

VIEW FROM THE CELLAR

By John Gilman



LEXINGTON

2011 Lexington Gist Ranch Estate Cabernet Franc (Santa Cruz Mountains)

The 2011 cabernet franc from new Lexington project from Thomas Fogarty and Nathan Kandler comes in at 14.4 percent alcohol and, like the merlot bottling, was aged entirely in used barrels. The wine is excellent, jumping from the glass in a deep and classy blend of cassis, black cherries, a touch of currant leaf, cigar ash, lovely soil tones and a nice framing of vanillin oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and complex, with a fine core of fruit, moderate tannins, good acids and excellent length and grip on the complex and still fairly youthful finish. This wine is beautifully light on its feet, without lacking depth, and is quite tasty today, but really deserves four or five years in the cellar (at least) to allow it to fully blossom. It is a very high class, Cheval Blanc-like example of cabernet franc. Given that the ranch was only planted in 1999 and this is the result of vines that are only twelve years of age, I cannot wait to see future vintages, as once these vines really start to get some age under their toes, they are going to produce some stunningly mineral-driven examples of cabernet franc. But, the 2011 is outstanding and a very, very strong first vintage here! 2019-2040+.

93 Points

2011 Lexington Gist Ranch Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Santa Cruz Mountains)

The 2011 cabernet sauvignon bottling from Lexington includes twenty percent merlot in its cépages and was raised in twenty-eight percent new barrels. The wine comes in at a cool 14.1 percent octane and delivers absolutely exceptional complexity on the nose, with notes of cassis, sweet dark berries, tobacco leaf, stony soil tones, a touch of nutty new wood and a top-note of cigar smoke. On the palate the wine is deep, full-bodied and impeccably balanced, with an excellent core, great structural interplay between its ripe tannins, tangy acids and mineral drive and a very, very long, nascently complex and energetic finish. This is a stellar young vintage of cabernet sauvignon and a very, very welcome new arrival in the firmament of California's top cabernet bottlings for the cellar. Just a terrific bottle! 2021-2055.

94+ Points