

# KIVEL STADT CELLARS

2018 Father's Watch – Red Blend

**Overview:**

Years ago, Kivelstadt Cellars was only an idea- the idea that people deserve to drink wines with soul. These wines would come from vineyards with heritage, farmed with the utmost respect for nature, and fermented with minimal intervention. A combination of these ideals has evolved into a lifestyle which, vintage after vintage, results in delicious wines that pay homage to California's terroir.

Father's Watch is Kivelstadt's southern Rhône-style blend. The grapes are grown in a single amazing vineyard in Mendocino County. This rustic and elegant red wine is proof that California can produce serious wine at a reasonable cost. With 14 months in barrel, the wine balances beautifully between its primary aromas and softened tannins. It will make the staunchest Francophile smile and is the perfect wine for a relaxing summer afternoon.

**Varieties:**

Grenache Noir (34%)

Syrah (36%)

Carignane (30%)

**Production:**

956 Cases

**Vineyards:**

Venturi Vineyard, Mendocino County AVA

**Grape Details:**

A little-known fact is that Carignane doesn't originate from Southern France's Languedoc-Roussillon, the region that made it famous. The grape evolved in North-East Spain's Aragon region where it is known as Mazuelo. Carignane is vigorous, highly productive, late budding, mildew prone, and late ripening. Vines produce wines that are high in color, tannin, acid and flavor. These characteristics make it perfectly suited for Northern California and extended life. As these vines get older and older, their fruit gets more and more concentrated.

Grenache Noir or Granacha Tinta in Spain is an ancient variety that has undergone many mutations effecting berry color (Blanc, Gris and Rouge can all be found). Grenache has long been thought to originate from Spain, but current DNA analysis has started a debate as to whether it originated in Spain or Sardinia, where it is called Cannonau. Grenache

Noir is France's second most widely planted grape, which implicates its importance in wine tradition. It is also the base of Southern Rhone Blends from famed regions such as Châteauneuf-du-Pape. This relatively early budding, but late ripening grape is great for hot climates (such as California!). Color is dependent on yield and can range from light and bright to dark and brooding. A fun Viticultural fact is that Grenache is highly resistant to eutypa die back, which explains its miraculous longevity.

Syrah's most famous home is in the vineyards of the northern Rhône. It was recently discovered that Syrah is a cross between Mondeuse Blanche (a grape indigenous to Savoie that's famous for its pepper character) and Dureza (some variety I've never heard of, but is related to Toroldego). Syrah is a famously vigorous variety, which ripens quickly and shortly after veraison (when the baby grapes turn from green to red). This makes harvest decision and farming especially important for Syrah growers, as the wines can go from underripe to overripe in a blink of an eye. Also, next time you're in a Syrah vineyard, check out the leaves. Syrah is famous for an extremely large middle lobe (the one that is parallel to the leaf's stem).

#### **Soils and Farming:**

Venturi Vineyard is located just north of Ukiah, in the Calpella Valley, on predominantly Pinole gravelly loam soils. Pinole soils are some of the most sought-after soil types in Mendocino County. Containing a mixture of sandstone, shale and quartz, these deep, well-drained soils were formed from alluvial flows, depositing fist-sized stones along the way. Highly deficient in organic matter, the moderately acidic soil pH allows for optimal nutrient uptake to allow the vines to thrive.

Larry Venturi is a 3rd generation farmer tending to vines planted on his family's historic site in Calpella (Ukiah), in Mendocino County. Planted in the late 1940's, this nearly 70 year-old vineyard is still amazingly healthy and productive, with much more life to go. The Zinfandel vines were planted in 1955 and are head trained, dry farmed, the whole shebang. The vineyard is farmed Certified Organic.

#### **Vintage:**

2018 was an excellent vintage, particularly for those of us who love restrained wines. Cool and constant temperatures made for slow and steady ripening. This is a vintage which harkens back to the fantastic California vintages of the 80's and early 90's.

#### **Vinification:**

Grapes were fermented separately and blended prior to elevage. All lots were fermented with ambient yeast in order to preserve the typicity of their distinct vineyards. Thirty percent of the clusters were left whole, while 70 percent were destemmed over the top. The fermentations were pumped over minimally in order to wet the cap. The idea is to gently extract flavor and tannin. This brings a combination of high-toned flavor and aroma with a masculine backbone brought on by the whole cluster. 22 months of aging in neutral French oak helps to bring the multiple sides of this blend into harmony.

#### **Tasting Notes:**

This red blend has richness on the attack, yet finishes brightly thanks to the acid profile of the Grenache and Carignane. There is a fantastic balance of fruit and earth, which is characteristic of southern Rhône blends, but due to its California roots this wine's fruit enlivens the entire drinking experience. There is distinct high-toned red fruit on the nose, with of dried herbs and spices rounding out the palate and finish.

**Analysis:**

EtOH: 13.23%

pH: 3.74

TA: 5.6g/L

VA: .72

FSO<sub>2</sub>: 21ppm

ML: 100%