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*Vine Cliff Winery*  
*2002 Private Stock Cabernet Sauvignon*

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***Vineyard***

The 2002 growing season started with a relatively cool spring followed by a warm dry summer. Vine growth was vigorous in the spring requiring a lot of shoot thinning and Cabernet clusters were atypical with large wings on the cluster shoulders which we removed to keep yields low. Warm, dry summer conditions caused some vine stress and accelerated sugar accumulation so we had to hang our cabernet out longer to get the flavours and tannin maturity we desire before picking. Longer hang time resulted in losing about 15% yield in 2002 but the resulting wine quality was well worth it with inky color, deep black fruit aromas, currant and blackberry flavors together with rich, ripe, chewy tannins. The 2002 harvest was relatively compact and at times we had chardonnay, merlot and cabernet all coming into the winery at once. The 2002 Private Stock is a blend of our most intense cabernet lots for the vintage. The core is from our oldest Cabernet Sauvignon vines grown in the rocky soils of our special 16 rows block located in the heart of our Oakville Estate. These vines produce small grape clusters, small flavorful berries and an intense, powerful Cabernet wine. 309 cases produced.

***Winemaking***

The grapes were hand picked and sorted before being destemmed into small stainless steel fermenters. After 3 days cold soak the must was inoculated maceration was between 16 and 30 days. When the ideal balance between fruit flavor concentration and tannin extraction was reached, the free-run wine was drained off the skins into Chateau style French oak barrels for ageing in our wine caves. Rex says about the barrels "...these are my favourite Full-tilt boogie Taransaud Chateau Traditional barrels!" (we are not entirely sure what that means but they do help the wine taste mighty fine). After numerous rackings, gentle egg white fining and 19 months ageing in our wine caves, our 2002 Oakville Private Stock, 16 rows.

***Tasting notes***

*Aroma:* Concentrated, spicy black fruit, dense with blackberry, cassis, and anise spice, and hints of toast, vanilla, lavender and dried herbs.

*Palate:* Ripe, viscous and concentrated fruit with currant, blackberry and cassis flavors. Rich mouthfeel, with great volume and thick, chewy tannins lingering on the finish.