

GRGICH HILLS ESTATE

NAPA VALLEY



2009 NAPA VALLEY ESSENCE®

VINTAGE: For the third year in a row, Napa Valley received only two-thirds of its average rainfall in 2009, which reduced crops levels somewhat. Spring was essentially frost-free, and a relatively cool summer with no drastic heat surges brought smooth, even grape development. Just before harvest a few days of heat spikes ensured perfect ripeness when we picked in the first days of September.

VINEYARD: For this wine we selected the best blocks that express the true nature—the essence—of our Sauvignon Blanc vineyards, which are organic and certified Biodynamic® by the Demeter Association. This holistic farming practice uses the earth's natural cycles and organic preparations to grow balanced, healthy vines without artificial fertilizers, pesticides, or fungicides. The grapes were grown primarily at our American Canyon vineyard in southern Napa Valley, where the cool climate and thin soils limit vigor, producing fewer grapes but more intense flavor. We hand harvested the grapes at night into small bins so they arrived at the winery cool and intact, preserving their wonderful flavors and bright acidity.

THE WINE: Using naturally occurring yeasts found on the grapes, we fermented the juice in 1,600-gallon French oak casks that were temperature controlled for a slow fermentation to retain all of the grapes' delicate aromas. We selected the best lots of the vintage, then aged the wine nine months in the same large oak casks. This aging adds another layer of complexity but the larger casks don't overwhelm the fruit flavors with oak. Pure aromas of tropical fruit, melon, and lemon grass are supported by a hint of minerality. The full mouthfeel and concentrated flavors make it the ideal wine with a goat cheese salad, smoked salmon, sautéed mussels or by itself as an apéritif.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Alcohol.....14.3% by volume
Fermentation...indigenous yeast;
fermented in 1,600
gallon oak casks
Harvest date....September 5, 2009
Sugar.....23.3° Brix
Bottling date....July 7, 2010
Release date....September 2010
Total acid.....7.2 g/L
pH.....3.14
Time in oak.....9 months
Type of oak.....large French oak
casks
Production.....614 cases (12/750 ml.)
Blend.....100% Sauvignon
Blanc

