

Diamond Series



Carter Cellars

Carter Cellars' successful rise to a top level California winery is a simple story of two men whose friendship evolved into a remarkable business partnership. How they became friends is a tale worth repeating.

The two men, Mark Carter and Nils Venge, met some 20 plus years ago, thanks to Carter's interest in fine wines. Carter actually began his career as a developer of restored Victorian homes in his hometown of Eureka, California. The homes overlooked Humboldt Bay, a fixture in far northern California. One success followed another and soon Carter had built a number of Victorians and created himself a successful business. A hotel property followed and then a truly thriving restaurant named 301 Restaurant was added to Carter's portfolio of businesses. It was at the restaurant that Mark Carter established a Wine Spectator Grand Award Wine List that has continued to secure awards to this day.

In Mark Carter's quest for wine authenticity, heralded Napa Valley winemaker Nils Venge was invited to appear at a winemaker event at Carter's restaurant. It was the same Nils Venge of the perfect 100 score by Robert Parker in 1985 while at Goth Vineyards. That initial appearance turned into many successful return events during which Carter and Venge became close friends. When Carter finally decided to develop Carter Cellars in 1994, it was Nils Venge who provided the professional help that assured Carter Cellars a successful beginning. Fruit was secured from a number of sources and the first Carter Cellars wines were released to high scores and good acceptance from the national wine media. The original 160 cases have evolved into about 750 cases this year, still miniscule by anyone's standards for the wine industry.

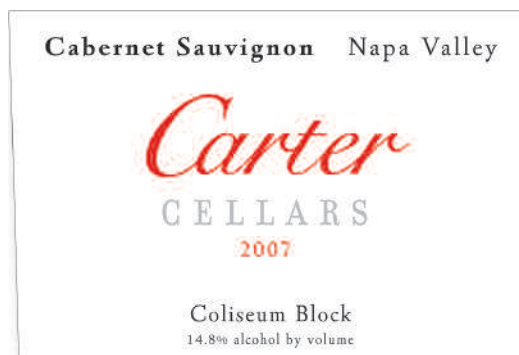
That was more than seventeen years ago, and the awards and accolades have continued unabated during that period. Carter Cellars has raised its presence steadily and is now recognized as one of the top wineries in Northern California.

"I have chosen to keep our production small," commented Carter. "It has a great deal to do with the blocks and vineyards we draw from. All are steep, hillside properties (at an elevation of around 1,100 feet) and only produce a limited amount of grapes per acre. However, the intensity and wonderful flavors the vines bestow on the grapes more than makes up for the lack of quantity. We usually make about thirty barrels of each wine, which really isn't all that much."

Asked about his new stature among Napa Valley's elite wineries, Mark Carter answered thusly: "I am delighted to be where I am right now, among a wonderful collection of winemakers and winery owners. I feel I have approached the situation correctly and have always adhered to the axiom that being small was better."

Asked about advice he would give prospective winery owners in Napa Valley or elsewhere, Carter said that he would expect any new owner to really get to know the area they choose to work in. He would also expect those persons to drink a great deal of wine from that area and try and develop a particular style with which to emulate. Only when a new owner can say he truly knows his particular surroundings will the wines he makes or has made become successful and be accepted.

All of Carter Cellars' wines are crushed and made at Mark Carter's other Napa Valley winery, Envy Winery, located on Tubbs Lane in Calistoga. A new processing building has been added recently to facilitate production at the facility.



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Mark Carter has also added a new winemaker, Mike Smith, whose expertise will be seen starting with the 2009 vintage. Smith was a protégée of Thomas Brown (Schrader Cellars and Outpost Wines) who has become a significant winemaker in the boutique winery world of California. Mark Carter expects

Smith's influence to have a beneficial effect on the wines of Carter Cellars.

"Mike's a talented guy who brings a lot to the table," he added. "It will be great to see what changes he brings to our wines. In the barrel tastings we have performed so far, the results have been quite encouraging, and the wines haven't even been bottled. I can't wait to see the finished product."

It's easy to see that all is good with Mark Carter and Carter Cellars. It's a clear situation of someone knowing what he wanted and following through until reaching fruition. Chances are you will be hearing a great deal more about this amazing winery.

Accolades and Tasting Notes

Carter Cellars 2007 'Coliseum Block' Cabernet Sauvignon

95+ Points, *Robert Parker* — "The compelling 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Coliseum Block even eclipses the brilliant 2006. Opaque purple to the rim, with a gorgeous perfume of violets, licorice, blueberries, and blackberry liqueur, this backward, formidably endowed, full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon possesses a multilayered texture, juicy, sweet fruit, loads of tannin, and well-integrated new oak."

95-Points, *Wine Enthusiast* — "As rich as Napa Cab gets. Made solidly in the modern style, it's soft, elaborate and flamboyant, suggesting ultra ripe blackberry pie, currant, mocha-choca and sweet oak flavors. The all-important tannins are smooth as velvet. Few Cabs are more delicious for drinking now..."

93-Points, *Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar* — "Good, deep, ruby. Crushed cassis and an almost medicinal minerality on the nose. Lush, sweet and fat with fruit; this reminded me of the best Petite Sirahs Carter makes under his Envy label. Wonderfully round and pliant wine, finishing with less tannic power than the To Kalon example, but compelling sweetness."

Reorder

It is our distinct pleasure to present the latest release from Carter Cellars, celebrating the winery's tenth year of handcrafting fine wines in Napa Valley. The 2007 'Coliseum Block' Cabernet Sauvignon displays that certain characteristic of power and balance, intensity matched with grace, and an exquisite refinement that is becoming a signature of the Carter Cellars marquis.

Winery Direct: \$125.00

Diamond Series Price:

2-Bottle members.....\$99.00 / bottle

4-Bottle Members &
Multi-Series Members...\$96.00 / bottle
(Plus shipping)

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