

2005 PETER FRANUS CARNEROS SAUVIGNON BLANC



Vineyard:	Stewart Vineyard
Composition:	100% Sauvignon Blanc Musque Clone
Harvest Date:	September 15, 2005
Fermentation:	21 days at 49°
Oak aging:	Neutral puncheons, 3 months
Bottling Date:	April 13, 2006
Production:	582 cases

Since 1999 I have had the pleasure to work with this fabulous vineyard that consistently provides me with grapes that possess a unique and wonderful character. Something is going on at this old Stewart Dairy location on the unlikely Napa River flood plain that led one of New York's most highly regarded restaurant wine buyers to call a recent vintage the best California Sauvignon Blanc he had ever tasted. I thank my growers Jim Fore and Doug Hill for doing their job so well and having faith in me to do mine.

The winemaking changes we began in 2003, continued with this vintage-- a cold fermentation, utilization of a yeast strain known to enhance aromatics, and aging in neutral oak puncheons. The Musque clone, the cold fermentation and yeast provide the exotic nose, while the sur lie aging results in a creamy, near sense of sweetness in the mouth, maintaining a tension with the vibrant acidity.

The nerve-racking cool late summer served the grapes well. Longer hang time--nearly three weeks longer on the vine than 2004--without any extreme heat packed the grapes with flavors and made harvest a pleasure.

Nobody seems to talk about the color of a white wine. For some reason the 2005 struck me with its beautiful straw/green hint of gold hue that suggests, come, smell and taste. Lemon-lime zest. Pineapple. Ginger. Lemongrass and a hint of mint. Green pea. Go and crush some stone to get a sense of minerality. I'm amazed at the forwardness of this wine which has been in the bottle for just over a month. I can only imagine what's going to happen down the road. I love the elusiveness of the nose that captures elements from several of the great Sauvignon regions in the world.

Sauvignon Blanc is especially "hot" right now, so of course I wish I had a lot more of this to offer. Get this one while you can and let it be your introduction to the spectacular 2005 vintage.