



2017 CHECKERBOARD AURORA VINEYARD

MARTHA MCCLELLAN, WINEMAKER

"Aurora Vineyard is nestled in a small valley midway up Diamond Mountain on a large knoll located at an elevation of 1,200 feet. The knoll projects off the mountainside, giving the vineyard full Southern exposure and open light from the East and West and protection from Napa Valley's summer fog. Six acres of the vineyard are planted in the knoll's rich, volcanic soils that are riddled with basalt cobble in a loamy red clay. The remaining six acres are planted in a deep gravelly mix of white volcanic ash and chips of decomposed Rhyolite that were washed down from the steep, rocky crags of Diamond Mountain above.

On approach, the palate of the 2017 Aurora Vineyard is full with notes of freshly brewed Italian espresso, roasted vanilla bean, toasted almonds, and blackberry compote. This spice-forward wine continues with flavors of baked cherry pie and crushed, dried red pepper. There's ample fresh fruit surrounding the core, including dark cherry, black currant, and red plum which serve to lift the wine to a lingering finish with finely polished tannins.

In its youth, the 2017 vintage benefits from decanting."