

2000 FRANUS CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA VALLEY



Vineyards:	Hyde Vineyard	35%	Harvest Dates:	Sept. 29 through Oct. 27
	Rancho Chimiles	21%	Maceration:	21 days, average
	Estate	16%	Oak Aging:	17 months, 55% new French
	"East Napa"	16%	Bottling Date:	April 5 & 6, 2002
	Napa Valley College	8%		
	Fore Vineyard	4%		
Composition:	100% Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon		Cases Produced	2200

I export a small amount of wine to Germany, and typically my importer comes over once a year to taste through my wines. There is a handful of "professionals" with whom I enjoy tasting and he is one of them because his observations and insights always seem to be on target. After tasting my 2000 Cabernet he announced, "This is your best yet." It later became very poignant for me because I had not yet heard that the "wine press" was about to trash the 2000 vintage. Imagine my surprise.

A brief but excruciating heat wave occurred in June, but the rest of the growing season was rather temperate and uneventful except for the earthquake in early September that I thought would knock my house off its foundation. Fairly long and slow grape ripening resulted in flavors that I would describe as classic.

As in previous vintages, Hyde from Carneros and Terry Wilson's Rancho Chimiles comprise the majority of this 100% Cabernet. Together they form the backbone that always provides the structure upon which the rest of the wine builds. I also think that one of the hallmarks of this 2000 is its complexity, certainly a result of the growing season, but also the fact that I used more vineyard sources in this wine than any previous vintage.

The wine displays a very youthful, dark ruby color. Its expansive nose reveals berries and cream, bay, allspice, cedar, and cassis. I find the mouth round and smooth making it enormously quaffable, yet with enough acidity to meet my important criterion of keeping it lively. The weight, harmony, and balance of the wine should allow it to develop for quite some time.

No wonder that one of the most famous restaurants in New York is currently pouring a ton of this wine by the glass!