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HOUYI VINEYARD 2019 VINTAGE

Houyi Vineyard came to our attention in 2013 when we were looking to create a new Single Vineyard Cabernet from Pritchard Hill. Flanking the eastern side of Napa Valley, we knew Pritchard Hill was special, with some of the best-known names in Napa wine. At an elevation of nearly 1300 feet, the vineyard sits above the fog line, its vines soaking in the morning sun.

We have six blocks under contract – all Cabernet Sauvignon – most with a southeastern exposure. This vineyard, meticulously managed by David Abreu and his team from the time it was planted, is hitting its stride, and though it may not produce a typical “mountain” Cabernet, we love the fruit it gives us.

Blend: Napa Valley AVA (Pritchard Hill). 100% Cabernet Sauvignon.

Vineyard: Houyi Vineyard

Wine Profile: With red and black fruit, this wine has a pretty profile that belies its mountain origins. Houyi’s signature floral note of violet/lavender is here, along with notes of graphite and iron. Perhaps because of the site’s warm, southwest explore, the wine lands in the middle ground of Napa Valley Cabernets, not as structured as Farella but also not as hedonic as To Kalon or Crane. Tannins are chalky.

THE STORY BEHIND HOUYI

Houyi Vineyard is owned by the Chang family, who are also the proprietors of Nine Suns. The one thing you immediately notice upon visiting Houyi Vineyard is how much rock there is to contend with. Three feet under the top soil is a bed of solid rock, and planting a vineyard on this site is not for the faint of heart.

When photographer Matt Morris visited Houyi, he was struck not only by the rock, but by the machinery used for its excavation. “I call it the bucket graveyard,” he says of the pile of rock and backhoe parts pictured on our Houyi Vineyard label. “It shows just how much effort goes into growing grapes here.” Matt used a Polaroid 180 Land Camera for his shot, one of those folding cameras from the 1960s that he found on eBay.

