



Hyde de Villaine

Hyde de Villaine Belle Cousine is a masterful Bordeaux-style blend, embodying the elegance and complexity of the Hyde Vineyard in Napa's cool Carneros region. With its rich layers and seamless balance, this wine is a true testament to the artistry of Napa Valley winemaking.



Belle Cousine 2018

California, USA

Region and Vineyards

Belle Cousine 2018 comes from the **Hyde Vineyard**, situated at the eastern edge of the **Los Carneros District** in Napa Valley. Known for its cool-climate influences, Carneros benefits from **marine breezes and moderate temperatures**, ensuring a long growing season that fosters complexity and balance in the grapes.

The vines, aged **18 to 34 years**, are planted on **Haire clay loam soils** with ancient terraces and alluvial fans. This terroir promotes excellent drainage and enhances the wine's structure and minerality. The vineyard's **south-southwest exposure** maximizes sunlight, contributing to optimal ripening of both Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Winemaking

Belle Cousine 2018 is a blend of **45% Merlot and 55% Cabernet Sauvignon**, harvested between **September 28 and October 23, 2018**. The vintage benefitted from abundant rains in February, followed by ideal conditions in spring and summer, creating an even fruit set. The mild summer, extended fall sunshine, and moderate heat allowed the grapes to develop **complex flavors and balanced sugars**.

The wine underwent **21 months of aging in French oak barrels**, with **20% new oak**, ensuring a refined integration of oak influence. Bottled **unfined and unfiltered** on **July 30, 2020**, the wine maintains its natural texture and authenticity, with an alcohol level of **14.2%**.

Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Deep ruby with garnet reflections.
- **Aroma:** Rich black cherry and currant aromas are complemented by hints of dried rose petals, graphite, and holiday spices.
- **Palate:** Full-bodied and velvety, with flavors of dark fruits, sweet basil, and subtle oak. The finish is smooth, elegant, and approachable, even in its youth.

Alcohol :14,20 %

Composition: 55% Cabernet
Sauvignon, 45% Merlot



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Did you know?

The name **Belle Cousine** honors Pamela Fairbanks de Villaine, the cousin of Larry Hyde and wife of Aubert de Villaine of Burgundy. This wine symbolizes the union of two visionary families—Hyde of Carneros and de Villaine of Burgundy—united by a shared commitment to excellence and terroir-driven winemaking.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Beef Wellington:** The rich texture and dark fruit flavors of the wine pair beautifully with the layers of savory beef and pastry.
- **Lamb tagine with prunes and almonds:** The wine's spice and fruit notes complement the sweet and savory flavors of this dish.
- **Wild mushroom risotto:** The earthy richness of the risotto matches the wine's depth and velvety tannins.
- **Aged Gouda:** The nutty and caramelized flavors of aged Gouda enhance the wine's complexity and smooth finish.



Robert Parker (RP) : 94 Points (2018)

The 2018 Belle Cousine is an elegant blend of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon and 45% Merlot from the Hyde Vineyard. It was matured in about 20% new French oak for 22 months and aged an additional two years in bottle before release. Deep ruby-purple in color, it has pure aromas of cassis, bouquet garni, tobacco leaves, sandalwood and graphite, with bright bursts of red cherry and flowers. Full-bodied, the palate is surprisingly lifted, with granular tannins, seamless acidity and a long, mineral-driven finish. Winemaker Guillaume Boudet notes that Hyde de Villaine does not own an optical sorter. "To me, the optical sorter erases the vintage component of the wine," he explains. "It's a human being that calibrates the sorter with what they think is the perfect berry of this vintage." Give this fresh, floral blend another 2-3 years in bottle to unwind.



James Suckling (JS) : 94 Points (2017)

Aromas of dark berries and raspberries with fresh herbs, all of which follow through to a full body with tight and focused tannins. A long, flavorful finish. Tight and long.



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

In the glass, it is bold but also rustic, with brawny tannins that add to an impression of wildness. Dark fruit, tobacco, chocolate, spice and strong savory accents fill out the layers. I would give the 2017 a few years to soften, as it is pretty unyielding at this stage. (AG)



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