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**In the heart of cult Cab country,
winemakers flirt with other grapes**

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Napa Valley and Cabernet Sauvignon are synonymous. Cabernet is king of the valley, the best in the state, the priciest wine (often more than \$100 a bottle) and the most densely planted grape (more than 18,000 out of 45,000 acres). Cabernet is unquestionably Napa's big kahuna.

Since Napa Cabernet grapes fetch \$4,300 or more per ton, with its Bordeaux cousins Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Merlot close behind, and one, Petit Verdot, even more expensive at \$5,000 a ton, why would anyone even think of making any other kind of wine out of Napa Valley fruit?

Call it quirky or cagey, but a surprising number of wineries seemingly ignore the bottom line and dabble in Napa Valley-grown varieties that have nothing to do with the Bordeaux quintet. Some even make a big deal out of it.

. . . Napa Roussanne commands a whooping \$7,790 per ton and most of it is found in the Diamond Mountain vineyards of Reverie Winery, which makes the Rhone-origin varietal, as well as Barbera and Tempranillo, in tiny quantities. **Truchard's** estate-grown Roussanne is one of the state's best, and Kongsgaard Wine offers a St. Helena-grown Roussanne-Viognier blend called Vio Rous. . . .

