

Cakebread Cellars



2011 Sauvignon Blanc Napa Valley

Vineyards

Our Sauvignon Blanc grapes come from throughout Napa Valley, with a large concentration from our estate vineyards in the Rutherford, Calistoga, Carneros and southeastern Napa Valley regions. The superb fruit from these sites allows us to produce a full-bodied, crisp and complex Sauvignon Blanc boasting distinctive varietal character. (Our cool-climate Carneros and southern Napa Valley grapes, in particular, lend our Sauvignon Blanc a fresh, zesty tone not often found in Napa Valley renditions of the variety.) In 2011, as in past vintages, we blended in small amounts of Semillon (which enriches the mid-palate and softens acidity) and Sauvignon Musqué, an aromatic clone of Sauvignon Blanc that adds a bright, floral note to the bouquet.

Vintage 2011

2011 was among the coldest, wettest and latest vintages in memory. Wet winter and spring weather extended into mid-June, delaying and disrupting budbreak, bloom and fruit set, which reduced our Sauvignon Blanc crop by 50% and set the stage for a cool summer growing season that culminated in a prolonged harvest. The cool summer fostered slow, even ripening and the development of optimal fruit flavors at lower-than-normal sugar levels. This helped us craft a beautifully balanced Sauvignon Blanc with vibrant varietal aromas and flavors, and fresh acidity.

Winemaking

We harvest our Sauvignon Blanc grapes at night, when the vines are at rest, to fully capture their fresh, concentrated varietal flavors, crisp acidity and ideal sugar-acid balance. Whole-cluster-pressing of the fruit immediately upon arrival at the winery maximizes varietal intensity while minimizing the extraction of astringent compounds from the skins. In 2011, we fermented 80% of the juice in stainless steel tanks, 18% in one-year-old to four-year-old French oak barrels, and 2% in stainless steel barrels. Subsequently, 90% of the wine spent five months aging in neutral French oak barrels, which enriched its texture while maximizing varietal expression.

Tasting Notes

Our 2011 Sauvignon Blanc reflects all the positive attributes of a cool growing season. It's wonderfully fresh and aromatic, with bright scents of pink grapefruit, gooseberry, melon and green apple. On the palate, the wine is medium-bodied with rich, vibrant citrus (grapefruit and kiwi), honeydew melon, spice and mineral flavors balanced by excellent acidity and a long, refreshing, mineral/chalky finish reminiscent of a fine White Bordeaux. A superb apéritif wine, our 2011 Sauvignon Blanc is also wonderfully versatile with food, especially salads and lighter seafood, poultry and pasta dishes. Enjoy it over the next 3-5 years.

Blend: 88% Sauvignon Blanc, 8% Sémillon,
4% Sauvignon Musqué

Vineyards: Napa Valley

Harvest dates: August 31 – October 3, 2011

Fermentation: 82% stainless steel, 18% barrel

Barrel aging: 90% aged 5 months in French oak

Alcohol: 14.1%

Total acidity: 0.67 grams/100 ml

pH: 3.33

Bottled: March 2012

Winemaker: Julianne Laks