



Vine Cliff Winery *2002 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon*

Harvest Dates: September 24 ~ October 17, 2002

Growing Region: Oakville, Calistoga

Cases Produced: 1816 cases

Bottling Date: May 18, 2004



Vineyard

The 2002 growing season began with a relatively cool spring, followed by a warm dry summer. Vine growth was vigorous in the spring requiring a lot of shoot thinning. Cabernet clusters were atypical with large wings on the cluster shoulders, which were removed to keep yields low. This warm dry condition caused some vine stress which accelerated sugar accumulation so we chose to lengthen the hang time to achieve the desired flavor and tannin maturity. The Vine Cliff 2002 "Napa Valley" Cabernet Sauvignon is a marriage of our estate vineyards in Oakville and Calistoga. Blending fruit from these two different vineyards has allowed us to create a Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon with a breadth of flavors and complexity, yet still very approachable in its youth.

Winemaking

The grapes were hand picked and sorted before being destemmed into small stainless steel fermenters. A three day cold soak was used to extract color and flavor without tannin in the aqueous must environment prior to fermentation. After three days, the must was warmed and inoculated with yeast. Maceration averaged 21 days. When the ideal balance between juicy fresh fruit flavor, mid palate concentration and tannin was reached, the free run wine was drained into tight grain Chateau barrels, from the center of France, for extended aging in our caves. Individual vineyard blocks are aged as separate wine lots until the final blend was determined.

The 2002 Napa Cabernet blend is 86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc, and 4% Petite Verdot. The Oakville Cabernet imparts structure and concentration to the blend while the Cabernet Franc from our Pickett Road Vineyard gives the wine length, finesse and a polished supple texture.

Tasting notes

Aroma: Ripe Bing cherry, blueberry and deep black plum fruits. Floral with violets and lavender laced with spicy oak, hints of cocoa, caramel and sweet expensive leather.

Palate: Sweet, juicy upfront ripe cherry and plum fruit. Soft supple texture. Big rich mid palate with long chewy tannins on the finish.

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