



CHATEAU MONTELENA  
ESTABLISHED 1882

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## Twenty Year Ruby

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### Notes from the Winemaker, Matt Crafton, December 2017

#### INTRODUCTION

The Chateau Montelena Twenty Year Ruby is a “legacy” project—a one-of-a-kind, very rare Port-style fortified wine 22 years in the making. The project began in the late 80’s when Dave Vella and I were looking toward the future for other varietals with potential to succeed at Chateau Montelena. We created an experimental half acre vineyard block: eight short rows, 30 vines; eight selections of Syrah. In 1995 when the vines were mature and producing, we set off looking for our next winemaking experiment. Driven by a creative pull to do something completely different we decided to craft a legacy solera non-vintage Port-style wine. We wanted to start an ambitious and long term project, one that had the potential to outlive everyone who worked on it. We made a barrel or two every year for 17 vintages from 1995 to 2012 (except 2011). I remember towards the beginning of the project when one of the younger cellar hands asked, “When are we going to bottle some of this?” I said, “Not for years . . . we’re making this for when I have my grandchildren sitting on my knee by the Christmas tree.” When we started making this wine I was 41 and my kids were 19, 9 and 7. Grandchildren were a long way off at the time.

Fast forward to now . . . We’re proud to unveil the Chateau Montelena Twenty Year Ruby, a legacy that simultaneously reaches back in time and looks to the future. We finished, blended and bottled it in 2017. A combination of over 20 years and 17 vintages, we will only be releasing a few bottles of this wine each year to make sure we have it to enjoy for years to come. This Christmas I will be sipping Chateau Montelena Twenty Year Ruby, with my two granddaughters on my knee, toasting to this legacy.

Cheers!  
Bo Barrett

#### NOSE

The wine opens with lively aromas of raspberry and kirsch complemented by cinnamon, allspice, and clove. These, in turn, give way to incredibly bright notes of dried flowers and potpourri with just a hint of butterscotch lurking in the background.

#### PALATE

With 20 years of history, the layers of flavor on the palate are incredible and will only continue to evolve with time in the glass. Bittersweet chocolate, hazelnut, and ripe fig merge into rich caramel and espresso ahead of dried cranberry and plum.

#### FINISH

The finish is opulent and intense as candied orange peel and licorice slowly transition to warm toast, vanilla, and just a touch of mint.