

2006 PETER FRANUS CARNEROS SAUVIGNON BLANC



Vineyard: Stewart Vineyard

Composition: 100% Sauvignon Blanc
Musque Clone

Harvest Date: September 18, 2006

Fermentation: 28 days at 49° / 55°

Oak aging: Neutral puncheons, 3 months

Bottling Date: February 15, 2007

Production: 649 cases

Anyone who's been to Napa passes it every time they come into town—the old Stewart Dairy in Carneros on the south end of the Napa Valley. The little red barn along with the vineyard sits on the floodplain of the Napa River, and the combination of wind, restrictive soil, clone, and whatever else magical is going on results in grapes that I eagerly anticipate every year. Although it most often suggests a wine from the Loire, it dances along that spectrum from minerality to fruitiness, depending on the vintage.

In 2006 the Sauvignon fruit is a little more rambunctious. This was the latest harvest of the last several years allowing for plenty of intense flavor development. The wines are generous, yet came in with typically lower alcohols displaying great balance and elegance. I must say, I'm a real fan of the 2006 vintage.

As for the wine. Here come those aromas that you generally anticipate—citrus-peel, ginger, lemongrass, honeydew, and hay. Rich and fruity flavors fill the mouth, but the zinging acidity keeps it all in check welcoming you back for another glass.

Our winemaking regimen is not terribly complicated. The grapes are not crushed but rather whole-cluster pressed. The juice ferments at a fairly cold temperature which in combination with a selected yeast strain enhances aromatics and fruitiness. We age the wine sur-lie briefly in neutral (no new wood character) puncheons to add some richness and creaminess to the mouth.

We are especially pleased by the placements we have seen of our Sauvignon Blanc in some of the top restaurants in the country. I just heard that a group of Napa winemakers recently had a blind tasting of twenty 05 Sauvignon Blancs. Guess whose came in first place? The “points” from the critics are fine, but more gratifying is when I hear these stories or get a call from someone who has just had the wine for the first time and wants to relay their enjoyment.

I think clam pasta will be exactly the right call for this wine tonight.