

# Diamond Series



## 13 Appellations Vineyard & Winery

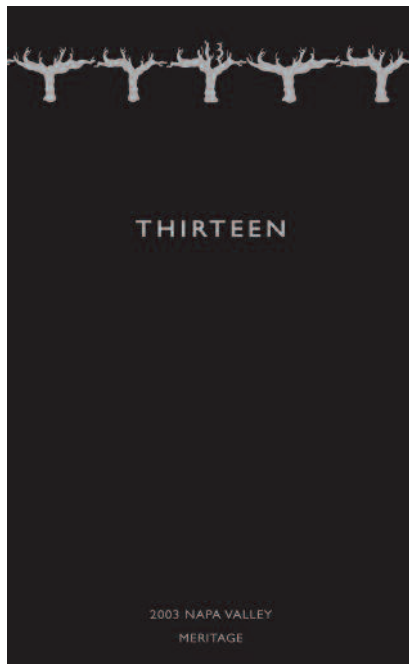
It's been aptly referred to as the United Nations of the Napa wine industry, and with certain good reason. Simply called THIRTEEN, the wine is a unique approach to presenting a product that, in concept, is more than a single wine and more than just a single entity. In a word, THIRTEEN is nearly all encompassing.

THIRTEEN began as a concept nearly five years ago, when noted Napa winery owner Mike Seitz (Brookdale Vineyards) contacted his good friend, winery owner and noted winemaker Steve Reynolds (Reynolds Family Winery). Seitz was extremely excited about an idea he was in the process of developing that involved gathering grapes from all the thirteen existing appellations within Napa Valley that would then be blended into a single wine. Reynolds embraced the project whole-heartedly and plans were made to begin sourcing the grapes. Unfortunately, Mike Seitz's untimely death in 2003 in a forklift accident nearly derailed the fledgling project. Sometime after his death, Seitz's widow, Kristi, began working with Reynolds to insure the project would reach fruition. Vineyard management specialist and winery owner Oscar Renteria (Renteria Wines) was brought into the project to help sourcing and also promote the wine. Renteria was an acknowledged expert in vineyard management and was a key element in being able to secure the perfect fruit needed to make THIRTEEN a reality. He currently travels and handles a great deal of the national marketing for the wine. A final partner, Sean Thomas (Thomas Knoll Winery), was added to insure the undertaking's financial stability.

"It was actually amazing to see how the growers accepted the concept of THIRTEEN," remarked Kristi Seitz recently. "Everyone we contacted wanted to be

represented. Many said they couldn't believe it had never been done before. It was quite exciting for everyone involved."

For the record, the appellations included were Mount Veeder, Howell Mountain, Yountville, Stag's Leap, Chiles Valley, Rutherford, St. Helena, Atlas Peak, Wild Horse Valley, Spring Mountain, Carneros, Diamond Mountain and Oakville. An important decision was made by the partners to limit the amount of grapes to one ton per appellation, thereby assuring a truly limited production wine. "It seemed like the correct thing to do," added Kristi Seitz. "After all, the partners all owned small wineries and this was an added project for everyone. It was supposed to be fun for all and that's exactly the way it has all evolved."



THIRTEEN's first production was from the 2002 harvest, a grand total of just about 100 cases. Needless to say, the first THIRTEEN met with critical acclaim and was quickly sold out. "It's an ambassador for the valley," explained Steve Reynolds. "We limit ourselves to the one ton and then have the luxury of cherry picking. Some of the best wines in the world come from the same vineyards."

The current THIRTEEN release is up to approximately 950 cases, the level the winery will probably enjoy for quite some time due to the self-imposed tonnage restraints. Due to the preponderance of Bordelaise grapes in Napa Valley, THIRTEEN is a true Meritage (rhymes with heritage) wine that includes Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Thirteen is a member of the Meritage Association and will continue making the wine with its present assortment of grape varieties.

"We wanted THIRTEEN to be a sample in the bottle of the entire valley," Kristi Seitz added. "When Mike first came up with the idea, we wanted to really do it right and match the best fruit with the finest appellations. The idea of



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using grapes from the growers with the best reputations was fine as long as the current fruit lived up to the reputations.”

In 2004, a minor wrench was thrown into the marketing when authorities designated another sub-appellation for Napa Valley. The new appellation is called Oak Knoll and will be included in future editions of THIRTEEN, er, FOURTEEN if current marketing ideas are followed. “Look at the bright side,” finalized Kristi Seitz. “One day we will be able to have a vertical tasting with Thirteen, Fourteen and even more if they continue adding appellations. I just can’t think of anything that would be more fun.”

Fun indeed. After all, when the wine in question enjoys ambassador status, the sky’s the limit, right?

## Accolades and Tasting Notes

THIRTEEN is not sent out to any wine magazine or competition for review or awards. Demand is high and the wine’s brilliance speaks for itself, both in quality and concept. Until now, there had not been a single wine that attempted to define Napa Valley as a whole. It is, after all, a daunting task to collect grapes from every soil type, every microclimate, and every terroir. While the parts are great, their sum is greater.

THIRTEEN winemaker, Steve Reynolds comments, “My approach to making this wine was complexity through integration, balance through restraint. Protect the grapes, respect their differences, and get out of the way. It worked. Even in its infancy, THIRTEEN is already showing the balance of a world-class wine. On the front end, you’ll find cassis, rhubarb and strawberry, which gives way to a rich, textured mid palate that is just now beginning to express the hillside characteristics I wanted the wine to have. The finish is long. So long, you’ll have plenty of time to rethink what a cult wine is all about.”

Hugh Johnson, one of the world's best selling wine authors describes THIRTEEN as “A new wine that is both an invention and a discovery.”

## Reorder

2003 THIRTEEN—Imagine one bottle of wine capturing the essence of the entire Napa Valley. That’s precisely what THIRTEEN has accomplished. One ton of grapes from each of Napa Valley’s thirteen sub-appellations blended together to create a one-of-a-kind Meritage wine. Each release of THIRTEEN Napa Valley Meritage is a lightning quick sell out and the 2003 vintage will soon be very difficult to find. An enticing blend of 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 8% Petit Verdot, and 5% Cab Franc captures the expression and terroir of Napa Valley. In 2004, a fourteenth Napa appellation was added so this will be the last release. Once the last bottle of the 2003 is sold, you will only be able to find it at auction prices—a collector’s dream come true. We highly recommend making room in your cellar for this one. Enjoy now or hold until 2020.

Winery Direct: \$115.00

**Diamond Series Price:**  
3 bottles-\$99.00 / bottle  
6 bottles-\$97.00 / bottle  
12 bottles-\$95.00 / bottle  
(Plus shipping)

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