



# Garagiste SERIES

[gar-uh-zheest'] noun - A French term used to describe independent, artisan winemakers crafting small batches of wine in garage-type settings and not yet discovered by the mainstream.

## Level 3 Wines

Owners: Norm & Susan Benson      Winemaker: Norm Benson

Location: Paso Robles, CA

Founded in 2015 in Paso Robles, California, Level 3 Wines is the latest wine endeavor for Norm and Susan Benson, who originally joined the wine industry in the early 1990's when they established Dark Star Cellars. Their mission with Level 3 Wines is to produce very limited amounts of ultra-premium, handcrafted red wines from respected vineyards on the Westside of Paso Robles.

Norm Benson first fell in love with wine in 1990, the year his parents planted a vineyard in Paso Robles. He was immediately attracted to the balance of agriculture and art in wine, and found himself trekking back and forth between Paso Robles and his home in Thousand Oaks, California. Norm quickly immersed himself in the process of producing wine and in 1993, crushed his first thousand pounds of Cabernet Sauvignon from his parents' vineyard with the help of some friends. In 1995, Norm and Susan purchased property on Anderson Road and established Dark Star Cellars - the winery still resides here today and stands as a benchmark for the quality of wines produced in the region. For several years, Norm split his time between the winery and his twenty-five year career in the motion picture industry and finally began work full-time at the winery in 2000. During that time, the Bensons garnered several awards and ratings and gained a devoted following at Dark Star Cellars.

In August of 2015, Norm and Susan decided it was time for a change of pace. They sold Dark Star Cellars to a friend and moved over to the "slow lane." The problem was, they weren't quite ready to stop making wine. They wanted to slow down, but not disappear! Establishing Level 3 Wines was the solution.

The name "Level 3" symbolizes the third chapter in the Bensons' professional lives. Level 1, if you will, was the motion picture (Norm) and medical (Susan) industries; Level 2 was Dark Star Cellars, and of course, the third is Level 3 Wines.

Norm and Susan Benson only craft three red blends for Level 3 - "Driven," a Bordeaux blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc, "C&C," a Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Petite Sirah blend, and "Milestone," a Rhône blend of Syrah, Grenache, and Mourvedre. The wines are only available through the winery and at select restaurants. We are proud to share this wine with our Garagiste Wine Club members and salute this next winemaking venture for Norm and Susan Benson. Cheers!

## Level 3 2015 "Driven" Red Blend

156 cases produced

Denner Vineyards, Westside Ranch & Arbor Creek Vineyard, Paso Robles

A classic Bordeaux blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc, the Level 3 "Driven" Red Blend comes from a trio of well respected Westside Paso Robles vineyards. On the nose, complex aromas of ripe blackberries, tobacco, cocoa and eucalyptus mingle together and complement the rich, lush, full-bodied palate that lingers on the smooth, lasting finish. Aged 20 months in oak. 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc. Enjoy now until 2025.

Gold Medal Wine Club Price: \$39.00 / bottle

To order, visit the Wine Store at [GoldMedalWineClub.com](http://GoldMedalWineClub.com) or call 1-800-266-8888

\*2 bottle minimum per wine, per order. Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included. Call for details.

