

2005 PETER FRANUS NAPA VALLEY CABERNET SAUVIGNON



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Vineyards: Rancho Chimiles
Truchard Vineyard

Composition: 88% Cabernet Sauvignon
12% Cabernet Franc

Harvest Date: October 6, 18, 19
Fermentation: 10 days, up to 85°

Maceration: 25 days average

Oak aging: 18 months
100% French Oak 60% new

Bottling Date: April 26, 2007

Production: 1052 cases 750ml

Just look at the production numbers right above this. We often fail to emphasize the miniscule quantities of wine we produce from some of the finest growers out there. Throw in nearly 30 years of winemaking experience and the results are very limited wines with distinctive personalities that end up in the best restaurants and shops in the US and Canada.

Since 1996 I have worked with Terry Wilson and his vineyard, Rancho Chimiles, located in Wooden Valley on the south east of Napa Valley. I say the same thing every year—meticulous, attention to detail, impeccable, fastidious. For example, he works the vine's canopy to allow proper light exposure as well as protection from afternoon sun. I can assure you, this is no simple task. His hard work provides amazing consistency and the resulting wines are always dense, concentrated, and complex with layers of flavor.

Although I began with a small amount of fruit from Truchard Vineyards in 2004, I made a serious commitment in 2005. When I saw the gorgeous western exposure hillside vineyard in northern Carneros, I was confident it would be the site to provide me with outstanding grapes. My intuition was correct. I also appreciate Jo Ann and Tony Truchard's warm, generous, easygoing personalities, even in the throes of a hectic harvest. I happen to be one of those who believe those traits somehow express themselves in the grapes and ultimately the wine.

In 2005, late spring rains delayed flowering of the vines, but the summer months were mild with near perfect conditions. The cool late summer rattled nerves, but the long slow ripening without the typical heat spikes during harvest resulted in long hang time and wonderful flavor and color concentration in the grapes. Harvest of Cabernet began essentially three weeks later than 2004.

Allow me to introduce the 05 Cab: A vibrant, brilliant, dark ruby color announces the depth of the wine. A kaleidoscope of aromas follows—black cherry, cassis, bay, dried herb, earth, allspice, and sweet vanilla. The wine is pure and classic, with a natural acidity that keeps the wine bright and food friendly. The fullness of the mouth is brought in check with the firmness of the structure.

We tend to taste wine on its own. Big mistake. To prove my point I just grabbed a piece of cheese and then a spoon of last night's pasta sauce. Food, fat, and red wine. There's a reason they work together!