



APPELLATION: OAKVILLE
VARIETAL BLEND: 100% CABERNET FRANC
WINEMAKER: SPENCER GRAHAM
RELEASE DATE: SUMMER 2010

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Deeply hued dense purple to garnet in color. Complex aromas of lovely sweet ripe fruit such as mulberries, black currants, Damson plum and with nuances of cedar, cassis and lavender that complement the classic varietal aromas of pencil shavings, tobacco leaf and pepper. Full-bodied and dense and striking a harmonious balance between bright ripe fruit and the grip of its ultra-fine tannins on the palate, this wine finishes with a long and savory persistence.

WINEMAKING

Upon arrival at the winery, the Cabernet Franc grapes were hand-sorted by cluster. We exercised strict control and selection of the fruit which went into the fermentation tank. Prior to fermentation, we gave the grapes and skins also known as "must" a long cold soak in order to extract as much color and flavor from the grapes. Allowed to ferment with 'ambient' yeasts, the must received a combination of pumpover treatments while in tank, which were decided on each day by simply the taste of the fermenting mass. Once fermentation was complete, the wine was macerated on the skins to increase extract and permit the tannin structure to soften. This Cabernet Franc was aged for 16 months in 100% French oak from select coopers including Taransaud, Sylvain, Darnajou, and Nadalie. Because we are proponents of meticulous minimalism, we handled this wine as little as possible through the entire process from fermentation to barrel aging and finally to bottling so that it continued to deepen in richness and complexity. The wine was bottled without fining or filtering in its pure, delicious state.

VINEYARDS

Our Cabernet Franc grapes are grown in a small, rocky, west-facing vineyard located in the Oakville appellation off the Silverado Trail on the east side of the Napa Valley. Cool nights give way to foggy mornings and warm afternoons to create optimal climate conditions, allowing for a stellar expression of the variety.

VINTAGE

The trend of the 2007 growing season in northern California was towards extreme heat, until the dog days of August mellowed into a mild, dry fall. This change in temperature allowed our grapes to develop gradually and to ripen evenly providing ideal, textbook conditions for this variety. Through careful management of crop level and vine growth, we guided this Cabernet Franc to optimum ripeness and allowed the grapes to showcase their complex and forward aromas and flavors. The result is a wine which is a striking expression of the variety, featuring clean, true flavors, ample structure and body, balancing natural acidity and classic Bordelaise character.

CELLARING RECOMMENDATIONS

This full-bodied Cabernet Franc will continue to age with great poise over the next 8-10 years.

Elizabeth Spencer

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