

WOLF FAMILY VINEYARDS

St. Helena / Napa Valley

2002 Meritage, Napa Valley Estate Grown and Bottled

Vineyards

The 2002 Meritage is made from estate grown Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon from the Wolf Family vineyard located just south west of St. Helena against the foothills of the Mayacamas Mountains in Napa Valley. The one acre Cabernet Franc vineyard was planted in the mid '80's on sparse, rocky, volcanic soils, situated higher up the slope of the Mayacamas toward the back of the property. The vines produce very small, intensely flavored berries with low yields. The Cabernet Sauvignon was planted in 1996 to clones 337 and 7 on Schwarzman rootstock, on a 4' by 6' spacing. This five acre vineyard lies on a slightly sloping area of gravelly, clay loam soils. Because of the close spacing, the vineyard has low per acre yields due to the small berries and very loose clusters. The warmer temperatures in St. Helena provide ideal conditions for bringing out the depth and complexity of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc grapes. The vines produced a moderate crop size (3-1/2 tons per acre) of small berries.

Vintage

The 2002 vintage started out with a cool spring and summer, but then heated up on Labor Day. Two weeks of much needed 90+ degree temperatures in September provided ideal conditions for full ripening and encouraged the depth and complexity of the Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. The vines produced 3-1/2 tons per acre of small berries. Unexpectedly, the harvest was within a normal timeframe bringing in the Cabernet Sauvignon on September 26 and the Cabernet Franc on October 15.

Winemaking

The 2002 Wolf Family Vineyards Meritage was fermented primarily with native yeasts, finishing in about 15 days. Both the Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon were pressed when dry then aged 16 months in 60% new French oak barrels and 40% one and two year old French oak barrels. Because of the warm harvest, the Cabernet Franc had plenty of tannins and extract. This vintage holds the largest percentage of Cabernet Franc to date because of the extraordinary development of the Cabernet Franc.

Tasting Notes

The Wolf Family estate vineyards bring out the floral and jammy aromas, a luscious mouthfeel and the velvety and rich mid palate and finish in Cabernet Franc. This wine exhibits lovely aromas of strawberry and blueberry jam, a nicely weighted palate and a creamy texture in the middle body and finish.

Statistics

Wine	14.8% alc., 6.7 g/L total acidity, 3.79 pH
Blend	85% Cabernet Franc; 15% Cabernet Sauvignon
Bottling	117 cases of 750mls bottled in March 2004
Release Date	Summer 2005
Proprietors	Jane and Doug Wolf