



Platinum Wine Club

90+ Rated, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers.

Michel-Schlumberger Wine Estate | Dry Creek Valley

This estate winery came to life in 1979 as Domaine Michel and eventually rose to significance in Sonoma County's prestigious Dry Creek Valley. Jean-Jacques Michel, a native of Switzerland, found the climate of this area perfect for growing high quality grapes that eventually filled some 80 acres of vineyards, a sizable estate by today's standards.

More than a decade later, another European vintner, Jacques Schlumberger (pronounced *Schlum-bur-jay*), whose family roots were in the Alsatian wine industry for more than 400 years, bought controlling interest in the winery and the Michel-Schlumberger Wine Estate was born.

At that time, Michel-Schlumberger Wine Estate was producing around 3,000 cases and has since grown to an annual production of between 5,000 and 6,000 cases and intends to stay at that level for the foreseeable future.

"You might say we have found our 'sweet spot,'" commented Winemaker Bryan Davison, who has been with the company for the last eleven years. "We are actually a very small operation. Besides myself, there are two full-time employees and we are able to produce the quantity and quality our owners demand."

After Jacques Schlumberger retired from the business in 2011, an investor group purchased Michel-Schlumberger. The five-person group does not involve itself in the winery's day-to-day operations and prefers to stay unidentified.

Why has Michel-Schlumberger Wine Estate remained a top-flight producer for so many years?

Winemaker Bryan Davison believes he knows the secret to the company's long-term success. "The fact that practically all of our vineyards are considered 'bench land' is the key. The soils are incredibly rich and semi-gravelly, and the vines relish such complimentary local environs. It is amazing that such a long stretch of land was not forested and was completely plantable. A great portion of our vines are south-facing and tend to produce some really special flavors. Our original vines are still producing incredible fruit, albeit at low levels. We have begun a replacement program, but at a slow pace. This year, we have replanted some 15 acres and next year we'll do another 10. That way, none of our production will be affected."

The fact that Michel-Schlumberger Wine Estate

is considered one of the darlings of the Sonoma County wine experience is no surprise to knowledgeable wine consumers. Its wines have consistently garnered high scores and honors in both local and national competitions.

What about the style of Michel-Schlumberger Wine Estate's releases?

"I would have to say that we tend toward the European style," said Bryan Davison. "The wines are extremely elegant and well-balanced. I still like the full-fruit forward style of California wines, but our grapes tend to produce some specific flavors and I try and duplicate them whenever possible. The Dry Creek Valley is famous for its mini-climates and we are the beneficiaries of this locale."

Davison points to a pair of noted winemakers as the keys to his wines' success. "I worked for Pete Downs at a custom crush facility where we assisted in making a large number of wineries' releases. Each was a different winemaker and I learned high-quality winemaking from a number of winemakers and winery owners who utilized the facility. I was always impressed with Patrick Campbell, owner and winemaker of the celebrated Laurel Glen Vineyard and always consider him one of my mentors."

What challenges lie ahead for Michel-Schlumberger Wine Estate?

"Each vintage produces slight variations in the fruit we receive and that is the challenge we experience. It is exceedingly important to continue the style and polish of the previous vintages even if the fruit is slightly different. That's the real task for the winemaker and our cadre of loyal customers can attest to the fact that we have been quite fortunate to have achieved that goal in all of our wines."

Wines from properties such as Michel-Schlumberger Wine Estate are not always available due to low volume and remarkable followings. It is a great pleasure to introduce our *Platinum Wine Club* members to this delicious 2017 'Platinum Collection' Cabernet Sauvignon from Sonoma's heralded Dry Creek Valley AVA. The wine will be an amazing addition to even the finest cellar and is capable of aging for a number of years while reaching full maturity.

This is a special wine from a special winery. Enjoy!



Michel-Schlumberger | 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon, Dry Creek Valley



**94 POINTS +
CELLAR SELECTION +
GOLD MEDAL**

— *Tastings.com*
(Beverage Testing Institute)

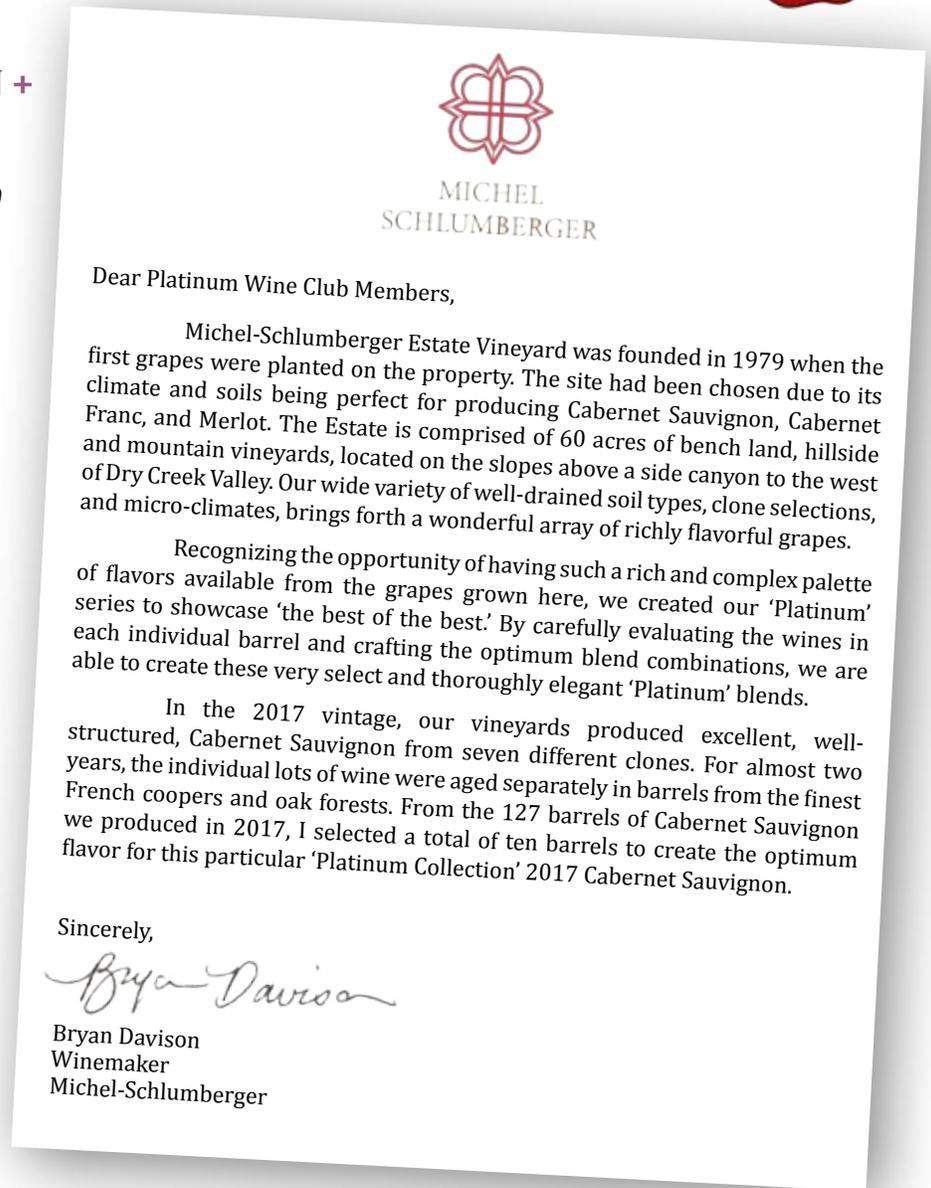
242 cases produced

A blend of the best barrels, the Michel-Schlumberger 2017 'Platinum Collection' Cabernet Sauvignon showcases the outstanding depth of flavor that the winery's estate vineyards can produce. This special bottling includes fruit from the bench land and mountaintop vineyard blocks for optimum flavor expression, and the result in an exceptionally concentrated wine with layers of flavors. Dark ruby in color, the Michel-Schlumberger 2017 'Platinum Collection' Cabernet Sauvignon opens with rich aromas of blackberry, cassis, and plum, with hints of peppery spice. The palate is smooth and elegant before leading into a long finish of dark fruit nuances. Aged 21 months in French oak. 98% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Petit Verdot. Enjoy!



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**This month's Platinum *Plus!*
Featured Wine:**

**Keplinger
2015 'Mars' Red Blend,
Moon Mountain, Sonoma**

94 Points - *Jeb Dunnuck*
225 Cases Produced



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