



2005 SAVANT

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. Our Syrah was harvested in early October while the Cabernet Sauvignon was picked in the beginning of November.

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. In May, we removed smaller fruit bearing shoots that might have had difficulty ripening their clusters to decrease production and increase fruit quality. The warm summer provoked early veraison, and to ensure we had even maturity throughout the vineyard, we removed green or pink colored fruit. Yields of less than 1.5 tons per acre extended the growing season and resulted in small, intense clusters rich in color, flavor, and complexity.

Production Practices

Our winemaking team began sampling the ripening grapes on a regular basis in early September. During the last few weeks before the grapes were picked, we tasted the skins, juice and seeds two to three times per week. We evaluated color, flavor and tannin ripeness to determine the exact harvest date.

A skilled crew handpicked the grapes into ½ ton picking bins. Once at the winery, a sorting area removed any less than perfect clusters. 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 for the Cabernet portion, and small, brand new 59 gallon American oak barrels for the Syrah portion. UV-43 yeast, a strain known for its intense cherry and berry characteristics, then fermented the wine to dryness over a twelve-day period. During fermentation, the tank fermenting wine was pumped over for about 35 minutes up to four times daily to extract the ripe tannins and intense flavors from the skins. The barrels were punched down four times daily to control temperature and enhance extraction from both skins and wood. Free run juice from both lots was used for the final blend. Malolactic fermentation took place in barrel to help incorporate the oak faster. 18 months in new American and French Oak (21% New American, 47% New French) helped soften the tannins and lengthen the mid palate. We blended the wine in August and put it back into barrel for ten months to ensure the wine was integrated before bottling.

Tasting Notes

The 2005 SAVANT is inky black in color and aromatically layered from the combination of Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon. The glass is immediately filled with a multitude of aromas, including black fruit, Bing cherry, cassis and soft oak notes from the barrel fermentation. The entry is elegant, and segues into a mid palate with a combination of blackberry, mushrooms and black pepper. The finish is layered with lush, ripe tannins and is complimented by approachable, seamlessly integrated flavors of oak. Drink now through 2016.

Technical Information

Blend: 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Syrah
Blended: 8/17-8/18, 2006
Pump overs: 2-4 times daily during fermentation
Harvest method: 100% hand-harvested
Fermentation: 10 to 13 days with UV-43
Maceration: 28 to 35 days including fermentation
Total Acidity: .65 g/100ml
Malolactic fermentation: in barrel
Yeasts: UV-43

Barrel aging: 18 months in 225-L American & French oak barrels, 68% new
Barrel replacement: 40-60% annually
Racking: every 3 months
Fining: none
Filtering: none
Bottled: May 4, 2007
pH: 3.75
Alcohol: 15.0%
Barrels: Center of France. Vosges. Allier. Nevers. Minnesota