

# JUSTIN

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VINEYARDS & WINERY

## 2005 JUSTIFICATION

### Vintage Summary

The 2005 vintage began with heavily moisturized soils as the result of an extremely wet winter. Early spring remained cool and wet, providing vines with all the water necessary to promote a strong, well developed canopy. Crop loads were up to 25% higher than normal. July and August temperatures lingered in the mid 90's, allowing healthy canopies to absorb the consistent heat and bring veraison quickly. Fall maintained healthy, moderate temperatures around the 88-degree range, allowing the wines to develop phenolics while still maintaining acidity. A quick heat spike in late October provided the necessary degree-days to push the last of the grapes to proper maturity levels.

### Vineyard Practices

Aggressively pruning the vines helps focus the plants stored carbohydrates on promoting strong early growth in shoots. When shoots reach around 6 to 8 inches, we remove any growth not intentionally left at pruning. To help intensify color, ripen tannins and maintain healthy vines, we increased sun exposure and air circulation by removing laterals and creating a tunnel through the middle of the canopy. Merlot clusters tend to be large and have shoulders or wings. Prior to veraison, we removed these shoulders and wings to ensure we had even maturity throughout the vineyard. In the Cabernet Franc fields, we removed any green or pink colored fruit, which could result in unripe flavors. The extra crop removal resulted in yields of around 2 tons per acre. Merlot, a thin-skinned variety, was harvested September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Cabernet Franc needed a little more time in the sun to ripen its thick skins, and develop its hard green tannins into soft, supple, more palatable flavors. The Cabernet Franc was harvested November 4<sup>th</sup>.

### Winemaking Practices

A skilled crew handpicked the grapes into ½ ton picking bins. Once at the winery, our crusher-destemmer removed all of the stems and lightly crushed the grapes. The must (crushed grapes) was then placed in a stainless steel tank. UV-43 yeast, a strain known for its intense cherry and berry characteristics, then fermented the wine to dryness over a ten-day period. The relatively early harvest of Merlot brought great acid levels, helping extract bright, intense color during fermentation. Two pump overs per day, plus occasional delestage (the process of racking the fermenting wine into another tank and returning over the top with a high powered pump) helped create the complexity and balance of this Merlot. The Cabernet Franc had a combined fermentation and maceration that lasted 3 weeks. The consistent year allowed us to extract the black fruit, earthy and leather characters from the ripe skins. Pump overs took place twice a day for all 21 days. Malolactic fermentation took place in barrel and 47% new French Oak helped add depth to this Cabernet Franc/ Merlot blend.

### Tasting Notes

Aromas of raspberry, blackberry and light earthy characters make up the nose of our 2005 right bank Bordeaux blend. The entry is soft, supple and rich with red and black fruit. A lengthy, elegant mid palate follows, showcasing the many layers resulting from this complex blend. Slightly dusty, yet round tannins from the Cabernet Franc combine with bright acidity and fruit from the Merlot, to make this wine balanced and seamless from start to finish. Hints of chocolate, caramel and cinnamon from the new French oak are the encore of this unique wine.

### Specifics

**Barrel aging:** 18 months in 225-L oak barrels, 47% new

**Blend:** 64% Cabernet Franc, 36% Merlot

**Blended:** 8/6-8/7, 2006

**Harvest dates:** 9/30-11/4, 2005

**Brix at Harvest:** 25.8

**Harvest method:** 100% hand-harvested

**Fermentation:** 8 to 12 days with UV-43

**Maceration:** 14 to 21 days including fermentation

**Total Acidity:** .71 g/100ml

**Pump overs:** 2 times daily during fermentation

**Yeasts:** UV-43

**Barrels:** Allier, Nevers

**Barrel replacement:** 30-40% annually on average

**Racking:** every 3 months

**Fining:** None

**Filtering:** None

**Bottled:** May 25, 2007

**pH:** 3.55

**Alcohol:** 15.0%

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