



ROBERT MONDAVI WINERY

1970

Cabernet Sauvignon Unfiltered

Appellation: Napa Valley
Total Acid: 0.63%
Final pH: 3.47

Residual Sugar: Dry
Alcohol: 12.0%
Varietal: N/A

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

In 1970, we produced two Cabernet Sauvignons – an “Unfined, Unfiltered” and an “Unfiltered”. The “Unfined, Unfiltered” bottling was the equivalent of our “Reserve” selection that began in 1971 and continues today. This wine was made in extremely limited quantities and is no longer available. The Unfiltered bottling was the equivalent of our current Napa Valley Unfiltered Cabernet Sauvignon.

At a tasting on March 1, 2000, the 1970 Cabernet Sauvignon Unfiltered was evaluated and notes taken. This wine, reflecting the concentrated, small crop and cool growing season of the 1970 vintage, has confirmed our prediction that it would have great aging potential. According to Tim Mondavi, “The 1970 was a classic Napa Valley vintage that yielded Cabernet Sauvignons with power and backbone. Our 1970 Unfiltered Cabernet Sauvignon was not a wine that was immediately accessible in its youth; age has softened its tannins. Now, at nearly 30 years old, it still has great vibrancy and good density of flesh. It is showing graceful evolution with firm structure and focused flavors. The color still has good depth, with slight brick color at the rim.” Nuances of minerals, spices (including saffron), leather, tobacco, roasted meat, and sur bois character (forest undergrowth -- mushrooms and earth) have developed in the still remarkably fresh aromas and flavors. The wine should be decanted before serving.

VINTAGE

Napa Valley's 1970 growing season was difficult for grape growers because severe spring frosts caused half of the crop to be lost. A dry spring and warm March resulted in an early budbreak, setting the vines up for devastating frosts on April 27th and 28th. There were thirty-six nights in for the Napa Valley when temperatures dipped under 33° F. The cold spring was followed by a very hot summer, with many days over 100°, which further reduced crop. We needed to do very selective picking because of sun damage and varying grape maturity, caused by the development of second and third crop by the frosted vines. The harvest season stretched into November, with excellent ripening conditions. Although yields were extremely light, the Cabernet Sauvignon that was selectively harvested was outstanding and had highly extracted flavors. These concentrated grapes gave our 1970 Unfiltered Cabernet Sauvignon rich varietal character, excellent structure and long aging potential. .

WINEMAKING

The grapes were hand-selected to assure optimum quality and then destemmed and lightly crushed. The must was fermented in a combination of temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks and glass-lined roto-tanks (acquired in 1969). Fermentation lasted three to four days. At the end of the fermentation, 25% of the wine was left in contact with the skins for an additional three weeks to develop more flavor, body complexity and color in the wine. This technique of extended maceration, used by the top growers of Bordeaux, was adopted by Robert Mondavi Winery in 1969 with excellent results (and expanded in future vintages.) After pressing, the wine was allowed to settle and was then racked into small French oak barrels. The wine was aged for 24 months in barrels of Nevers oak. It was bottled without filtration to capture this vintage's tremendous body and complexity.

Susan ffrench --Updated 3/2/00