

2009 PETER FRANUS SAUVIGNON BLANC NAPA VALLEY



Vineyard:	Stewart Vineyard Truchard Vineyard
Composition:	100% Sauvignon Blanc Musque Clone 100% Carneros
Harvest Date:	September 8 & October 2
Fermentation:	23 days at 49°
Oak aging:	Neutral barrels 3 months
Bottling Date:	February 10, 2010
Production:	840 cases

Anyone who's been to Napa passes it every time they come into town—the old Stewart Dairy in Carneros on the south end of the Napa Valley. The little red barn along with the vineyard sits on the floodplain of the Napa River, and the combination of wind, restrictive soil, clone, and whatever else magical is going on results in grapes that I eagerly anticipate every year. It most often suggests a wine from the Loire, but dances along that spectrum from minerality to fruitiness, depending on the vintage.

In 2007, I received the very first Sauvignon Blanc from Truchard Vineyards, and continue to enthusiastically work with their fruit. Harvested three weeks later than the Stewart in 2009, it offers another dimension and layer of complexity that lifts the overall blend.

2009 will be discussed and evaluated in two ways—before the rains and after the rains. It was a beautiful, mild, growing season with slow, great flavor development in the grapes. Everything before the rains arguably is equal to anything of this decade. That's saying a lot! Our Sauvignon Blanc arrived in impeccable condition and were the first grapes for us to begin the harvest.

We have continued to follow the winemaking strategy that began in 2003. Grapes proceed to the press without any crushing, and the resulting juice ferments in stainless steel for roughly a month. We select a yeast strain known to enhance the aromatics of the wine. Aging takes place for three months in completely neutral puncheons—500 liter or 132 gallon barrels. The sur-lie aging adds a surprising textural component that elevates the pleasure component of the wine. The raciness is balanced by the creaminess of the barrel aging. A reminder, however, there is no new oak. The goal is to preserve the wonderful fresh fruit quality of the wine.

Our 2009 is pale straw in color. The wine is youthful in both the nose and mouth, and a few months in bottle have served it well, allowing its character to evolve. Intriguing and complex aromas offer ginger, lime peel, lemongrass, and passion fruit. Minerality reigns in the fruit character further adding structure to the wine. Bone dry and with appropriate acidity, it offers great balance of all its components. We are confident the wine will evoke our favorite wine description, "delicious."

Our 2009 Sauvignon Blanc ranks up there with two of my other favorite vintages—2004 and 2007. The embodiment of refreshing, it is a friendly wine that will satisfy a spectrum of Sauvignon Blanc lovers.