

Cakebread Cellars



2008 Benchland Select Cabernet Sauvignon

Vineyards

Our Benchland Select Cabernet Sauvignon is crafted from two exceptional vineyards in Napa Valley's gently sloping western benchlands, including Jack Cakebread's Hill Ranch in the heart of the famed Rutherford appellation not far from the winery. These sites enjoy ideal eastern exposures, well-drained soils and mild afternoon temperatures, resulting in uniform fruit ripening and wines of impressive depth and elegance. In 2008, 60% of our Benchland Select grapes came from the Hill Ranch, with 40% from the esteemed Oakville appellation.

Vintage 2008

The topsy-turvy 2008 growing season seesawed from heavy rains in winter to drought conditions in early spring to severe frosts in late March and throughout April. Coupled with inclement weather during bloom and stress-inducing heat during grape set, these conditions significantly reduced the size of the grape crop throughout Napa Valley, greatly concentrating flavors. Clear, mild summer weather, with warm days and cool nights, provided ideal conditions for the full maturation of our benchland Cabernet Sauvignon grapes, which were harvested between September 25th and October 11th with a perfect balance of sugar and acidity.

Winemaking

To maximize color extraction, tannin structure and vineyard expression, Cakebread Cellars winemaker Julianne Laks employs a mixture of small and larger tanks to ferment the components of our Benchland Select Cabernet Sauvignon. Julianne carefully tailors tank sizes, yeast strains, fermentation temperatures and maceration techniques to the attributes of each lot of grapes, which vary by location, ripeness level and clonal type. Such specialized fermentations, combined with lot-specific barrel aging regimens, ensure that the finest attributes of each vineyard site are reflected in the final blend. Our 2008 Benchland Select spent a total of 22 months in French oak barrels, 48% new, before bottling in August, 2010.

Tasting Notes

The 2008 Benchland Select bursts from the glass with vibrant dark fruit aromas (blackberry, boysenberry and dark plum) complemented by seductive spicebox, cocoa, loamy earth and leather scents. Rich, juicy and mouthfilling on the palate with deeply concentrated blackberry and plum flavors, its luxuriously supple mouthfeel and long, elegant finish are abetted by savory toasted oak and dark chocolate tones. Dense, lush and seamless, this opulent Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon drinks beautifully now, but will reveal even greater dimension with another 6-8 years' aging.

Grape variety: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Vineyards: 100% Napa Valley (60% Rutherford, 40% Oakville)

Harvest dates: September 25 – October 11, 2008

Fermentation: 100% stainless steel

Barrel aging: 22 months in French oak, 48% new

Alcohol: 14.3%

Total acidity: 0.73 g/100 ml

pH: 3.64

Bottled: August, 2010

Winemaker: Julianne Laks