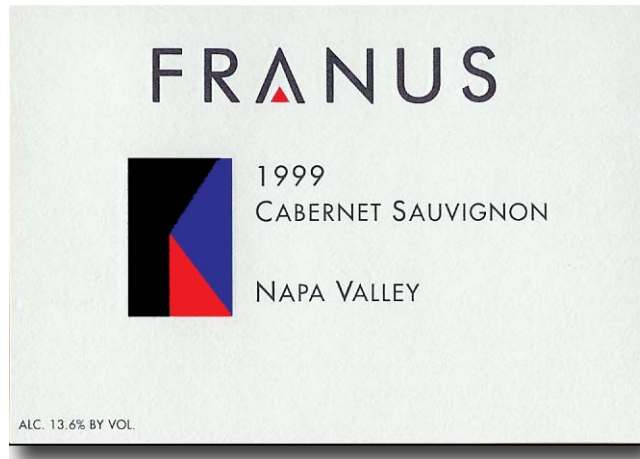


# 1999 FRANUS CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA VALLEY



Vineyards:	Rancho Chimiles	27%	Harvest Dates:	Sept. 29 through Oct. 28
	Hyde Vineyards	40%	Maceration:	24 days average
	Napa Valley College	19%	Oak Aging:	17 months, 50% new French
	Fore Vineyard	11%		
	Estate	3%		
Composition:	100% Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon		Bottling Date:	April 13, 2001

I will introduce the 1999 Cabernet by first offering a comment about the 1998. I have probably received more enthusiastic calls about the inappropriately maligned 1998 than any of my previous Cabernets. Hard to believe perhaps, but a little patience has resulted in a wine that is developing beautifully. For the impatient, here comes the 1999. Throughout the aging of this wine, I always had the sense it would be a crowd-pleaser, probably because of its rich, juicy, and flashy personality. To distinguish the two vintages, I would say the 1999 is more about fruit where I think structure about the 1998 version.

Once again, Hyde from Carneros and Terry Wilson's Rancho Chimiles constitute two thirds of this 100% Cabernet. It is interesting to compare the effect of the growing season since the last three vintages have the same vineyard sources. The harvest window in fact was virtually the same for the 1998 and 1999, and both years had long, cool growing seasons.

The fruit from Rancho Chimiles is divided between Pahlmeyer and Franus, and is consistently the deepest and most concentrated of my Cabernets. The Hyde while also rich and dark, is typically more fruity, forward, lower in tannin, and offers good acidity. The two complement each other well and add a balance to the blend. Balance is always one of my top winemaking goals.

There is no shortage of color in this dense, dark ruby wine. An exotic, almost Rhône-like nose invites you in. Dark fruits, cassis, tea, white pepper, rose petal, and nutmeg, are some of the descriptors that have come up in tastings. Even though the texture is lush, if you hold that wine in your mouth for more than a moment, you will detect the good acidity and a backbone of fine tannin that will keep this youthful wine together for a long time.

This wine has already found its way onto some great restaurant wine lists!