

## 1998 RHINEFARM VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON

### VINTAGE

1998 was a cool growing season. The fruit set was weak to moderate and produced a less than average crop load. The Cabernet was harvested four weeks later than average. The long hang time, unencumbered by rain, resulted in fruit of exceptional intensity and balance.

### VINEYARD

The Cabernet is sourced primarily from the estate blended with a small portion from the Desnudos Vineyard 500 feet above the valley in the Mayacamas Mountains, and the Batto Ranch, adjacent to the estate. The t-bud block from the La Paz section of the estate vineyard makes up the lion's share of the blend. Planted in 1976, the vines deliver black cherry, violet-scented fruit with great structure and dimension. It is due to this singular complexity that we bottle the wine unblended - our Rhinefarm Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon is one hundred percent varietal.

### WINEMAKING

The grapes were picked at 24 to 25 degrees Brix. We wanted to get the Cabernet Sauvignon as ripe as possible, due to the fact that the region is slightly cooler than farther north in the valley. Harvest was conducted in the early morning hours to keep temperatures low. Grapes were gently destemmed and crushed, and the must was sent to 15-ton tanks for primary fermentation. Fermentation of each lot was conducted separately and each was aged separately until final blending. The wines were pumped over twice daily with gentle sprinklers and tasted daily to observe tannin resolution and wine development. The Cabernets were pressed off about a week after dryness. Several lots underwent an extended maceration to improve tannin structure. The wine was aged in barrel for 12 months in medium-toast French (65%) and American oak barrels (15% new). The wines were unfinned and were lightly filtered before bottling.

### WINEMAKER TASTING NOTES

The 1998 Cabernet opens with blackberry and plum fruit with hints of tobacco and spice. The tannins are softly integrated into the mouthfeel. This wine is well structured and displays good balance throughout.

### ANALYSIS

*Harvested October 23-31, 1998*

Brix: 24.2

TA: 0.70 g/100ml

pH: 3.61

*Bottled in June, 2000*

Alcohol: 13.5%

TA: 0.57 g/100ml

pH: 3.66



Jeff Bundschu, Sixth Generation Vintner



Linda Trotta, Winemaker

*Release date:* October 1, 2000