

Chateau Montelena 2005 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

Winemaker's Notes

The mild and uneventful 2005 vintage presented ideal ripening weather. We anticipated optimal crop yields, juice quality, fruit flavors and chemistry. And because this overall weather pattern essentially extended the growing season, we began harvest much later than average. But once we finally ripped into the red grapes there was a massive "tsunami" of them: Cabernet, Zinfandel and Merlot! A solid and steady picking schedule, with a daily crush of 13 to 40 tons, continued for 18 days. It was an awesome period of ideal weather and harvest activity, during which we took in an amazing 473 tons of fruit.

Vintage Weather

This vintage has excellent potential. I feel that it shows strong similarities to 1986, in which we enjoyed delicious, fully mature fruit without excess sugar, and with good acidity. We could not have ordered better weather in 2005: when we needed a little heat, it warmed up; when we needed a little less heat, it cooled down. And in a vintage when many wineries might have had to shut down for lack of tank space, we never did. Our ability to maintain our balance during the compressed and hectic harvest resulted in a finely balanced wine which, after all, is what really matters.

Tasting Notes

In the glass, our 2005 Napa Valley Cabernet shows a deep, dense, black ruby color. It offers complex aromatics of berry, cedar, licorice, and classic Cabernet which, combined with its rich, underlying fruit concentration, should please the most discriminating wine lover. In the mouth it is wonderfully smooth, full-bodied and balanced, with attractive berry and spice notes, along with rich, fine grained Cabernet tannins. Tasty today, this wine is built in the traditional Montelena style, so that it will also definitely develop nicely with a few years of cellar time.



Production and Technical Data

Harvest Dates:	Cabernet Sauvignon: Sept. 22 to Oct. 31/Merlot Oct. 13 to Oct. 14
Bottling Date:	April 2007
Release Date:	March 2008
Production:	22,000cases
Composition/Blend:	86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc%
Appellation:	Napa Valley
Time in Oak:	18 months
Sugar at Harvest:	Cabernet Sauvignon: 24.7° brix/Merlot: 24.4° brix
Alcohol:	13.7%