

# Cakebread Cellars



## 2003 Vine Hill Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

### Vineyards

The grapes for our Vine Hill Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley, which is produced in very limited quantities, come from two special blocks of the acclaimed Vine Hill Ranch along Oakville's gently sloping western benchlands which is owned by the Phillips family. We have been working with Bob and Alex Phillips since 1981 and continue to do so with Bruce Phillips. These blocks produce fruit with exceptionally intense, concentrated flavors. In 2003, the grapes were harvested on October 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> at peak maturity.

### Vintage 2003

In 2003, a warm early spring gave way to cool, wet weather in April, which set back vine development. Seasonally temperate weather prevailed from May through July, but a cool pattern returned in August, delaying ripening. By early September, warm, sunny days and clear, cool nights were again the norm, and hot weather during the latter half of September sent us scurrying to harvest early-ripening varieties. October, however, brought classic autumn weather, with crisp mornings, warm afternoons and cool evenings, extending the harvest by several weeks and enabling us to pick our Cabernet Sauvignon grapes at ideal sugar levels. Red wines from the topsy-turvy 2003 harvest are rich and deeply colored, with excellent concentration and balance.

### Winemaking

We utilize traditional fermentation techniques with the Vine Hill fruit to ensure complete extraction of its deep color, intense flavors and smooth, ripe tannins. After crushing, the juice is cold soaked for 48 hours before fermentation is initiated. Once fermentation begins, the juice is 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 is splashed back into the tank, a technique known as rack-and-return. In addition to extracting more color and flavor, the aeration this technique affords converts short-chain (harsh) tannins to long-chain (suppler) tannins. After an extended maceration, the wine is gently drained from the skins and the free run juice transferred to French oak barrels. The skins are then pressed, and the resulting 'press fraction' kept separate. The 2003 Vine Hill aged 22 months in 37% new French barrels before being bottled in August 2005.

### Tasting Notes

Our 2003 Vine Hill Cabernet Sauvignon opens with complex, come-hither aromas of ripe blackberry fruit mingled with notes of milk chocolate, fig and sweet brown spices. On the palate, the wine delivers intense, concentrated, spicy blackberry flavors full of the classic 'dusty' character for which mid-Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is famed. Youthfully compact, with sturdy, well-integrated tannins, this classic Napa Valley Cabernet is difficult to resist now, but it should be cellared for a minimum of five years to ensure 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 Ranch, Oakville

**Harvest dates:** October 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>, 2003

**Fermentation:** 100% in stainless steel

**Barrel aging:** 22 months in French oak,  
37% new

**Alcohol:** 14.2%

**Total acidity:** 0.65 g/100 ml

**pH:** 3.77

**Bottled:** August 2005

**Winemaker:** Julianne Laks