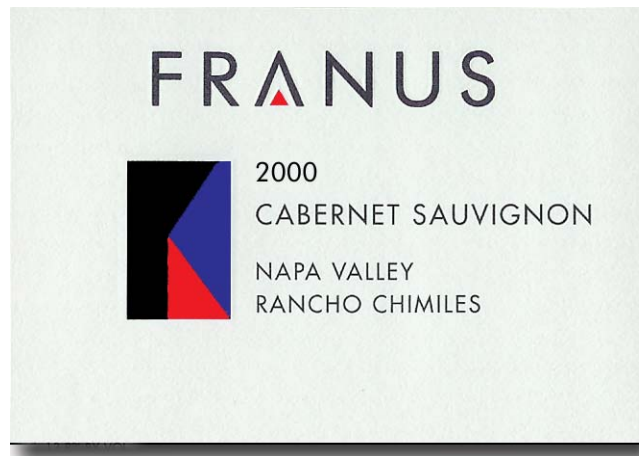


2000 FRANUS CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA VALLEY RANCHO CHIMILES



Vineyard:	Rancho Chimiles Terry Wilson, Grower	Maceration:	29 days
Composition:	100% Cabernet Sauvignon	Oak Aging:	17 months, 70% new French oak
Harvest Date:	September 22 & 23, 2000	Bottling Date:	April 5, 2002
Fermentation:	10 days, peak temperature 86°	Production:	500 cases

Through the proverbial grapevine I had heard of Terrence Wilson's Cabernet earlier, but it was 1996 when I began to work with his grapes. Previously the fruit had gone to Stag's Leap Wine Cellars and Chateau Montelena, but now I was in the enviable position of sharing the vineyard with Jason Pahlmeyer. Terry was clearly doing something right, and the Franus Cabernet was suddenly notched up with a new depth and concentration. It soon became apparent that the Rancho Chimiles Cab was in a special category, and wine lovers deserved the opportunity to experience this wine on its own. This is my second release of that wine.

Rancho Chimiles is located in Wooden Valley in the southern end of Napa Valley, east of the town of Napa. No one is more dedicated than Wilson in pursuit of quality, and this eastern exposure hillside vineyard always looks impeccable, and fruit arrives at the winery in perfect condition. Crop levels are low, and careful positioning of the fruit allows more of the gentle morning sunlight to reach the grapes while the leaf canopy protects it from the hotter afternoon sun.

The wine itself is always dense and generally has the most tannin of my different Cabernet lots, but those tannins are ripe and mouth-filling and are balanced by the richness and dimension of the rest of the wine. A similar comment can be made about the oak. Although aged in 70% new oak, the depth of the wine keeps the oak in check so there is never a sense of "oakiness."

Dark ruby in color aromas of cinnamon, clove, and cassis suggest classic Cabernet. The 2000 growing season softened the edges and tamed the power of this rich, often brooding wine, giving it a surprising balance and accessibility. Trust me; one glass will definitely invite another.