

Nickel & Nickel

From the historic heart of Napa Valley, this single-vineyard Cabernet captures the depth and pedigree of John C. Sullenger Vineyard with poised intensity.

Nickel & Nickel
Single Vineyard Wines

John C. Sullenger Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 2021

California, USA



Region and Vineyards

The John C. Sullenger Vineyard lies directly behind the Nickel & Nickel winery, at the core of **Oakville**, Napa Valley—a region globally recognized for producing some of the finest Cabernet Sauvignon. This vineyard bears the name of **John C. Sullenger**, a 19th-century pioneer who first established the site as a working farmstead in the 1880s. Today, its **30 acres of clay loam soils** are devoted entirely to Cabernet Sauvignon, planted with a selection of **clones and two rootstocks** to enhance complexity.

The site's position in central Oakville ensures it benefits from the cooling influence of nearby marine breezes while retaining abundant sun exposure. These conditions encourage long, even ripening and exceptional flavor development. The combination of soil richness and climate balance translates into wines with both density and elegance—a hallmark of this vineyard.

Winemaking

The 2019 vintage was marked by favorable conditions and a long, temperate growing season. Though 2021 was drier, the **2019 harvest** followed a similar arc of **gradual ripening**, allowing the fruit to achieve full phenolic maturity without overripeness. Clusters were hand-harvested between **October 1 and 13**, with optimal concentration due to smaller berry size.

After a **22-day skin maceration**, the wine was aged for **16 months in French oak barrels**, of which **55% were new**. This aging regime imparted subtle oak spice and roundness without overwhelming the purity of the fruit. The result is a wine that is bold, structured, and texturally refined—typical of Oakville's best expressions.

Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Deep ruby with violet reflections.
- **Aroma:** Red plum and raspberry dominate, complemented by hints of earthy spice and soft toast.
- **Palate:** Rich and juicy with layers of red fruit, integrated spice, and rounded tannins. The finish is long, lifted, and seductively smooth, sustained by fine Oakville tannic structure.

Alcohol :14,50 %

Composition: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

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Did you know?

The **Sullenger Vineyard** is Nickel & Nickel's **home vineyard**, and the first vintage produced under its name was **1997**. The site's consistent excellence has made it a flagship for the estate's single-vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon philosophy.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Dry-aged New York strip**: The wine's tannic frame stands up beautifully to well -marbled beef cuts.
- **Duck breast with cherry glaze**: Bright red fruit notes in the wine mirror the sauce while tannins cut through the fat.
- **Porcini mushroom ragù**: Earthy undertones in both wine and dish create a harmonious pairing.
- **Aged cheddar or Manchego**: The bold fruit and structure contrast elegantly with firm, nutty cheeses.

Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (VN) : 95 Points (2019)

The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon John C. Sullenger is a potent, tightly wound wine. It shows a bit more savoriness and overall austerity than the Stelling Cabernet, which is not a bad thing, as both are terrific expressions of Oakville. Dried herbs, autumn leaves, tobacco, cedar, menthol, pine and sweet red cherry build as the 2019 opens with a bit of coaxing. Give the tannins a few years to soften. (AG)

Wine Enthusiast (WE) : 94 Points (2019)

This wine opens in a swirl of brick, dust and sage, which is followed by a leathery undercurrent that gives texture to an otherwise supple, polished palate. Plum, cherry and mineral-like earthiness provide contrast and complexity to a full-bodied yet elegant expression of the grape.

Wine Spectator (WS) : 93 Points (2019)

This has a lovely, caressing flow to its cassis, dark plum and blackberry puree flavors, while well-integrated toast runs along the edges, with a mix of sweet bay leaf and anise. There's a subtle loamy hint at the end, while the purity of the fruit wins out easily.