



Elizabeth Spencer[™]

2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain

Appellation: Howell Mountain
Varietal Blend: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Production: 8 Barrels
Winemakers: Spencer Graham

Winemaker's Notes

Deep garnet in color. Aromas of rich, ripe black plum, blackcurrant, green peppercorn, toast and cedar entice the olfactory senses. Ripe on the palate, the wine exhibits bright flavors of kirsch and plum with a hint of musk. Vibrant acidity and good texture keep the rich, ripe flavors in balance, and the finish is bracing and bold.

Winemaking

Upon arrival at the winery, hand-harvested grapes were further hand-sorted, ensuring that only perfectly sound, ripe fruit was accepted. Receiving a long cold soak in order to extract as much color and flavor as possible, the must was left alone so that the native yeasts would begin the fermentation process. The fermenting juice received pump-over treatments while in tank to continue extraction from the skins. Once fermentation was complete, the wine was macerated on the skins to increase extract and allow the tannin structure to soften. Aged for 20 months in 100% French oak from select coopers including Taransaud, Sylvain, Darnajou, and Nadalie, this wine was handled as little as possible in order to allow it to continue to deepen in richness and complexity. The wine was bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

Vineyards

Sourced from vineyards high on top of Howell Mountain in the Napa Valley, this wine exhibits all the special characteristics of this mountain region. The taut dynamic between the sun-drenched eastern exposure of Howell's slopes and the wind-swept, cold nights at high elevations is revealed in the interplay within the wine which is brilliantly ripe yet unflinchingly structured. Howell Mountain is a truly singular area to produce Cabernet Sauvignon.

Vintage

The 2005 growing season in northern California was characterized by two distinct features – early spring weather with more than usual rain, and a slightly cooler than normal summer. As a result, the grapes had an ideally paced development cycle with even ripening throughout. By assiduous management of the crop levels and vine growth, we were able to guide our Cabernet Sauvignon to optimum ripeness with ideal maturation of tannins along with complex and forward aromas and flavors. As a result, this Cabernet Sauvignon is a true expression of the variety, featuring clean, pure flavors, ample structure and body, and balancing natural acidity. Howell Mountain's enticing combination of solid structure and well-ripened fruit shine through in this vintage.