



Platinum Wine Club

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

Venge Vineyards | Napa Valley

Many youngsters dream of being firemen, policemen, or even movie stars. Not so for Kirk Venge (pronounced *Ven-ghee*), who remembers exactly when he accurately predicted his future business path. Venge was only four years old when he determined his potential fate.

"My family was at church and a questionnaire went around about what each child wanted to do as he got older," Venge, now 42, recalled recently. "I answered, 'winemaker,' and thought nothing about it. In our family, you could say that wine was of paramount interest to everyone."

The Venge family is well known to just about anyone with a serious interest in Napa Valley wine and winemaking. Kirk Venge is the fourth generation of his family that emigrated from Denmark around 1940. After stopping in New York, Kirk's great-grandfather and grandfather moved to Los Angeles and eventually started a wine import business. In 1945, Kirk's father Nils was born and was brought up in the world of wine distribution.

Nils Venge attended UC Davis and after graduation began a career as a renowned winemaker with a resume that included Sterling Vineyards, Villa Mt. Eden, Charles Krug, and Groth Winery. In 1976, Venge also partnered with his father-in-law in purchasing a 17-acre Cabernet property in Oakville that would form the basis for the family's Saddleback Cellars, the entity that would one day form the basis for Venge Vineyards.

Kirk Venge followed his father to UC Davis and earned a degree in Viticulture and Enology and worked for Mumm Napa while attending school. He also spent a year in New Zealand and honed his winemaking skills before returning to Napa Valley.

During this time, 1992 to be exact, the Saddleback Cellars name was formally changed to *Venge Vineyards*, a move that propelled the new winery into the hierarchy of Napa Valley wineries. Many awards and accolades followed and, in 2003, Kirk Venge became the winemaker for his family's named winery.

"I was pleased the family had the confidence to give me control of the winery's future," Venge stated. "Following in my father's footsteps was great for my

career, but it was also a little tough. Many people thought our wines were still Nils' products, and the wines were judged and evaluated on that basis. I wanted to do my own thing, and it all took some time."

Kirk has proven to be as talented a winemaker as his father, making wines in his own style, with a vision to build on the family legacy.

In fact, Venge Vineyards has hardly skipped a beat. Awards and accolades have been plentiful and, in 2008, Kirk achieved his lifelong dream and acquired full ownership of Venge Vineyards. The following year, he took a giant step by purchasing a twelve and a half-acre Cabernet ranch in the foothills of the Palisades Mountains in Calistoga to serve as Venge Vineyards' new home. The property includes a state-of-the-art winery operation and an old house that accompanied the land now serves as the tasting room, giving the estate a complete look and feel.

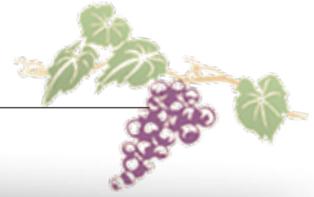
"I was finally able to produce wines that I could call my own," Venge related. Kirk's talent and skill as a winemaker is reflected in the well-balanced style of all of his wines. His philosophy of "making wine in the vineyard" is found in every bottle. Kirk works closely with grape growers to attentively develop the highest quality fruit possible from each vineyard he works with. He knows that the best wines can only come from the best grapes, so it is no wonder his focus has always been on the vineyard first.

For the record, Venge Vineyards is just one of Kirk Venge's myriad of winery responsibilities. He is now one of the most recognized and sought-after winemakers in Napa and Sonoma, offering his winemaking talents to several other California wineries including Hunnicutt, Macauley Vineyard, Mirror, Bacio Divino, JAX, and B Cellars, just to name a few. He has earned countless accolades for his wines and has been named **One of the Top 20 Young Winemakers in the World** by *Food & Wine magazine*. He is certainly following very closely in his father's footsteps and continuing the Venge family legacy of excellence in winemaking.

We are proud to share one of Kirk Venge's latest achievements with our Platinum Wine Club members. Cheers!

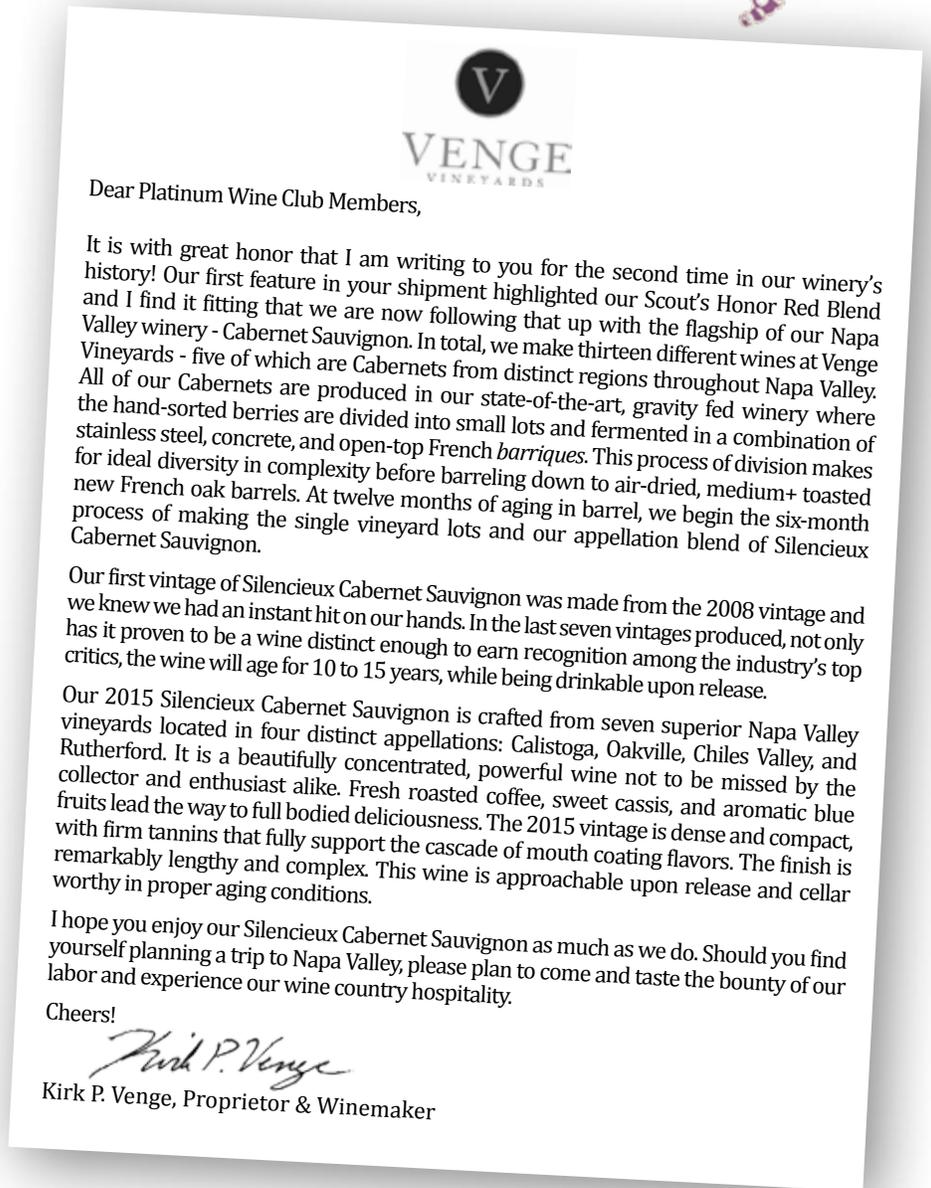


Venge | 2015 Silencieux Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley



95 POINTS
— *Jeb Dunnuck*

The Silencieux Cabernet Sauvignon is Venge Vineyards' flagship wine, offering a beautifully concentrated, powerful blend of fruit from several select vineyard locations in Napa Valley. The vineyard selections themselves are the heart and soul behind this stunning Cabernet Sauvignon, and with such diversity of fruit comes the incredible complexity and powerhouse style the Silencieux is known for. Venge's 2015 Silencieux, comprised of 96% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Petit Verdot, and 2% Cabernet Franc, features fruit from seven distinct vineyards in four Napa Valley appellations: Calistoga, Oakville, Chiles Valley, and Rutherford. Notes of fresh roasted coffee, sweet cassis and blue fruits are supported by firm tannins, a rich, full body and a remarkably long and complex finish. Aged 18 months in oak. Enjoy now until 2025.



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

**Samsara 2013 Syrah,
Zotovitch Vineyard, Sta. Rita Hills**

93 Points - *Antonio Galloni's Vinous*
92 Points - *Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate*
190 Cases Produced



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