



2007 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

Vintage Summary

The 2007 growing season began with a cold, dry winter, resulting in an early budbreak. Spring remained dry and warm, providing a consistent climate for canopy growth. In early summer, the soils were depleted of their water holding capacity, naturally reducing yields by 30%. A mild, early summer eventually turned hot. Consistent temperatures in the mid 90's ripened fruit consistently throughout the harvest season.

Vineyard Practices

Aggressively pruning the vines helps focus the plants stored carbohydrates on promoting strong early growth in shoots. When shoots reach around 6 to 8 inches, we remove any growth not intentionally left at pruning. To help intensify color, ripen tannins and maintain healthy vines, we increased sun exposure and air circulation by removing laterals and creating a tunnel through the middle of the canopy. In May, we removed smaller fruit bearing shoots that might have had difficulty ripening their clusters to decrease production and increase fruit quality. In June, an early crop removal pass was done to balance out the unusual heavy crop load. The warm summer provoked early veraison, and to ensure we had even maturity throughout the vineyard, we removed green or pink colored fruit. Yields of less than 2 tons per acre extended the growing season and brought balance and even maturity to the vineyards.

Winemaking Practices

Our winemaking team began sampling the ripening grapes on a regular basis in early September. During the last few weeks before the grapes were picked, we tasted the skins, juice and seeds two to three times per week. We evaluated color, flavor and tannin ripeness to determine the exact harvest date.

A skilled crew handpicked the grapes into ½ ton picking bins. Once at the winery, the clusters were hand sorted for consistency. After passing through our de-stemmer, berries dropped onto our modern sorting system, with both mechanical and hand sorting ensuring nothing green or under ripe was missed. The must (crushed grapes) was then placed into a small open top ten ton stainless steel tank. UV-43 yeast, a strain known for its intense cherry and berry characteristics, then fermented the wine to dryness over a twelve-day period. During fermentation, the fermenting wine was pumped over for about 35 minutes twice daily to extract the ripe tannins and intense flavors from the skins. After fermentation, another two to three weeks of pump overs were needed to extract the slower releasing tannins found in Cabernet Sauvignon. Malolactic fermentation took place in barrel to incorporate the complex flavors. We blended the wine in mid August of 2008 to allow the wine to integrate for 8 months prior to bottling. The wine was aged for 18 months in 35% new French oak.

Tasting Notes

Our 2007 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon is inky purple in color. Black fruit, combined with currant, leather and cedar fill the glass. Blueberry, red currant and cocoa make up the complex, fruit driven entry. A sweet, rich mid palate segue's into a finish layered by gritty, ripe tannins and soft nuances of caramel and butterscotch derived from the ripe fruit and new French oak. This balanced example of Paso Robles Cabernet Sauvignon is ready to drink now for tannin lovers, but will further soften and age for the next 15 years.

Specifics

Barrel aging:	18 months in 225-L oak barrels, 35% new	Barrel replacement:	20-30% annually on average
Blended:	8/4/ 2008	Racking:	every 6 months
Harvest dates:	10/22, 2007	Fining:	none
Brix at Harvest:	27.1	Filtering:	none
Harvest method:	100% hand-harvested	Bottled:	May 1st, 2008
Fermentation:	12 to 15 days with UV-43	pH:	3.72
Maceration:	18 to 35 days including fermentation	Alcohol:	15.5%
Total Acidity:	.65 g/100ml	Barrels:	Allier, Nevers, Bertrange
Pump overs:	2 to 4 times daily during fermentation	Yeasts:	UV-43
Malolactic fermentation:	in barrel		
Suggested Retail Price	\$45.00		