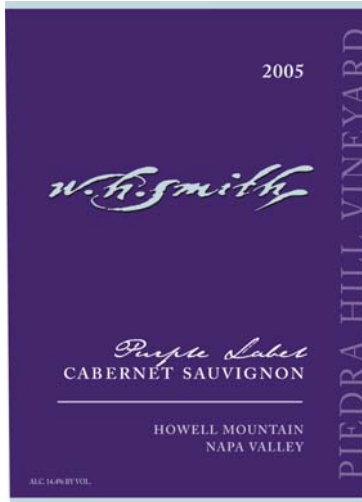




## 2005 Piedra Hill Vineyard - *Purple Label* Howell Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon



### **The Vineyard:**

The Piedra Hill Vineyard is becoming synonymous with award winning Cabernet-based wines from Howell Mountain. Bill and Joan Smith own, farm and make wine from this stunning six acre vineyard. The vineyard is dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon, primarily clones #337, #191, #341, #338 and BV 4, and the other four Bordeaux varieties; Merlot, Petit Verdot, Malbec and Cabernet Franc.

Piedra Hill Vineyard sits above the fog line, so temperatures are, on average, five to ten degrees cooler than on the valley floor. This creates higher natural acidity in the grapes and leads to even ripening of the fruit. The hallmarks of the Piedra Hill wines continue to be intensity of fruit and tremendous balance.

### **The Winemaking:**

The focus of Piedra Hill Cabernet *Purple Label* is on fruit, richness and perfectly integrated tannins. The magic is in the removal of seed tannin. Grape seeds are removed at every step along the way – during the long, cold soak (6-8 days at 40°) and during fermentation via a process called ‘rack and return’ or *delestage*. The result of this process is a gorgeous, fruit-driven wine, wonderful to drink in its youth yet age-worthy, thanks to the very well integrated grape skin and barrel oak tannin.

Once the wine is in barrel, Bill and his wine-making team select a day to blend *Purple Label*. They blend and taste from different barrels and continue to modify the blend. They are searching for the barrels holding the most intense fruit. As you can imagine, from a meticulously farmed hilltop vineyard, there is intense fruit in *every* barrel! But, Bill feels like the blend this year is especially intense and worthy of your attention now, or fifteen years from now.

### **The Wine:**

Both the color and the nose scream ‘plums’! Dark intense fruit and jam-packed plum aromas let you know that you’re onto something special. On the palate, there is great density to the fruit. The deep blackberry fruit, the bright acidity and the firm tannins spread out all over your mouth.

### **Food Pairing:**

This is a red meat wine! Especially a juicy barbequed steak or grilled Saratoga lamb chops. Really any grilled or smoked foods will work well with the intensity of *Purple Label*. Don’t forget to finish your meal with some dark chocolate – maybe a warm truffle cake.

### **Press from the 2004 Vintage:**

94 Points – *The Wine Enthusiast* – August, 2007

97 Points – *The Arizona Republic* – June 20, 2007

### **Technical Information:**

<b>Appellation:</b>	Howell Mountain, Napa Valley
<b>Aging</b>	100% new-selection of Boutes, Radoux, Taransaud, Ermitage and Treuil
<b>Alcohol:</b>	14.4%
<b>Bottled:</b>	July 12, 2007
<b>Production:</b>	297 cases of 12/750ml for wholesale distribution
<b>Release Date:</b>	December 1, 2007