



APPELLATION: NAPA VALLEY
VARIETAL BLEND: 100% CABERNET SAUVIGNON
WINEMAKER: SPENCER GRAHAM
RELEASE DATE: FEBRUARY 2010

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Deep dark maroon in color. The fragrant expression of ripe, plush California black fruit is complimented by the classic Bordelaise aromas of cassis, violets, cigar box and crushed gravel. Damson plum, cherry and bright blackberry flavors on the palate accentuate the well-integrated tannins in this full-bodied, opulent wine and are focused and balanced by natural acidity. Juicy, ripe plum dominates the taut, precise finish of this powerful yet elegantly structured wine.

WINEMAKING

Upon arrival at the winery, our 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon grape clusters were hand-sorted in accordance with our strict quality control guidelines whereby we selected only perfectly ripe, well-developed berries and then discarded all unripe fruit and leaves. Prior to fermentation, the grapes were lightly macerated and the juice and skins kept in contact for a long cold soak in order to extract as much color and flavor as possible. We allowed 'native' yeasts to begin the fermentation and then we carefully monitored the production, scheduling pumpovers as needed while the wine was still in tank. Once fermentation had completed, the wine was further macerated on the skins to increase extract and to allow the tannin structure to soften. This wine was aged for 20 months prior to bottling in select French oak barrels from several different coopers including Taransaud, Sylvain, Darnajou, and Nadalie. This small lot of E x S Cabernet Sauvignon was handled as little as possible from fermentation to barrel aging through to bottling and because of minimal intervention, the wine continued to deepen in richness and complexity. Our specially designated Guardian Cabernet Sauvignon was bottled without fining or filtering.

VINEYARDS

The fruit for this E x S Cabernet Sauvignon is from a representative array of vineyards located from the finest sub-appellations within Napa Valley. We are privileged to work with grapes grown at top-quality sites in St. Helena, Howell Mountain, Yountville, Oakville, Rutherford, and Mt. Veeder. This diverse assortment of vineyard sources allows us to produce a Cabernet Sauvignon of great finesse which we feel is truly representative of the whole of the Napa Valley.

VINTAGE

2007 was an ideal vintage in northern California with near-perfect weather that allowed the vines to develop gradually and the grapes to ripen evenly. The growing season started out to be quite warm until the high temperatures of August mellowed into a long, mild, and (thankfully) dry autumn. By careful management of our crop levels and vine growth, we were able to guide our Cabernet Sauvignon to optimum ripeness, showcasing complex and forward aromas and flavors. The result is a complex, age-worthy wine that is a brilliant expression of the variety and the vintage, featuring expansive, pure flavors, ample structure and body, balancing natural acidity and classic Bordelaise character.

CELLARING RECOMMENDATIONS

This classic Cabernet Sauvignon will continue to age with great poise over the next 8-12 years. In the meantime, decant it for an hour or more.

Elizabeth Spencer

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