

2011 CONTINUUM

Estate Proprietary Red Wine Napa Valley

SOURCE	REVIEWER	RATING
Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar May/June 2014	Stephen Tanzer	92+



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With 62 acres now under vine here, at an altitude ranging from 1,300 to 1,600 feet, above the fog line, Tim Mondavi describes his estate atop Pritchard Hill as “a grand cru on top of the world.” And it was showing at its best on a pellucid, breezy March morning, when I was able to clearly see individual buildings in San Francisco 60 miles to the south. As of vintage 2011, Mondavi’s flagship wine is 98.5% from estate fruit. His new winery was ready in time for the 2013 harvest, which Mondavi told me was the 40th harvest of his winemaking career. It’s clear that he has been re-energized by his new project. Mondavi is now making 25% of his wine in cement fermenters, which he says enhance minerality and vibrancy. He’s also following a racking regime that owes more to Burgundy than to Bordeaux—just three or four rackings in total, or less, before bottling without fining or filtration. The potentially exciting 2012 was scheduled for just its second racking the day after my visit.

(\$175) (75% cabernet sauvignon 12% petit verdot, 11% cabernet franc and 2% merlot): Full ruby-red. Sexy, slightly liqueur-like aromas of currant, plum syrup, licorice, menthol and iron. Spicy and energetic but with a soft, creamy middle giving the wine considerable early appeal. Not a hugely fleshy or structured cabernet but offers lovely restrained sweetness and inner-mouth aromatic character. Finishes with building, slightly tough mountain tannins that call for four or five years of patience.