



NAPA VALLEY CABERNET SAUVIGNON
2001

VINEYARDS: Rancho Chimiles, Hyde Vineyard

COMPOSITION: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

HARVEST DATE: September 7 & 8, 2001; October 11, 2001

FERMENTATION: 10 days, up to 88°

MACERATION: 8 days average

OAK AGING: 8 months, 100% French Oak, 75% new

BOTTLING DATE: April 30, 2003

PRODUCTION: 1200 cases - 750ml

Terry Wilson and Larry Hyde are the heavy hitters in the grape business. They sell to the likes of Mia Klein, Paul Hobbs, Patz & Hall, Stags' Leap Wine Cellars, and Pahlmeyer to name a few. It's no coincidence that these are among the most sought after wines in the market today, and it gives you an idea of these growers' dedication and attention to detail. And the icing on the cake is that they're nice guys and a pleasure to work with.

I first began working with Terry's Rancho Chimiles in 1996. The ranch is located in Wooden Valley in the south end of Napa Valley. His eastern exposure vines grow in an exquisite hillside setting, and are always meticulously maintained with crop levels kept low. The vine's canopy is worked to allow proper light exposure as well as protection from afternoon sun. I can assure you, this is no simple task.

Larry Hyde's concerns are a little different in the Carneros region, but he displays that same dedication. Careful canopy management is also essential here to assure proper ripeness in the grapes, and he does whatever it takes to deliver the best fruit possible to his wineries.

These vineyards are the perfect foil for each other. The brooding, deep, richness and power of Wilson are tempered by the lively, fragrant, and forwardness of Hyde. I always look for balance, and here it is big time.

As for the wine, the first thing you'll notice is that it's opaque. A dense, nose of allspice, cassis, black cherry, and vanilla caramel lead to mouth-filling flavors that reflect the aromas with an equal density. Plenty of stuffing and sweet tannins demand food. I assure you, this is not an aperitif wine. Thick prime rib or lamb shanks or for my vegetarian compatriots, a reduced, concentrated portabella mushroom recipe might pull it off.

I have to say, I am very proud of this wine, and I thank all those involved!