



## 2006 SAVANT

### Vintage Summary

2006 began with consistent rain and cool weather. The vines, tired from the heavy 2005 harvest, awakened in early May with unusual warm weather for late spring. May, June and July averaged a high of 78 degrees. August and September lingered in the 85-degree range, helping achieve bright, ripe fruit character without picking based on concerns of too much sugar and high alcohol. Rain showed its ugly face in late October, but our low yields had us 98% harvested before the storm hit. Harvest took place from late September through late October.

### 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 mild summer helped maintain acidity and produce unusually elegant, balanced wines. 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.

### Winemaking 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 French 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 (10% New American, 50% 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 2006 Savant is dark ruby in color with a slight crimson hue. Aromas of spice, cedar box and caramel surround plum and black cherry in this barrel fermented red blend. The entry is soft and supple, echoing the spice and red fruit found in the nose. The mid palate balances the bright fruit of Syrah with the power and acidity of Cabernet Sauvignon. Structured, integrated tannins from the 60% new oak evolve into a lush velvety finish garnished with flavors of cocoa, coffee and mint.

### Specifics

Blend: 59% Syrah, 41% Cab

Blended: 8/11-8/12, 2007

Pump overs: 2-4 times daily during fermentation

Yeasts: UV-43

Maceration: 28 to 35 days including fermentation

Total Acidity: .68 g/100ml

Harvest method: 100% hand-harvested

Fermentation: 10 to 13 days with UV-43

Malolactic fermentation: in barrel

Barrel aging: 18 months in 225-L American and French oak barrels, 60% new

Barrel replacement: 40-60% annually

Racking: every 6 months

Fining: none

Filtering: none

Bottled: May 4, 2008

pH: 3.71

Alcohol: 14.5%

Barrels: Center of France, Vosges, Allier, Nevers, Minnesota