



## **SARACINA MALBEC MENDOCINO COUNTY SKID ROW VINEYARD 2015**

### **Vintage & Appellation**

Mendocino County Skid Row Vineyard 2015  
Production of 374 cases

### **Varietal Composition**

100% Malbec

### **Bottling Date**

July 26, 2017

### **Technical Data**

14.5 % alcohol by volume  
0.69 gm/100 ml titratable acidity    pH 3.72

### **Release Date**

August 15, 2017

### **Vineyards**

Planted in 1999 and farmed organically from the outset, Skid Row Vineyard is the westernmost block on the Saracina Ranch, marked by black clay and gravelly soils at the base of the foothills. The plant material is the original Bordeaux clone 4. It is significant not for what it produces, but for what it doesn't. It is the lowest-yielding commercial Malbec clone available, and on our property typical yields are one and a half tons per acre. It produces concentrated fruit without the need to pick at very high sugars.

The vineyard was named "Skid Row" for the tracks carved into the surrounding hillsides in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries by donkeys dragging logs down to the vineyard site, where they were collected to fire the furnaces for hop barns in the course of making beer.

### **Harvest**

The harvest of 2015 reflects the last of the drought years, with the lowest berry and cluster weights we have ever recorded. This translated to finished wines with real nerve, or *nervosité* as the French would say. We harvested at dawn on September 10, with an average of 24.6 brix.

### **Winemaking and Cooperage**

The grapes were harvested by hand, destemmed and gently fed into the fermenter with 50% whole berries. Native yeast fermentation began in earnest eight days later and was managed with two aerative pumpovers per day until dryness. The wine was drained directly into Taransaud barrels, 15% of which were new. Native malolactic fermentation was complete by early January. The wine rested on light lees for 19 months and was then lightly fined and bottled unfiltered on July 26, 2017.

### **Winemaker Alex MacGregor's Comments**

Deep garnet in color, this wine reveals notes of black fruits, black licorice and sandalwood. The palate shows amazing tension, concentration and length, reflecting the small berry weights of a drought year and careful tannin management during fermentation. It would pair well with a grass-fed flank or skirt steak with a snappy blueberry barbecue sauce.