

TURLEY

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the inaugural release of the 2017 vintage! I'm writing you from a train, barreling north towards wine country. (Yes, we have trains in California; no, they don't actually go that fast, I just liked the dual meaning of "barreling!") As we lumber (slowly) along the stunning California coast, I'm reminded of just how vast our state is; for over 2 hours of this journey, the view consists solely of train tracks and raw coastline, made all the more dramatic by the currently stormy skies and vivid colors of the surrounding landscape. It's easy to forget just how wild nature can be, even here, in the most populated state in the Union. Indeed, I spotted foxes and a pack of wild boar along today's route. (Don't tell my dad, or he'll be out here with his rifle rustling us up some dinner faster than you can say "*That's protected land, Larry!*")



Not too shabby, as train commute views go

As I sit here, my mind drifts to just how unique what we do at Turley is; where most wineries may have a few vineyards surrounding their cellars, ours are sprinkled throughout the entire state, representing 12 different counties and myriad soil types, micro-climates, and growing seasons. On a recent ride from Paso Robles back to the home turf in Napa, winemaker Tegan Passalacqua & I tallied up all of the old vine vineyards we work with (defined by Turley and the [Historic Vineyard Society](#) as over 50 years of age), and the grand total is thirty-four. Thirty-four! *And 14 of those are over 100 years old!* We tried and failed to think of another winery that works with more old vines; should you succeed, however, please drop us a line, as I'm curious as all get-out!

Finally, the 2017 vintage is strong, despite several challenges, most noticeably the fires in early October in Napa and Sonoma. However, you can rest assured: Zinfandel and Petite Syrah ripen much earlier than other varieties, and Turley's grapes were all in safe and sound well before the fires started. We are a great deal luckier than most, and though our yields were down significantly—especially in Sonoma—we are grateful our wines were spared at all. In keeping with tradition, the smaller harvest led to greater concentration in the wines. They are nimble and more elegantly textured on the palate, with all the pure fruits and exceptional balance you've come to expect from Turley. We hope you enjoy.

Old Vines Young Love,
Christina Turley

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2017 Turley “Juvenile” Zinfandel, California

Composed of a variety of younger vines (6-25 years old) that have been replanted in several of our most storied old vine sites, Juvenile comes from a selection of our best vineyards across California, including Hayne, Pesenti, Salvador, Vineyard 101, Fredericks, and Kirschenmann. *All the classic Zinfandel markers: pretty cherry, salty dried brambly fruits, savory spice, and silky tannins. Hailing from 24 vineyards in 12 different counties across our beautiful Golden State, the Turley Juvenile sets the standard for classic California Zinfandel.*

2017 Turley “Estate” Zinfandel, Napa Valley

Certified organic, this head-trained and dry-farmed vineyard is special to all of us here at the winery; right in our backyard, it’s what we see every day at work (and from the family home!). The alluvial soil is rich with obsidian; we’ve even found quite a few arrowheads over the years. *Ripe red fruits, warm earth, fresh herbs...this wine is reminiscent of foraging through the vegetable garden for dinner at the end of a warm summer’s day. Focused but lengthy on the palate with a suede-like texture, the ’17 Estate Zinfandel can easily be enjoyed with food or on its own, preferably in a well-worn leather chair.*

2017 Turley “Dusi Vineyard” Zinfandel, Paso Robles

Planted by Dante Dusi in 1945 and head-trained and farmed by his family to this day, the Dusi vines produce some of the richest and most distinctive wines in Paso Robles. *Immediately expressive on the nose: vivid red fruits, chalky soils, and fresh cherry sap, with a hint of Poblano pepper in the background. Satiating and rich on the palate, with a nice boost from the acidity; Larry wants to drink it with “a dish of wild game in a cooked red berry or cherry sauce.”*

2017 Turley “Duarte” Zinfandel, Contra Costa County

This wine is comprised of fruit from the turn-of-the-century Evangehlo, Mori and Salvador vineyards, planted between 1890 and 1930. Because of the sandy soils and impressive age of the vines, the wine has some of the softest, silkiest tannins we’ve ever seen in a Zinfandel. *Savory, alluring, and profound on the nose, with dark fruit notes, sandalwood, rhubarb, and whole black peppercorns. Suave tannins and excellent depth on the palate; we found the wine much more expressive with a quick decant, or it will likely age well if you have more patience than we do!*

2017 Turley “Dragon Vineyard” Zinfandel, Howell Mountain

Situated well above the fog at 2400 feet on an east-facing point of Howell Mountain, Dragon is a certified organic estate-farmed vineyard. Planted in rocky, red, volcanic soil, the Dragon is a unique, full-bodied and powerful Zinfandel that is almost always Larry’s favorite. *The 2017 is quintessential Dragon: dark fruits, incredible focus and depth, white spice, purple flowers and perfume. More grip to the tannins than even Rattlesnake, this wine will certainly age well and benefits from a decant.*

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2017 Turley “Rattlesnake Ridge” Zinfandel, Howell Mountain

Rattlesnake Ridge is an estate-owned and certified organic vineyard located above Dragon on Howell Mountain in Napa at about 2600 feet. Exposed at the very top of the rocky ridgeline, these vines see more sun, wind, and cold weather due to the elevation, and it can even snow in the winter! *Darkly colored and jewel-toned, the Rattlesnake Zinfandel is Howell Mountain terroir turned up to 11: strongly spiced, ripe dark fruits, game meats, and feral forests aplenty. More voluptuous than past years on the palate, with structured tannin; this is an age-worthy wine that will benefit from decanting.*

2017 Turley “Buck Cobb Vineyard” Zinfandel, Amador County

Planted at 1500 feet on the volcanic, granitic hillside near our Amador winery in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Cobb Vineyard Zinfandel is an homage to “Buck” Cobb from whom we purchased the vines. The rocky conditions and more extreme weather (including snow) in this dry-farmed vineyard make for a hearty, robust Zinfandel. *The 2017 Cobb is a fascinating, full mouth of wine, with textbook brambly, dusty fruits, green peppercorn spices and a hint of orange rind on the nose. Distinctive Amador granitic tannins on the palate, a bit coarser than years past, with refreshing acidity. This wine begs for food; follow Larry’s lead and cook whatever you wish, as long as it’s over an open fire!*

2017 Turley “Mead Ranch” Zinfandel, Atlas Peak

Planted at about 1600 feet atop Atlas Peak on the south-eastern side of Napa Valley, Mead was originally planted in the 1880s. Our head-trained block is primarily from the 1970s; right in the fog, this is generally the last of our Napa vineyards to ripen each year. *This is the second-to-last vintage of Turley’s Mead, so if this is a favorite, you may want to stock up. Of all the spring wines we tasted, the ’17 Mead is the most dramatically expressive right off the bat: high-toned, wild red fruits like fraise du bois or a raspberry patch come to mind, along with cracked black pepper and fragrant herbs. Yields were miniscule, with less than a ton to the acre, and this is reflected in the typically dense mountain tannins.*

2017 Turley “Casa Nuestra” Red Wine, Napa Valley

Casa Nuestra is a certified organic vineyard nearly adjacent to the Turley Estate property in Napa Valley, just across the nearby Napa River. The vineyard is planted with a Mediterranean mix of Zinfandel, Petite Syrah, Carignane, Mourvèdre, Alicante, Napa Gamay, Negrette, and Refosco, with a bit of Chenin Blanc for good measure. *The 2nd iteration of this wine for Turley, the ’17 evokes an entire meal in the glass: layers of dark fruits like black cherry and ripe plums, followed by deeply satiating savory notes. The texture is true Napa Valley, multi-dimensional across the palate, with exceptionally satisfying tannin and balance.*

2017 Turley “Kirschenmann Vineyard” Zinfandel, Lodi

Owned by our winemaker Tegan Passalacqua, these ungrafted vines were planted in 1915 in the sandy soils of the east side of the Mokelumne River AVA. Thanks to the river’s cool waters and delta breezes, these head-trained, field-blend vines—including Mondeuse, Cinsault, and Carignane—are constantly protected from the heat. *Bright and high-toned notes of red cherries, citrus and blood orange, along with ripe peaches and other stone fruits on the nose. The palate is signature Kirschenmann: excellent acidity, suave tannins, and profound depth, with a lightly chalky, well-structured finish.*

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2017 Turley “Estate” Petite Syrah, Napa Valley

This certified organic Petite Syrah vineyard is planted in the rocky alluvial soils commonly found on our Estate just north of St. Helena, in the heart of Napa Valley. The wines are classic Napa Petite Syrah: dark and brooding on the nose, bright and vibrant on the palate. *Freshly cut dark purple flowers, Indian ink, nougat, and the savory garrigue flavors characteristic of the Estate vineyards are all found on the compelling nose. Dense on the palate but balanced by luscious acidity and chalky tannins with a long finish; we strongly recommend decanting this wine.*

2017 Turley “Rattlesnake Ridge” Petite Syrah, Howell Mountain

At 2500 feet above St. Helena on the north-eastern ridge of Napa Valley, the Petite Syrah from Rattlesnake Ridge Vineyard is a fantastic expression of Howell Mountain: the high elevation, sun-drenched yet cool and windy site makes for a dark, profound Petite Syrah. *Perfumed with violets, fragrant white flowers, brambly fruits and sweet leather; with some age and a good decanting, this wine could pass for Côte Rôtie. An assisted lift from the bright acidity balances the expansive palate, which is dense, powerful, and opens even further throughout the lengthy finish.*

2018 Turley “Estate” Sauvignon Blanc, Napa Valley

We planted a small, special section of the Estate to dry-farmed, head-trained, certified organic Sauvignon Blanc from heritage Napa Valley budwood—mostly so Larry could drink it with his beloved oysters. But he’s nice enough to share a few bottles of this wine, aged in used French oak barrels and a concrete egg, with us! *The ’18 is the most mineral iteration of this wine, and Larry’s favorite that we’ve made to date. Perfectly ripe green melons, white grapefruits, citrus, and polished gravel dust bounce out of the glass, with buoyant crushed stone acidity and a hint of pie crust on the palate.*

2017 Turley “Bedrock Vineyard” Zinfandel, Sonoma Valley

Right in the heart of Sonoma Valley and hailing from 1888, these vines are planted amidst volcanic rocks and Los Robles cobbled loam soils. The wine is layered and complex, owing perhaps to the small amounts of Petite Syrah and Alicante Bouschet that are also found in our organically-farmed block. *Black licorice, shoe polish, leather and dark fruits, the Bedrock drinks almost like a Cabernet. Broad and well-structured on the palate, with slightly coarser tannins characteristic of Sonoma Valley.*

2017 Turley “Vineyard 101” Zinfandel, Alexander Valley

Also in Sonoma, this pre-Prohibition certified organic vineyard was the first old vine purchase Larry ever made. At only 2 ½ acres, it is the smallest site we make into a vineyard designate, which is a shame, since the wines are consistently one of our favorites. *Classic 101 aromas of the best homemade, whole-berry cranberry sauce with orange rind; rich, sweet fruits with a tart citrusy lift that’s drawn through on the long, succulent finish. Recommend decanting.*

2017 Turley “Sadie Upton Vineyard” Zinfandel, Amador County

In 1922, during Prohibition and while her husband was away, a then 21-year-old Sadie Upton decided she was going to plant herself a vineyard near their home at 1500 feet in the Sierra Foothills. Now, nearly 100 years later, the jewel-like vines are still kicking in the gumption-riddled tradition of their creator. *The ’17 Sadie smells of a briar patch chock-full of red berries, salted stone fruits, and a cooling spearmint. The palate is deeply gratifying: densely layered with fruit, acidity, and granitic tannins, though lighter and spritelier in texture than the nose would lead you to believe.*