

STAR LANE

Jim and Mary Dierberg are no newcomers to wine. Since 1974, they've owned one of America's oldest wineries, Hermannhof, located in their home state of Missouri. Developing an initial passion for wine during their early trips to Germany during the 1960s, the couple discovered that an old winery in Hermann, Missouri - founded in 1852 - was for sale, and they bought it.

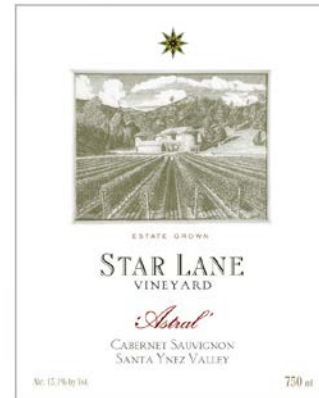


The wines at Hermannhof are good, but the Missouri climate is not conducive to growing the European varietals that have made France and California famous, and so, it was only a matter of time before the couple sought a new winemaking perspective. In 1996, they purchased Star Lane. After consultation with renowned Central Coast grower Dale Hampton and soil scientist Paul Skinner, the Dierbergs realized that the land was best suited to growing Cabernet and its related varietals.

Starting with 100 acres in 1996, they later bought a cooler vineyard site better suited to Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, a bit farther north in Santa Maria. In January of 2004 they added a new property in the Santa Rita Hills, also suitable for Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, and called these two vineyards, fittingly, Dierberg. Practicing organic viticulture, the winemaking couple are constructing their dream winery on the Star Lane property. It's dug into the hillside for efficient use of energy and will host some 26,000 square feet of caves for barrel aging.

"ASTRAL" CABERNET SAUVIGNON

HAPPY CANYON AVA



Varietal/Blend: nearly 100% Cabernet Sauvignon with small amounts of Petit Verdot & Cabernet Franc (almost exclusively on their own rootstocks)

Farming: practicing organic

Soil: sand and loam

Vine Age: 10 years

Fermentation: stainless steel

Aging: 22 months in 70% new barrels (French Oak)

Alcohol: 14%

Yeast: indigenous

Fined: none

Filtered: none

"When searching for our best barrels and lots for Astral, over the years we have found ourselves gravitating toward own-rooted vineyard blocks. Most wine is grown on root species different than the above ground material... Knowing pressure from this pest is reduced in our area, we have taken the risk to revisit what it might have been like to taste wine from those vines of 100 years past. We have observed that the vines do behave differently, and so does the wine. Namely the fruit permits longer skin contact without over-extraction, promotes classic Cabernet flavors with rich California textures, and integrates new oak at a much higher percentage allowing for increased complexity and age ability."
-Winemaker's notes

Country: United States

Region: California

Sub Region: Happy Canyon AVA

Vineyard: Star Lane Vineyard