Cakebread Cellars



1999 Vine Hill Ranch Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Vintage 1999

Each growing season is unique. 1999 was certainly no exception, and will be remembered as one of the coolest seasons of the decade. It kicked into gear with a long, cold winter, followed by a moderate spring. Bud break came in late March and early April, with bloom complete by mid-June. A cool, dry summer resulted in a rather late harvest, giving the vines extra "hang time" and allowing the grapes to reach optimum ripeness. The end results were wines with deep color and an excellent balance of fruit and tannins.

Vineyard

This Cabernet Sauvignon comes from Vine Hill Ranch, owned by long-time grape grower, Bob Phillips, and his family. We've proudly worked with the Phillips since 1981, using grapes from their vineyard situated along Oakville's gently sloping western hillsides in our Benchland Select Cabernet Sauvignon. In 1997, we decided that the vineyard was too special not to be bottled as a single vineyard wine so we bottled a small amount that year. That bottling confirmed our belief in the quality and uniqueness of this special site and exemplified the Phillips' dedication to it.

Winemaking

Cakebread's winemaker, Julianne Laks, combines traditional and innovative wine making techniques in crafting our red wines. For starters, she cold soaks the juice and skins, or must, prior to fermentation to intensify color and flavors. During the fermentation process, Julianne uses pumpovers and, whenever necessary, a technique called "rack and return," whereby the must is transferred from tank to tank to stimulate the production of phenolic compounds that help to balance and round out the wine's tannins. Four weeks of extended maceration and daily tastings also aid in crafting the most complex wine possible. Our Cabernet Sauvignons are then aged in 80% new French oak for 26 months prior to bottling, and aged an additional year before release to the public.

Tasting Notes

Following in the tradition we established with our first vintage in 1997, our 1999 Vine Hill Ranch Cabernet Sauvignon is layered and complex. From the deep, dark color to the intense aromas of blackberry, plum, vanilla and cassis, to the mouthwatering flavors of dark berries and chocolate, each layer unfolds slowly and deliberately. The smooth texture, firm tannins and long finish complete the picture. Although this wine drinks nicely when young, it would also benefit from 4 to 8 years of bottle age.

Grape Variety: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon **Vineyard:** 100% Vinehill Ranch, Oakville,

Alcohol: 14.1% Total Acidity: 0.63g/100ml

Aging: French oak for 26 months **p.H.:** 3.74

Residual sugar: 0.08g/100ml Winemaker: Julianne Laks