



ROBERT MONDAVI WINERY

1966

Unfined Cabernet Sauvignon

Appellation: Napa Valley
Total Acid: N/A
Final pH: N/A

Residual Sugar: Dry
Alcohol: N/A
Varietal 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc

VINTAGE

The first harvest at Robert Mondavi Winery was underway before the roof was yet on the building. The spring had been free of frosts, with even temperatures, providing for good berry set. Rainfall was within the average range of 25-30". Early in the growing season, phenological development indicated an early vintage, but ensuing cool weather slowed down maturities. Harvest began mid-September. Hot winds elevated sugar levels by causing some dehydration of the grapes. Overall quality for Cabernet Sauvignon was very good to excellent and promised long lived wines.

VINEYARDS

We selected Cabernet Sauvignon from several outstanding Napa Valley vineyards and the Cabernet Franc from the Detert Vineyard, an Oakville bench vineyard that has contributed to nearly all of the winery's Reserve Cabernet Sauvignons. The face of Napa Valley was much different 30 years ago. According to the Napa Agricultural Report, in 1966 the total grape acreage in Napa Valley was 11,381 compared to the 35,030 planted acres in 1995. The most widely planted black grape was Petit Sirah at 1,651 acres; French Colombard led the white varieties at 621 acres.

FERMENTATION AND AGING

"We crushed the grapes into the stainless steel fermenters. The juice was fermented with Montrachet yeast (in granular form from Red Star) at about 75°F. The wine fermented dry in five days, at which point we drained off the wine with no extended skin contact. The wine was aerated and transferred to another stainless steel tank. Michael and Robert wanted to filter, but the filter had not arrived yet from Germany. So the wine was racked and aerated two more times from stainless steel tank A to stainless steel tank B. We put the unfiltered wine into barrels in December for aging. The barrels were topped two weeks after filling, then every three months in the pyramid. After 18-19 months of barrel-age, the wine was blended with the Cabernet Franc. This was the first Reserve but Mike and Robert did not want to use the name "Reserve", so the word "Unfined" was to be the equivalent. We bottled the wine with an old, six spigot, semi-automatic, hand-siphoned, stainless steel filler borrowed from Charles Krug and an old single corker. We labeled and foiled the bottles by hand on three round tables. On a big day, 8 or 9 people did about 420 cases."