



HOWELL MOUNTAIN 2010

*Abreu*

## PROPERTY

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When David Abreu purchased this Howell Mountain property in 2000 it came with an unexpected perk: first growth redwood stakes dating back over a century. Relics of an earlier era of agriculture.

“When the college owned this site they’d burn the underbrush, including the stakes, to keep it clean. When I came in we found them and set them all aside,” he says.

Perched at 2,000 feet, the vineyard calls the Vaca Mountains home - a rugged mountain range hemming the eastern edge of the



Napa Valley. Surrounded by a protected forest of fir and pine, the vines enjoy abundant sunshine above the fog line of the valley below. Its red Aiken soils are layered over white tufa, and the rocks that littered the site before it was planted now form walls defining the property. The redwood stakes – collected, stacked, preserved – await their next life.



LUCIA ABREU VINEYARD  
HOWELL MOUNTAIN

# 2010 ABREU Howell Mountain

NAPA, CA

Entering its 5th year, the 2010 Howell Mountain has had plenty of time to settle into its skin. And it needs it. Deeply rooted in slopes which long ago gave up their fertile top soils to Napa's valley floor below, the vines find their way amid ancient, free-draining soils, rocky outcrops, and intense sunshine. The results are anything but ambiguous – these mountain wines can be tenacious in their youth, but reward patience.

In 2010, the Merlot was the first fruit to come off this vineyard. A rare single-varietal fermentation in the Abreu cellars, it produced a stellar Merlot which added a silky, textural component to the final blend. The Malbec block, weighing in at a whopping 0.8 tons, followed, co-fermented with Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot, making up one of the core pieces of the final Howell Mountain blend. Three additional picks of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot completed the harvest on October 20 and 21.

COMPOSITION:	Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Merlot, Malbec
PICK DATES:	October 5, 16, 20, 21
PRODUCTION:	12 barrels
BOTTLED:	December 2012
RELEASE DATE:	March 2015
WINEMAKER:	Brad Grimes
PROPRIETOR:	David Abreu

Year in and out this vineyard presents us with polarizing fermentation lots, and 2010 was no exception. Some wield jaw-dropping floral aromatics, others mineral austerity and righteous structure, yet others wild, garrigue-inflected black and blue fruits. Blending them is almost a shame, yet the whole is invariable greater than the sum of the parts.



707.963.7487

[info@abreuvineyards.com](mailto:info@abreuvineyards.com)

“An absolute blockbuster, the 2010 Howell Mountain includes Malbec and Petit Verdot blended with the Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. It boasts an inky/blue/purple color as well as a sumptuous perfume of barbecue smoke, lead pencil shavings and wet rocks. This ripe, smoky, intense, full-bodied wine reveals a boatload of tannins, but also richer fruit and a deeper, multidimensional mouthfeel and finish than the 2009, which appears to be more broodingly backward and structured. This appears to be a great success. Consume it over the next 25-30 years.”

Robert Parker—The Wine Advocate

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“The 2010 Howell Mountain is simply magnificent. Inky, deep, and full-bodied to the core, the 2010 blasts out of the glass with graphite, pencil shavings, menthol, melted road tar, plum, cassis and licorice notes. The 2010 is an exciting, viscerally thrilling wine that takes hold of the senses and never lets up.”

Antonio Galloni—Vinous Media



## JOURNEY

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Growing up, Napa Valley was David Abreu's playground as well as his classroom. Born into a family of ranchers, he spent the better part of his youth working in Napa's original vineyards. Over time, David's sense of what makes a site stand out—why one vineyard makes great wine and another's is just good—was sharpened beyond the ordinary. Eventually, intuition and experience led him to four exceptional vineyard properties: Madrona Ranch, Cappella, Howell Mountain, and Thorevilos.

He planned and planted each one. And with an uncompromising—some might say insane—commitment to



quality, he and his crew farm them to perfection. Alongside Brad Grimes, a chef turned winemaker, he whittles one hundred barrels down to just 12,000 bottles of single-site Cabernet blends. You could call it passion beyond reason. And you may be right.

“When you work with a vineyard long enough, you get to know its personality. You know how to pull the best from it, no matter the vintage. That’s what it takes to make a great wine. A wine that might actually be around – to tell its own story – 100 years from now.”

David Abreu