



ROBERT MONDAVI
WINERY

2 0 0 8

FUMÉ BLANC RESERVE

TO KALON VINEYARD

• W I N E M A K E R ' S N O T E S •

A wine that does justice to the Fumé Blanc tradition here at Robert Mondavi Winery. Expansive aromas of verbena, melon, and honeyed grapefruit crescendo to flavors of passion fruit, lemon grass and a glimmer of Temple orange. Supported by the minerality distinctive of the To Kalon Vineyard and the lush generosity of Sémillon, this electric wine has exceptional palate appeal with uplifted fruit and herbal notes indigenous to its legendary provenance.

Varietal blend: 95% Sauvignon Blanc, 5% Sémillon

• V I N T A G E •

Our 2008 harvest rewarded us with a small crop of very high quality fruit, although the months leading up to it brought grey hair to our vineyard team. Even so, Napa Valley came through remarkably unscathed by the drought, frost, fire and hot winds that plagued other California regions. After heavy rainfall, spring turned into the driest on record. Total rainfall was 27.6 inches at our To Kalon Vineyards in Oakville and 17.34 inches in Los Carneros. The drought-condition spring months were punctuated by the worst April frosts in several decades; our vineyard team protected our vineyards during 25 sleepless nights and saved our crop. The low rainfall, coupled with dry winds during bloom and berry set, reduced yields 25 percent or more in most varieties. Fortunately, Mother Nature's mood improved as summer progressed, resulting in an excellent ripening period. Harvest, which began early on August 8 and ended in mid-October, went "textbook" smoothly through all varieties. We picked the Sauvignon Blanc grapes for this wine August 13 through 16.

Grapes: (Average) 23.3° Brix with 0.52% initial acid and 3.38pH

• V I N E Y A R D S •

A large percentage (48 percent) of the fruit for the 2008 Fumé Blanc Reserve came from To Kalon Vineyard's T Block, which was planted in 1960. Another 45 percent came from To Kalon's Sauvignon Blanc vineyard planted in 1994, plus 5 percent from the Sémillon block and the remaining 2 percent from the I-block, planted in 1945. The older vines that comprise a large portion of this wine's heritage are never irrigated, and through the years have learned to self-regulate to produce just the right amount of fruit that they can faithfully ripen. To Kalon soils are well-drained, allowing roots to dig deep. Combined with dry farming, this results in intensely flavorful fruit with a fine mineral character. Grapes from the older vines impart concentration and opulent flavors to the blend, while the younger vines deliver vibrant fruit character and lively structure.

Grape Sourcing: 100% To Kalon Vineyard, Oakville AVA, Napa Valley

Average vine age: 31 years

• F E R M E N T A T I O N A N D A G I N G •

We immediately pressed the grapes as whole clusters, employing press cuts to separate the delicate free-run juice from the later stages of pressing. Barrel fermentation (100%) took place in lightly-toasted 60-gallon French oak barrels, of which 25% was new. To retain crisp acidity as a balance to the richly flavored fruit, the wine was not allowed to undergo malolactic fermentation. During 10 months of barrel aging, we hand-stirred the yeast lees (a process called *bâtonnage*) to increase harmony and impart creamy texture. The wine was gently clarified with barrel-to-barrel racking during aging. At blending, a small portion of Sémillon was added to enhance floral notes and silky mouthfeel.

Wine analysis: 0.74% total acid, 3.07pH, 0.82% residual sugar, and 14.6% alcohol, by volume