

Cakebread Cellars



2002 Vine Hill Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Vineyards

The grapes for our Napa Valley Vine Hill Cabernet Sauvignon, which is produced in very limited quantities, come from the acclaimed Vine Hill Vineyard along Oakville's gently sloping western benchlands. The vineyard has long been owned by grower Bob Phillips and his family, and we've been fortunate to work with them for over two decades, using Vine Hill grapes in our Benchland Select Cabernet Sauvignon since 1995. In 1997, we decided the fruit from this exceptional vineyard merited its own bottling, so we began producing a Vine Hill Cabernet Sauvignon from two special blocks of Bob's vines. Vine Hill has since become one of Cakebread Cellars' most coveted wines. In 2002, the fruit was harvested October 4th - 8th in ideal condition.

Vintage 2002

In 2002, Napa Valley enjoyed a long, mild growing season of consistently warm days and cool nights, with just a few manageable heat spikes in late September and early October. With an expectation of healthy yields, many growers significantly thinned their crops and pruned shoots and leaves extensively to guarantee the vines put all their energy into ripening the remaining grape clusters, ensuring highly concentrated, complex fruit flavors. Cakebread Cellars further maximized grape quality by using advanced soil moisture management techniques to precisely calibrate the amount of water required by the vines at critical junctures throughout the season.

Winemaking

After the fruit was crushed, the juice and skins were moved to tank and allowed to cold soak for 72 hours before fermentation was initiated, a procedure designed to extract color and enhance flavor. Once fermentation got underway, the juice was drained from one tank to another, allowing the skins in the first tank to fall to the bottom, only to be thoroughly re-macerated once the juice was splashed back into the tank. Known as rack-and-return, this procedure helps diffuse pigment and tannins from the grape and also converts short-chain (harsh) tannins to long-chain (suppler) tannins. After an extended, four-week maceration, the wine was transferred to French oak barrels, 75% new, where it spent 18 months aging before being bottled in August 2004.

Tasting Notes

Our 2002 Vine Hill Cabernet Sauvignon reveals a wealth of toasty blackberry fruit in the nose overlaid with a pronounced creamy, milk chocolate tone. In the mouth, the wine is deep and concentrated, with intense black fruit and chocolate flavors that turn spicy in the long finish. Compactly structured, with firm, balanced tannins, this beautiful Napa Valley Cabernet should be cellared for a minimum of five years for maximum enjoyment and will continue developing in the bottle for at least five years after that.

Grape varieties: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Vineyards: 100% Vine Hill Vineyard, Oakville

Harvest dates: October 4th - 8th, 2002

Fermentation: 100% in stainless steel

Barrel aging: 18 months in French oak,
75% new

Alcohol: 14.1%

Total acidity: 0.64 g/100 ml

pH: 3.56

Bottled: August 2004

Winemaker: Julianne Laks