



2004 SAVANT

Vintage Summary

The 2004 vintage began with relatively low rainfall. Dry soils and a warm February resulted in an early bud break. Spring generated ideal weather, limiting heat spikes and allowing vines to produce full, dense canopies. In early June, we removed laterals and selective leaves to manipulate the canopy, and allow filtered light to penetrate the clusters. The warmest summer since 1997 produced consecutive months of 90-degree temperatures. Veraison came early and was very even, allowing us to drop any discolored or green fruit left prior to harvest. August was nearly perfect, with only one day jumping above 100 degrees. September and October remained generally warm, providing a perfect climate for harvesting ripe fruit while still maintaining natural acidity.

Production 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.

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 (23% New American, 15% 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

This blend of 50% Syrah and 50% Cabernet Sauvignon is so intense and concentrated you cannot see through the wine. Almost black in color, the wine has aromas of ripe plum, wild berry and black currant. The entry is soft, with medium acidity and flavors of raspberry, black cherry and a hint of cedar box. The Syrah portion of this wine was fermented in barrel, and the oak integration from this process has created a seamless integration of oak and tannins on the finish. In three words: **lush, powerful, complex.**

Technical Information

Blend: 50% Syrah, 50% Cabernet Sauvignon
Blended: 8/12-8/15, 2005
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: .58 g/100ml
Malolactic fermentation: in barrel
Yeasts: UV-43

Barrel aging: 18 months in 225-L American & French oak barrels, 38% new
Barrel replacement: 28-40% annually
Racking: every 3 months
Fining: none
Filtering: none
Bottled: June 5-9, 2006
pH: 3.8
Alcohol: 15.0%
Barrels: Center of France, Vosges, Allier, Nevers, Minnesota