

CALDER WINE COMPANY

NAPA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

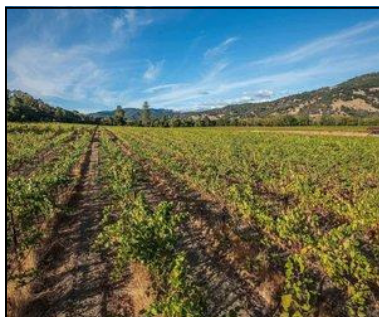


Owner/Winemaker Rory Williams: I grew up in a wine family, with my family having started and continuing to run Frog's Leap and Tres Sabores wineries in Napa's Rutherford AVA. Both wineries grow their grapes organically and dry farm their vines, the practice of which requires a hybrid of respect for tradition and creative endeavor. This synthesis carries over to winemaking, where I have been taught that the highest art of winemaking consists of a creative evolution of the aroma, taste, and feel of a place, which can only occur if one has eyes both on the past and the future.



I started Calder (my middle name) as an attempt to begin my own creative evolution, using a grape that has a long history in the place where I was born, was planted and vinified by my winemaking idols, and, I believe, tells its own unique version of what makes Napa, Napa.

THE MEYER VINEYARD—Farmed by Calistoga's Meyer family since the first part of the 20th century, the Charbono vines on this property were first planted to supply John Daniel, Jr.'s Inglenook winery with grapes for its varietal Charbono. In fact, some of the oldest of the vines on the property are 40-50 years old, and date to the Inglenook era. The old age of the vines and the drought-resistant rootstock on which they are grafted allow the vineyard to be dry-farmed—that is, the grapes receive only winter rainfall as irrigation. This intensifies the flavor potential of the grapes and tempers their sugar accumulation, helping to produce a wine with natural balance.



THE RACHEL ROSSI VINEYARD—Sitting on the historic 52-acre Rossi property at the northern end of the Rutherford Bench, the Riesling vines that go into the Calder Dry Riesling are holdovers from an earlier age of grape growing. Though the variety was once widely-planted, the 1/3-acre block in front of the ranch's iconic white water tower is now

part of only a handful of remaining acres in Napa. Farmed by the Rossi family for over 100 years, the care of these vines is now overseen by Frog's Leap Winery, which continues to apply the traditional organic and dry-farmed practices classic to this site — and since my day job involves working in Frog's Leap vineyards, I work with these vines throughout the year.

The Rachel Rossi vineyard is named for the family that bought the property in 1903 from J.M. Thompson, whose ownership in turn dates to the era of the Mexican ranchos. Rachel Rossi was the matriarch of the family, who continued the property's tradition in viticulture and lent her name to the family's winery, which operated from 1907 to 1950. Old fermentation notes, written in chalk on redwood walls, can still be seen in the winery building that sits behind the Riesling block. The farming of the ranch continued to be managed by Ray and Louise Rossi, Rachel's children, until Louise's passing in 2007. Though northern Rutherford would normally be considered slightly too warm for Riesling, the combination of old vines, a late-ripening Riesling clone, and careful farming practices designed to limit the rate of ripening combine to preserve acidity and freshness in the grapes.



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