

Cakebread Cellars



1999 Benchland Select Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Vintage:

At Cakebread Cellars, we find that each growing season is unique. 1999 was certainly no exception; it turned out to be the coolest season of the decade. The season kicked into gear with a long, cold winter, followed by a moderate spring. Bud break came in late March and early April, with bloom complete by early June, a week earlier than the previous year. A cool, dry summer resulted in a rather late harvest, with 124 days from bloom to harvest. This extra “hang time” allowed the grapes to reach optimum ripeness. Additionally, due to rain during bloom in 1998, the 1999 yields were extremely low. The end results were wines with deep color and an excellent balance of fruit and tannins.

Vineyards:

Our Benchland Select Cabernet Sauvignon is made from specially selected vineyards planted on the rolling hillsides, or benchlands, of the Mayacamas Mountains on the Napa Valley’s western side. An eastern exposure, which provides for slightly cooler temperatures, combined with well-drained gravelly loam soils creates the perfect environment for growing slow-ripening, high-quality Cabernet Sauvignon fruit. For this reason, since 1995, we’ve chosen to highlight these magnificent vineyard sources in this enticing 100% varietal blend.

Fermentation & Aging:

Cakebread’s winemaker, Julianne Laks, uses a variety of techniques to create our signature red wines. For starters, she keeps all vineyard lots separate prior to blending so that she can monitor their individual progress. She then can pick and choose the best lots from the Benchland vineyards to create the final blend. Additionally, she cold soaks the juice and skins (must) prior to fermentation to intensify color and flavors and racks the wine from tank to tank during fermentation to stimulate the production of phenolic compounds that help to balance and round out the wine’s tannins. Four weeks of extended maceration and daily tastings also aid in crafting the most well rounded wine possible. Aging in 80% new French oak for 26 months prior to bottling adds another layer of complexity to the wine.

Winemaker’s Notes:

The 1999 Cakebread Cellars Benchland Select is a stunning example of the power and beauty of Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. If the deep, dark ruby color isn’t enticing enough, then the rich aromas of ripe black cherries, dusty chocolate and cedar certainly will be. On the palate, ripe, dark fruit flavors of cherry, blueberry and cassis mix with hints of chocolate and dried herbs. Supple tannins and a long, smooth finish are the final rewards.

Grape Variety: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Fermentation: stainless steel
Barrel Aging: 26 months in French Oak
Winemaker: Julianne Laks

Alcohol Content: 14.1%
Total Acidity: 0.62g/100ml
pH: 3.72
Residual Sugar: 0.08g/100ml