

Far Niente



THE NAPA VALLEY WINE ESTATE
ESTABLISHED 1885



Director of Winemaking
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1998 FAR NIENTE ESTATE BOTTLED

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

NAPA VALLEY, OAKVILLE

NOTES

The 1998 growing season remained quite cool into late spring, with periodic rain and cold weather extending into early June. Then by mid-month, the weather developed into extremely hot daytime conditions, tempered only by the cool evenings. As a result, the vines experienced a sudden transition from spring to summer, and did not have as much time to develop as usual. Ultimately, the climatic conditions found their balance, and harvest took place within a normal timeframe, commencing on October 10th and lasting through early November. However, stringent selection of the grape clusters in the vineyard, and again at the winery, was necessary to obtain the best possible fruit quality.

The three varietals used in this wine, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc (8%), and Merlot (15%), were carefully monitored, then hand picked from our estate vineyards. The Stelling Vineyard, located in Oakville directly behind Far Niente, remains the cornerstone of this Cabernet. The clusters were then sorted by hand to assure the finest quality prior to crushing. Following fermentation in stainless steel tanks and three weeks of maceration, each lot was evaluated. Only those lots that combined best to express the unique house style of Far Niente were included in the blend that was assembled into new French Oak Barrels for twenty months of aging. In a final step to further soften the wine prior to bottling, each barrel was fined with several fresh egg whites.

The 1998 Far Niente Estate Cabernet Sauvignon has subtle blackberry and cassias flavors complemented by cedar oak aromas as well as the typical “dusty” components traditionally found among the finest soils of the western vineyards of Oakville. The vintage has produced round California ripeness with a firm core that maintains grace. The blending has helped produce a wine that is soft and layered now, while further bottle aging will reward your patience with a longer and more velvety texture.