

2000 Cabernet Sauvignon Sonoma County

Vintage: The 2000 vintage was one of those that separates the good growers and winemakers from the average ones. The harvest started out OK with the early fruit coming in good condition and predictable. Then it got cold and started to rain in October, normally our busiest month of harvest, and didn't stop until November. We didn't pick any grapes in October. The harvest restarted in November and lasted almost until Christmas. The grapes for this wine were picked one month later than normal and struggled to get ripe. We cherry picked the vineyards in order to cull out the lesser fruit ending up with less but better grapes and wine.

The Wine: Our 2000 Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend from four vineyards. The Cabernet is from Mike Topolos's Russian River Vineyards, Russian River Valley; Gino's Vineyard and Fred Labbé's Vineyard, both in Kenwood, Sonoma Valley. The Cabernet Franc is from the Levenstein Vineyard on Mt Veeder in Napa County. The blend brings together the more delicate structure of the Russian River Cabernet and the fullness and strong middle palate of the Sonoma Valley Cabs. The Cabernet Franc takes the flavors up on the palate in the way we taste chocolate. The result is a truly Sonoma style Cabernet with grace and elegance laid over a strong varietal character. We blended the wine after the first nine months in the barrel and then returned the blend to selected barrels for another year of aging.

what good vineyard management and good winemaking can do in a less than perfect vintage. The color is very dark and brilliantly clear. The nose is rich in Cedar and blackberries. The flavor is layered, reaching all parts of the palate, top to bottom, side to side, front to back and lingers in a long finish. The tannins are evident but integrated; the balance is perfect.

Data:

Winemakers:	Robert Rex, Michael Browne
Blend:	53% Cabernet Sauvignon, Russian River Valley 42% Cabernet Sauvignon Sonoma Valley 5% Cabernet Franc, Mt Veeder
Harvested:	By hand, Nov. 3, 9, 14, 2000
Brix at Harvest:	22.5°, 24.5°, 23.0, 25.2
Acid at Harvest:	5.6, 6.9, 6.1, 4.9 g/L as Tartaric
pH:	3.56, 3.85, 3.40, 3.78
Yeast:	Bordeaux Red
Fermentation:	12-15 days open-tops, hand punched
Max. Fermentation Temp:	90°F
Aging:	20 months in 80% French Oak, 20% American Oak, 35% new
Fining:	none
Filtration:	Screened at bottling
SO ₂ at Bottling:	16 ppm free
Bottled:	368 cases – May 12, 2003
Alcohol:	13.1%
Residual sugar:	0%
Released:	October 1, 2003
Awards & Reviews:	Not yet submitted.
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