

Shafer

A bold and captivating Rhône-style blend from Napa Valley, Relentless 2017 marries Syrah's richness with Petite Sirah's structure for a soulful, cellar-worthy wine.

Relentless 2017

California, USA



Alcohol :15,80 %

Composition: 86% Syrah, 14% Petite Syrah

Region and Vineyards

Relentless is sourced from a small ridgetop vineyard located just south of Napa's **Stags Leap District**, nestled within the foothills of the Vaca Mountains. This elevated site benefits from well-draining volcanic soils, optimal sun exposure, and cooling breezes that allow the grapes to retain freshness while developing deep flavor concentration. The topography here creates a natural amphitheater, ideal for slow and even ripening.

Shafer Vineyards has long cultivated Rhône varieties on these rugged slopes, where **Syrah** thrives under the California sun and **Petite Sirah** contributes backbone and color density. The vineyard's microclimate, combined with meticulous sustainable farming, results in low yields of intensely flavored grapes. This distinct location endows Relentless with a signature profile: opulent yet fresh, deeply layered yet approachable, and always expressive of its mountain terroir.

Winemaking

The 2017 vintage was marked by a warm and extended growing season, allowing fruit to hang on the vine under ideal conditions, reaching perfect phenolic maturity. Harvested between **24.0° and 26.0° Brix**, the grapes exhibited vivid color and complex aromatics.

The blend is composed of **86% Syrah** and **14% Petite Sirah**, fermented and aged in **100% new French oak barrels** (from Allier and Tronçais) for an impressive **30 months** . This long élevage contributes to the wine's layered texture, polish, and aging potential. With **15.8% alcohol**, the wine shows considerable power yet maintains a striking balance of richness and energy.

Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Inky purple-black with a vibrant rim.
- **Aroma:** Aromatically expressive with layers of black plum, grilled meat, black licorice, leather, wild herbs, and hints of crushed stone.
- **Palate:** Full-bodied and opulent, delivering dark cherry, vanilla bean, game, menthol, and spice. Silky tannins lead to a long, mouth-coating finish with remarkable depth and structure.

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Did you know?

Relentless was named in tribute to Elias Fernandez, Shafer's longtime winemaker, whose relentless dedication to quality has shaped this wine since its inception. It is one of Napa's most acclaimed Syrah-based blends.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Smoked short ribs with rosemary glaze:** The wine's robust structure and smoky-sweet depth complement rich cuts of beef.
- **Grilled lamb with tapenade crust:** Earthy and herbal notes mirror the wine's savory complexity.
- **Wild boar ragù over pappardelle:** A rustic pairing that brings out the gamey, dark-fruited intensity of the blend.
- **Aged cheddar or smoked gouda:** These cheeses stand up to the wine's bold tannins and spice-laden palate.



Jeb Dunnuck (JD) : 94 Points (2017)

While I don't think the 2017 Relentless will match the 2018, it's nevertheless a beautiful Syrah that offers lots of smoky dark berry fruits, barbecue notes, spice, and meaty nuances in a rich, pure, nicely textured, medium to full-bodied package. It's going to evolve gracefully for a solid 10-12 years.



Wine Spectator (WS) : 94 Points (2017)

Deep and powerfully built, with a rich and polished texture that highlights wild berry and blueberry flavors that show notes of espresso, smoky beef and black pepper. Finishes with big but refined tannins. Syrah and Petite Sirah. Drink now through 2030.



Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (VN) : 93 Points (2017)

The 2017 Relentless is a bold, flamboyant wine that seems to have put on even more density over the last year, hard as that may seem to believe. Black cherry, licorice, spice, leather and menthol are all amped up in this decidedly opulent, full-throttle Syrah-based wine. (AG) (9/2019)