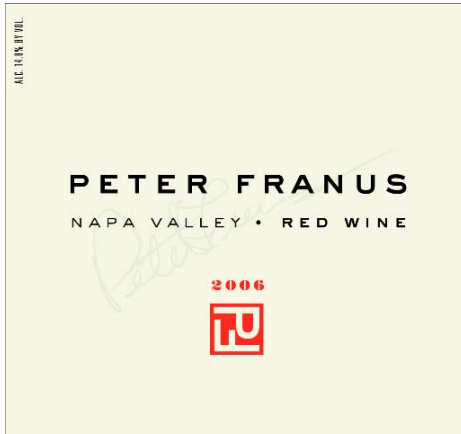


## 2006 PETER FRANUS NAPA VALLEY RED WINE



Vineyards:	Fore Family Rancho Chimiles Stewart Vineyard
Composition:	70% Cabernet Sauvignon 20% Merlot 10% Cabernet Franc
Harvest Date:	Sept. 25, 29 Oct. 18, 23
Fermentation:	12 days average, up to 82°
Oak aging:	18 months 100% French Oak 70% new
Bottling Date:	May 22, 2008
Production:	950 cases 6 x 750ml

Cabernet Sauvignon is very much the driving force of wine production in Napa Valley. It performs extremely well and typically commands the highest prices for grapes as well as wine. Because I have been in Napa Valley for 30 years, I can say this—it is a resilient grape and not terribly difficult to grow, and from a winemaking standpoint, not terribly difficult to make. The challenge, however, is to make a wine with personality that distinguishes itself from the pack. When everyone is using similar barrels, similar clones, and similar everything, how do you make that happen?

Enter Merlot and Cabernet Franc. I have the good fortune to work with some extraordinary Merlot and Cabernet Franc, both coming out of Carneros. They perform extremely well on their own, but when blended together with Cabernet Sauvignon, the resulting wine is elevated to an entirely different level. My goal has never been to knock you over the head—those are easy wines to make. I want to intrigue you with layers, complexity, and nuance. That is the driving force behind my Napa Valley Red Wine. Intuition guides me as I select a handful of barrels that I feel are offering something a little special. The blend will vary from year to year and “Red Wine” freed me from the restraints of calling it Cabernet Sauvignon.

2006 literally began with incredible rains and flooding. The rest of winter was long and wet, resulting in late bud-break and bloom. A record-breaking heat wave in July stressed the vines some more. Warm dry winds in the latter part of September pushed harvest into full swing, although for most it typically began a couple of weeks later than normal.

The Bordeaux reds of 2006 offer elegance and complexity. That is their charm and why they attract me so much. Because the Merlot was so strong in 2006, it represents 20% of the blend, offering a lush, supple note to the wine. Medium ruby in color, compared to the 2005, the wine is more forward and approachable, offering hints of black cherry, cinnamon, wintergreen, vanilla, coffee, and floral notes. Expansive and complex are my other notes. The acid and weight are perhaps more reminiscent of Bordeaux than California—a result of the vintage rather than any winemaking manipulation. The wine is very alive and should hold together for quite some time.

My ultimate evaluation of any wine I drink is this: do I want to go back to a second or third glass? Yes, I do. And I am my own harshest critic!