



"A stellar range at Dakota Shy, one of Napa Valley's most exciting young wineries."

-- Antonio Galloni, January 10, 2020
2017 & 2018 Napa Valley In Depth

Dakota Shy

Antonio Galloni Tasting Notes

2017 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon - Score 92

The 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley) is bold, racy and super inviting. There is plenty of intensity backing this potent, deeply flavored wine. Crushed red berry, chalk, mint, white pepper and spice give the 2017 striking aromatic top notes and overall brightness. The Napa Valley Cabernet is mostly taken from hillside sites, that give the wine its grippy, tannic feel. I would prefer to cellar it for at least a year or two, as the tannins are intense for an appellation-level bottling. Even so, the fruit emerges beautifully with a bit of air.

2017 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon Moulds Family Vineyard - Score 94

The 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon Moulds Family Vineyard is dense, powerful and explosive, with a stunning combination of fruit richness and the more savory/mineral-driven inflections that are typical of this site. Inky blue/black fruit, crème de cassis, licorice, menthol and spice all run through this heady, super-concentrated Cabernet.

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2017 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon Atlas - Score 95

The 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon Atlas is one of the most vibrant wines in this range of 2017s from Dakota Shy. Rose petal, mint, white flowers and pepper notes give the 2017 a striking floral and savory quality to play off a core of dense red cherry and pomegranate fruit. Incisive tannins give the wine focus and cut. There is a brilliance to the 2017 that I especially admire; this is such a gorgeous wine.

2017 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon Zen Master - Score 93

The 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon Zen Master is another stellar wine in this range. Zen Master, Dakota Shy's artist label Cabernet, is wild, exotic and deeply perfumed, the 2017 has so much to offer. Crème de cassis, lavender, mint, spice and chocolate all run through this super-expressive, pliant Cabernet Sauvignon from Dakota Shy. The 2017 will drink well with minimal cellaring

2017 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Franc Oakville Ranch Vineyard - Score 95

A new wine in this range, the 2017 Cabernet Franc Oakville Ranch Vineyard is positively stellar. Bright acids and vibrant fruit flavors all give the 2017 a decidedly elegant, polished feel that wines from this site don't always have. This is such a gorgeous wine, and also remarkably fresh for the year.

2017 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon Social Currency - Score 95

The 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon Social Currency is a blend of fruit from Paras on Howell Mountain and Pellett in St. Helena. The mix of mountain and valley floor sites yields an incredibly vibrant, distinctive wine loaded with personality. Graphite, crushed rocks, torrefaction, menthol, dark fruit, chocolate, leather, spice and plum all come to life in this mid-weight yet deeply structured Cabernet Sauvignon. There is so much to like here. (bottled in 1.5L)

2018 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley - Score 90-92

The 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley) is an outrageously beautiful wine, especially at this level. The addition of 10% Cabernet Franc gives the Napa Valley Cabernet striking aromatic intensity. Lavender, spice, plum and menthol add layers of nuance to this compelling, super-refined Cabernet Sauvignon from Dakota Shy.

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2018 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon Moulds Family Vineyard - Score 92-94

The 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon Moulds Family Vineyard is elegant, polished and finessed with striking aromatics of floral, savory and mineral notes that give the wine its distinctive profile. Medium in body and a bit nervous in feel, the 2018 has a very bright future. It will be interesting to see if this gains more flesh over the course of its aging.

2018 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon Atlas - Score 93-95

The 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon Atlas offers a beguiling array of inky dark fruit and more savory and mineral notes. Deceptive in its mid-weight structure, the 2018 packs a serious punch in every direction. Crushed rocks, lavender, crème de cassis and sweet spice build into the finely cut, chiseled finish. This is such a promising wine.

2018 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon Momentum - Score 91-93

The 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon comes across as a bit quiet and hushed at this stage. I see a bit less body and overall texture next to the other wines in this range. At the same time, the 2018 has more freshness and overall vibrancy than the 2017. It will be interesting to see where this ends up in a year.

2018 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon The Custodian - Score 92-94

Another new wine in this range, the 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon The Custodian emerges from Mill Creek, in St. Helena's Northern Corridor. Bright, punchy and racy, the 2018 expresses the natural exuberance that is typical of wines from this part of St. Helena. Plush fruit, open aromatics and silky tannins add to its considerable allure. This is a terrific wine in the making.

2018 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Franc Oakville Ranch Vineyard - Score 93-95

The 2018 Cabernet Franc Oakville Ranch Vineyard is bright, punchy and full of flavor - all of which is accomplished by staying light on its feet. A wine of nuance and tension, the Franc once again truly dazzles here. The purity of the flavors is just striking.

2018 - Dakota Shy Cabernet Sauvignon Social Currency - Score 93-96

The 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon Social Currency, bottled in magnum only, is one of the highlights in this range from Dakota Shy. Today, it is also the most complete and expressive of the wines. Ample and creamy, with striking inner sweetness, the 2018 is just dazzling. Blackberry jam, chocolate, licorice, spice, menthol and lavender infuse the 2018 with captivating perfume and richness. All the elements meld together in a striking, sumptuous Cabernet Sauvignon that hits all the right notes. In a word: stunning.