the courage to go out on my own."



inking, eating and drinking like a local in Piedmont, Napa, Santa Barbara, Portland, Oporto, Mendoza...

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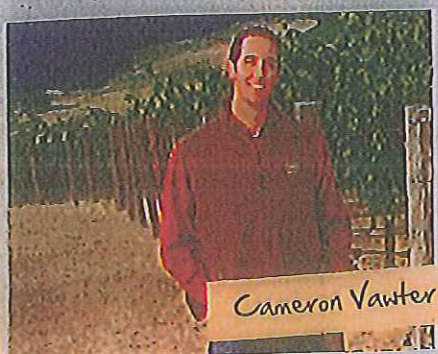


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# Annie and Cameron Vawter on Two Trajectories

Annie Vawter worked at Paradigm Winery as Heidi Peterson Barrett's assistant for four years, before setting off on her own as a winemaking consultant. Her husband, Cameron Vawter, has worked closely with Philippe Melka. The different approaches of their mentors led the couple to "some very heated conversations at the dinner table about winemaking," Annie recalls. "Our conversations are a little cleaner now that we have a couple of kids, but also because I think we have appreciation for each other's styles."



"Heidi was always on the other end of phone, and very generous with her knowledge and her experience," Annie says. "She has a gift for making everything seem simple, especially with how she makes choices. Most of her approach was driven by taste and flavor. Problems arise in the lab, but she taught me that if you're not careful you can get sidetracked with microbiology; she was able to drill down and get past the numbers and speak about what the wine was telling you. She has a style and her skills really help in making a wine seamless—a connected experience in the mouth from the very

beginning until the finish."

Cameron Vawter, winemaker at Dana Estate, says, "It's been interesting that Annie and I worked with Philippe Melka and Heidi Barrett—they're two incredible winemakers but they're really so different.

Philippe [doesn't use a lot of aeration during fermentation]; he loves to extend his macerations, sometimes up to 50 days on the skins. Heidi's not afraid of a good fire-hose pump over, busting up the cap. She presses off according to taste when the tannins are where she wants them to be, and completes the fermentation in barrel. It's early extraction and early pressing."

Annie interrupts him to say, "I think it's difficult to make assumptions based on one set of circumstances. Successful winemaking means making choices along a trajectory. Philippe and Heidi are very different but they're different from the start of

a long process that begins with the pick date and ends in the bottle. You can't just change direction because you heard someone does something one way."

Cameron goes on to describe the difference of working with a careless grower and then with Melka. "The moment I started working with Philippe," he says, "I realized how much I was missing in terms of attention to detail in the vineyards. Where he excels is in his ability to look at site and understand it.

them separately. It gives you access to learn about these areas.

"A lot of Philippe's wines are terroir-driven," Cameron says, "and looking at his client list, most are individual, vineyard-driven wines. In part it's his style, but it's also his preference. His style in winemaking is hands-off. My winemaking had been a little more interventionist; I was accustomed to using commercial yeast and nutrients, and more sulfur than Philippe, partly because I was a little more conservative and

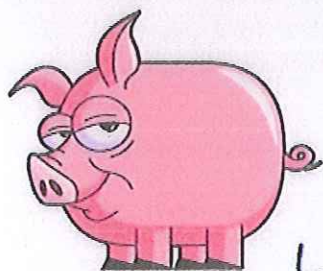
“The moment I started working with Philippe, I realized how much I was missing in terms of attention to detail in the vineyards. Where he excels is in his ability to look at site and understand it.”

—Cameron Vawter

"In 2005, he came on board at Dana and broke the vineyard down logically into blocks that work intuitively. Now we're on our ninth harvest, and we're still using the original map. He understands different locations, picks them separately and ferments

more concerned about going off course. But I've really embraced being hands-off. I've adopted native fermentations, and I use a natural malolactic. I want to expose the site at all costs. If you want to experience the site, you can't intervene." ■





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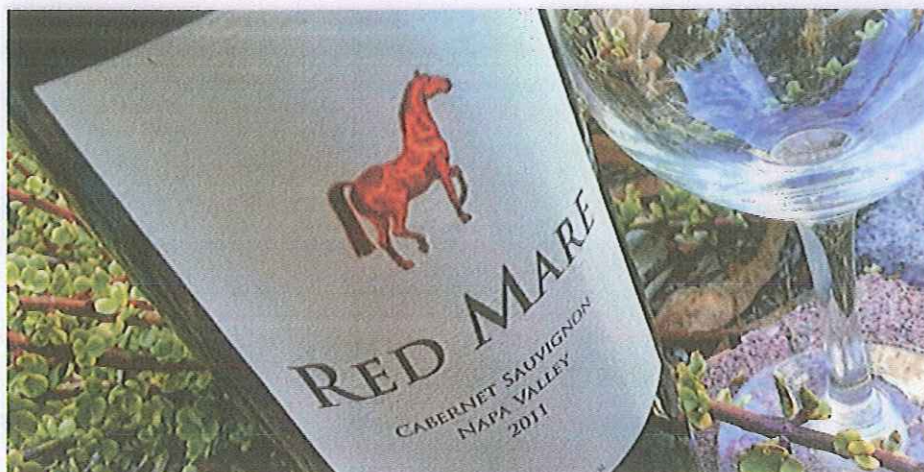
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Red Mare 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon

## TOM'S WINE FINDS: NAPA 2011 RED MARE CABERNET SAUVIGNON

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## Wine of the Week: 2011 Red Mare Cabernet Sauvignon

This is the inaugural post of Tom's Foodie Blog Wine of the Week. Every week I will be tasting and reviewing a new wine that I picked up recently. This week I am reviewing a 2011 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon from Red Mare.

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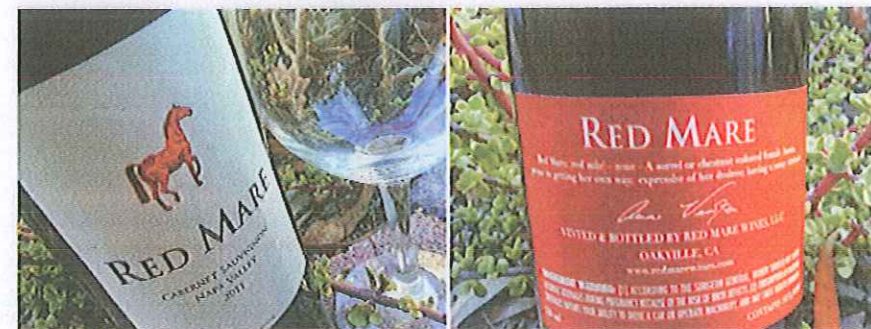
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Event - Newport Beach wine and Food Festival August 22, 2014



Red Mare 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon Labels

## 2011 Red Mare Cabernet Sauvignon Analysis

Red Mare is a small producer that sources fruit from well-respected vineyards





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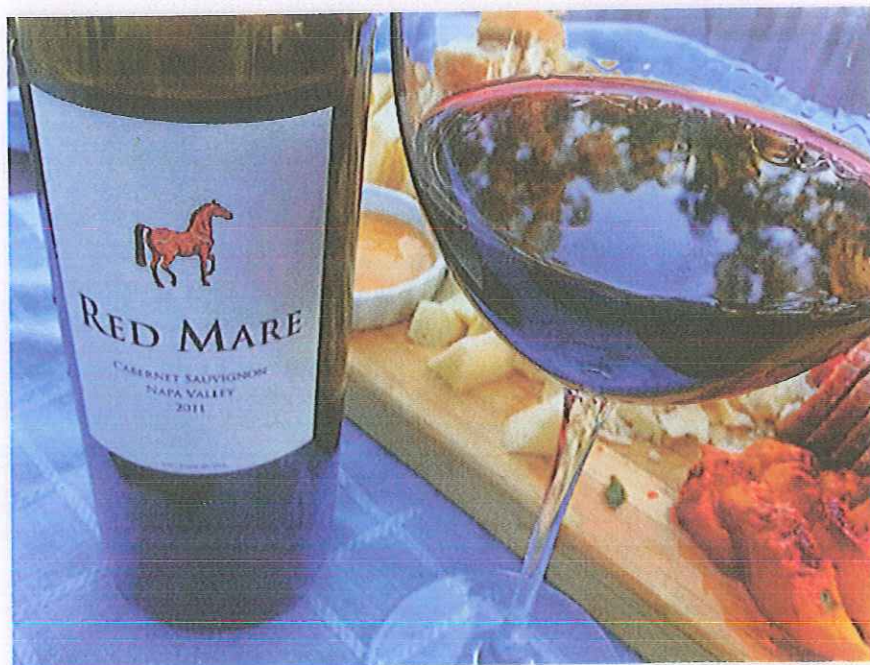
Goat Cheese Stuffed Fig Recipe  
August 5, 2014

throughout Napa Valley. This 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon vintage gathers fruits from Oakville, St. Helena, Rutherford. These three areas of the valley each have their own micro-climate and produce fruit that each lends a different flavor element to the wine.



Red Mare 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon Color

The Red Mare 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon is generally fruit forward, allowing you to taste black cherry, raspberry. There are lovely layers of chocolate, cassis and a fleeting memory of vanilla as your finish the swallow. The wine is juicy up front, rounded at the middle and a relatively smooth finish. This wine does have the characteristic Cabernet Sauvignon long bite at the end.



Red Mare 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon Served with Charcuterie





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This wine really needs to breathe at least 20 minutes, perhaps longer. My first sip, freshly poured out of the bottle, was unbalanced and tanic. After I let the wine rest in the glass for 20 minutes, the aroma became much suppler and the flavor profile became much more complex.

After 30 minutes in the decanter, I was really able to taste the subtle flavors of raspberry and finish of vanilla and clove that I previously mentioned. This wine is young for a Cabernet Sauvignon, I expect it to get better with more bottle aging.

## Food Pairing with 2011 Red Mare Cabernet Sauvignon

Since this wine is fruit forward and a little acidic, I paired it with a charcuterie board full of fatty meat, creamy cheeses and aggressive flavored bread. The wine paired well with the creamy soft cheeses like brie and Havarti and went perfectly with the hard aged white cheddar. It also paired well with the crusty garlic loaf.



Red Mare 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon Charcuterie Pairing

I would also serve this wine with any steak preparation, lamb, hamburgers and even salmon.

## About Red Mare Label

Red Mare is a wine producer, so they do not have their own fancy estate. They source wine from Napa's best vineyards and produce/bottle the wine at Napa Wine Company facilities in Oakville.

The label was founded by Proprietor Jim Striegel, who first starting making wine with his father as a child. With 40 years' experience in Marketing and Real Estate, he started his own label. Partnering with winemaker Anne Vawter, from Paradigm Winery, they produced their first Red Mare's first vintage in 2007 and are now on their 7<sup>th</sup> vintage. Their wines are sold directly to retailers and restaurants.

Based on what I tasted in this wine I expect big things from Red Mare Wines in the coming years.