



Robert Keenan Winery

1998 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

In spring of 1998 Keenan's last remaining Cabernet vines were torn out and replanted due to disease infestations. We were sad to lose our estate Cabernet, but this gave us the opportunity to work with fruit harvested from select vineyards throughout the Napa Valley appellation. Cabernet vineyards were carefully selected in order to ensure fully ripened fruit and a well-balanced blend. The 1998 vintage was somewhat troublesome due to a long winter and a relatively mild summer. Yet Keenan had no trouble harvesting Cabernet at optimum levels of maturity. After harvest the fruit was crushed, then fermented for seven to ten days. The wine was barrel-aged in fifty-percent new French and American oak for a full two years.

The blend was assembled just before bottling. The portion of Cabernet harvested from the Pope Valley region of Napa added plenty of forward fruit to the final blend. A vineyard in the Oak Knoll District imparted complex earthy characters, and Cabernet from St. Helena and Oakville added great structure. Five percent Merlot was added to the blend to give some additional black cherry and raspberry fruit nuances. The finished wine shows soft approachable characters even at its young age, yet the structure and complexity of the wine make it quite food worthy.

Reviews:

2001 Los Angeles County Fair, Limited Production Category: Gold Medal, Best Red Wine, Best of Class, Best of Competition

2001 California State Fair: Gold Medal, 94 points

2002 San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition: Gold Medal

2002 Jerry Mead's New World Wine Competition: Gold Medal

2002 Hilton Head Wine Competition: Gold Medal

Robert Parker had these comments regarding the '98 Cabernet after tasting a barrel sample of the wine in October, 2000:

"The Bordeaux-styled 1998 Cabernet Sauvignon is smooth and round, with aromas and flavors of herbs, earth and black currants... it is well balanced, and made in a forward attractive style." —Robert M. Parker, Jr., Wine Advocate

Wine Data:

Alcohol: 13.5%
Total Acidity: 0.60 grams/100 mL
pH: 3.48
Residual Sugar: Dry
Bottling Date: December 13, 2000
Production: 2,450 Cases
Blend: 95% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot