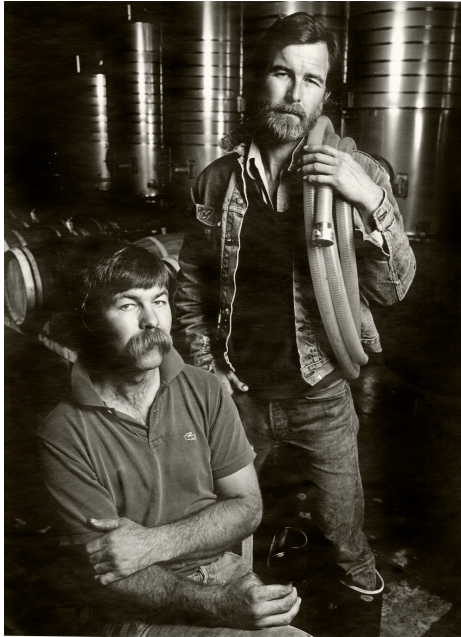


Smith-Madrone Vineyard and Winery

St. Helena, Spring Mountain District, Napa Valley



By Sayla Kraft

In the '70s, dry farming was the only option for a mountain vineyard. Such was the case for Stuart and Charles Smith when they started [Smith-Madrone Vineyards](#) —named after the ambitious brother duo and the Madrone trees that distinguish their property. In trying to find land to plant a vineyard in the Napa Valley, through a family friend Stuart explored a forest on the remotest and highest part of Spring Mountain and discovered that the land had been a vineyard in the 1880s and in fact had been part of the wagon trail route between Napa and Santa Rosa.

Founded in 1971, Smith-Madrone Vineyards & Winery is one of the few entirely estate-vineyard mountain wineries in the Napa Valley. Smith-Madrone's grapes are grown at the top of Spring Mountain (1,200 - 1,900-foot elevation with slopes up to 35%), west of St. Helena in the Napa Valley. The vines are planted on very steep slopes in red "Aiken" soil which is derived from weathered volcanic materials and sedimentary rock. Stuart Smith chose specific slopes with different exposures for specific varietals when planting the vineyards: eastern exposure for Riesling, southern and western exposures across flat stretches for the Cabernet Sauvignon and the coolest north-facing slopes for the Chardonnay. There are numerous historical sights on the ranch, as well as the huge array of natural beauty and wildlife.

Today, all their wines are still made entirely from the winery's dry farmed vineyards. Their dry farmed vineyards produce a small berry grape which has a

large skin-to-juice ratio and thus provides a grape juice wine which is very flavorful and intense. TheDailyMeal chose Smith-Madrone for 2014 Winery of the Year and recognized them “for creating, without fanfare, some of Napa Valley's best wines for almost 45 years, for industry leadership in labeling reform, and for utilizing innovative vineyard techniques that have led the way for other producers.”

If your is mouth is watering, consider coming to try their wine and hear Stuart Smith speak during our upcoming sustainable wine tasting and discussion event, [*How Green Is Your Wine?*](#) February 22nd, 6:00pm-8:30pm at the San Francisco Ferry Building.