



2012 Blankiet Estate Rive Droite (Merlot)

A Proprietary Blend Dry Red Table wine from Napa, California.

Review by Robert Parker

Wine Advocate # 209 (Oct 2013)

Rating: **(96-99)**

Drink 2013 – 2033

The 2012 Rive Droite Paradise Hills Vineyard is composed of 92.2% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc. Production was almost twice as high in 2012 (380 cases) than it was in 2009. Terrific stuff, it displays stunning aromas of coffee beans, smoky barbecued meats, and sweet kirsch, mulberries and black currants, a sensational, unctuously textured mouthfeel, full body and a stunning finish of nearly 50 seconds. This sexy, full throttle, exuberant, All-American Merlot came in at 14.8% natural alcohol. It should age effortlessly for 20+ years. The Blankiet Estate owned by Claude and Katherine Blankiet is beautifully situated on the lower hillsides of the Mayacamas Mountains, just behind the large Napanook estate of Dominus. An enviable group of talented people have provided assistance here, beginning with David Abreu, Helen Turley and John Wetlaufer, followed by Michel Rolland, Martha McClellan, and more recently Denis Malbec. Production remains between 1,800 and 2,500 cases with nearly half of that devoted to their second wine, the Prince of Hearts. The other cuvees include the Proprietary Red (Cabernet Sauvignon-dominated) and the Rive Droite (a Pomerol / St.-Emilion look-a-like wine), and in 2012, they added a tiny, 100% Cabernet Sauvignon cuvee called Mythicus. I could be wrong, but it seems to me these wines, which performed very well, and are among the finest of the so-called "cult" wines of Napa Valley, remain under-the-radar. Perhaps that is due to the small production. The 2009s are all stunning. In the challenging 2011 vintage, the Blankiets along with their winemaker Denis Malbec have fashioned very good examples, although they are much lighter and less concentrated and authoritative than the top vintages. The 2012s are among the finest wines Blankiet has yet made.

