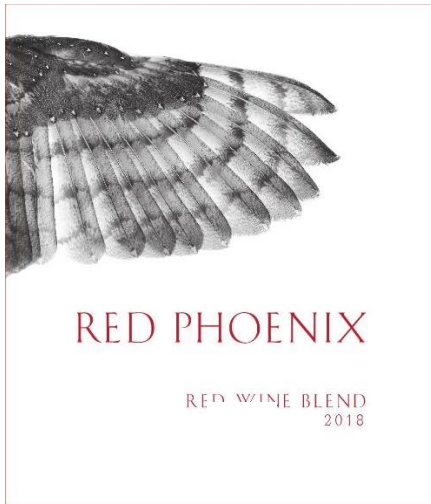


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Red Phoenix Overview

Owners: Vertical Palate / Leigon and Spear

Country / Region: USA, California, Lodi/Napa

Founded: 2020

Description: Founded in 2020, Red Phoenix is a collaboration between Vertical Palate Wine and Leigon and Spear, two deeply experienced California wine companies boasting decades of involvement in the industry. The winemaker is Joseph Smith, one of Lodi's top hands, who not only boasts an array of critical accolades but may also be California's only Belizean winemaker.

Wine Notes – 2018 Red Phoenix red Blend

Red Phoenix is an exciting project involving California wine veterans, Leigon and Spear and Lodi's Vertical Palate Wine Company. Renowned winemaker Joseph Smith's unique red blend combines Napa Valley and Lodi grapes with 40% of the juice barrel fermented in new French oak to add depth, a treatment that lends depth and complexity and is typically found only in the highest priced wines. In addition, the final blend includes a 14% addition of 2015 vintage wine to add complexity and an 'aged' quality. The result is an energetic and complex deep ruby wine that far outperforms its modest price point. The palate boasts bright flavors of cherry and blackberry with anise, chocolate and toasted oak background notes, smooth tannins and a long, velvety finish. The gem far outperforms its modest price point and was awarded 90 points by Wilifred Wong of wine.com.

Technical Specifications

Wine Composition:	86% 2018 vintage / 14% 2015 vintage – 57% Zinfandel, 14% Petit Verdot, 12% Petite Sirah, 7% Syrah, 5% each Merlot / Cab Sauvignon
Vineyard Region:	75% Lodi, 25% Napa Valley
Vine Age / Yields:	Various
Production Volume:	1,200 cases
Wine-Making / Vinification:	Hand-harvested low-intervention, sustainably farmed vineyards 100% destemmed grapes, 14 day native yeast fermentation - 40% barrel-fermented in French oak barrels, 30% flash on skins in stainless steel, 30% traditional fermentation in stainless steel Aged 24 months in 60% American oak / 40% new French oak (Radoux / Saury), filtered and fined, 4 months bottle age
Alcohol / Volume:	14.5%
Acidity:	6.4 g/L
Residual Sugar:	3.9 g/l

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Joseph Smith, Winemaker (Biography)



Joseph Smith has been making wine for 23 years and for the last 14 years, has been making award winning wines that have garnered extensive critical acclaim and commercial success.

Born and raised in the Central American country of Belize, hardly known for its wine culture, Joseph originally moved to northern California to work with his uncle in the construction business and didn't enter the wine industry until landing a chance job assisting Barry Gnekow of Gnekow Family Wines. Indeed, Joseph was totally unfamiliar with wine, noting "before I went to Gnekow Family Wines, I had never had a glass of wine in my life, so it was quite a journey for me."

From 2001 to 2008, Joseph worked as the righthand man in Barry Gnekow's wine consulting practice and worked with a number of notable California wineries, including Michael David Winery (Lodi), Hahn Family Wines (Santa Lucia Highlands), Klinker-Brick Winery (Lodi), Roger and Rogers (Napa Valley), Jessie's Grove (Lodi) and many others.

Under Barry's mentorship, Joseph gained wine making experience and had the opportunity to learn and oversee all aspects of wine making. Working with wineries and grape growers from the Central Coast to the North Coast of California provided him the opportunity to make wine from many of the well-known AVAs of Sonoma and Napa Valley.

In 2008, Joseph became the winemaker for Klinker-Brick Winery, owned by the Felten family. He remains Klinker-Brick's winemaker to this day.

Capping an extraordinary rise as a winemaker, in December 2020, Joseph was featured in both the Wine Spectator and the Wine Enthusiast magazines. Both articles recognized his winemaking expertise working with Lodi grapes, and particularly for producing Petite Sirah from the Antoinette Celle Vineyard.