



DECOY

THE EVERYDAY WINE FOR THE WELL-INFORMED

Since the inaugural vintage of our Decoy Napa Valley Red Wine more than a quarter century ago, Decoy has taken an important place in the Duckhorn Portfolio of wines. With a reputation for delivering great quality at a remarkable price, Decoy has established a loyal following for its distinctive style, which emphasizes ready-upon-release wines that are capable of expressing their full charm and complexity in their youth. Building on this foundation, Decoy has evolved from being a single wine that supported the Duckhorn Vineyards brand to being a renowned winery in its own right. The Decoy lineup now includes a Red Blend, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc, as well as a California Rosé and Brut Cuvée, all of which highlight Decoy's commitment to producing attractively priced wines from exceptional vineyard sources.



Winemaker Dana Epperson guides the Decoy winemaking program. A gifted winemaker, and an expert working with multiple grape varieties, Dana is also known for her skillful blending. While Dana guides the Decoy winemaking team, because of the Duckhorn Portfolio's unique structure, she also benefits from the talent and expertise of our other winemakers, each of whom has a unique area of specialization.

Fruit for the Decoy program comes from a mix of Estate vineyards and top grower vineyards. “It starts with our Sonoma County focus,” says Dana. “Whether it’s Pinot and Chardonnay from Carneros, Zinfandel from Dry Creek Valley or Bordeaux varieties from our own Ridgeline and Brownell vineyards in Alexander Valley, Sonoma County offers a range of world-class grapes.” To benefit from the diversity of Decoy’s great fruit sources, Dana and her team do as many as 150 individual fermentations each vintage with many lots as small as 5 tons. From there, hands on practices like open-top punch downs and lees stirring are applied. “There is an incredible amount of care that goes into these wines,” says Dana. “If you want to achieve small-lot quality in your wines, you have to apply the same small-lot attention to detail, including hand-sorting, the use of the finest coopers and French oak, and a commitment to artful blending. From the wealth of viticultural and winemaking talent we can draw from to our world-class cooperage program and more, Decoy benefits greatly from the remarkable resources of the Duckhorn Portfolio.”

In 2012, after several years of working with its sought-after grapes, Decoy acquired the renowned Ridgeline Vineyard property to further enhance the quality of our wines. Located on Oak Mountain, Ridgeline Vineyard is situated in the Alexander Valley appellation—Sonoma County’s best region for growing Bordeaux varietals.



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Ridgeline is a steep mountainside vineyard with elevations ranging from 100 to nearly 2,000 feet and benefits from an east-west exposure for maximum sunlight. These factors, and the site's primarily Boomer and Sobrante loam soils, threaded with interlacing natural mineral springs, provide remarkable conditions for cultivating red grapes with phenomenal concentration, color and structure. Ridgeline features 89 planted acres of primarily Cabernet Sauvignon and the other Bordeaux red grapes with most of the plantings dating back to 1999. This coveted fruit is used for our Decoy Cabernet Sauvignon, Decoy Merlot and flagship Decoy Red Wine.

In 2013, we also acquired another spectacular Alexander Valley Estate property, the Brownell Vineyard. Offering an ideal counterpoint to the mountain fruit of Ridgeline, Brownell is a beautiful valley-floor vineyard with ancient gravel and sand alluvial soils. Located in the heart of the valley, Brownell was planted in the early 2000s and features 10 acres of exceptional Cabernet Sauvignon. In this warm mid-valley location, the fruit gets beautifully ripe, adding richness and depth to our Decoy Cabernet Sauvignon.

The Label...

Our labels feature a decoy carved by Richard "Fresh-Air Dick" Janson (1872–1951) during the 1930s. Janson was a premier carver whose decoys are the most recognizable of all Pacific Coast carvings. Artist Michael Allard of Zimbabwe created a painting of this Pintail duck from the original carving. Both works reside in the Duckhorn Vineyards Estate House.

