



## VENGE 2011 FAMILY RESERVE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, OAKVILLE

After two vintages of blending our Calistoga and Oakville Estate vineyards to produce our Family Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, we turn back to our Oakville roots to produce this rare wine. The decision is one we will continue into future vintages, as the noble Oakville AVA stands on its own, worthy of producing the pinnacle of quality in our Cabernet production.

Fleshy, ripe and youthful are all words that pop into mind with this year's Family Reserve Cabernet. The color fixes on a beautiful dark red and purple hue that clings to the glass. The aromatics are plush and highly perfumed with ripe cherry, clove, cinnamon, blackberries and currants. The palate is even and expansive. There is no pocket of the mouth unfilled or escaping this wine's sumptuous composition. The flavors captured in this Cabernet wash over the front and through to the back of the palate for over two minutes past the initial impressions. Anticipated maturity is 2015 to 2030.

### IN THE VINEYARD

Harvest took place very late on October 23rd. The cane-pruned vines were hand harvested from our Venge Estate vineyard in Oakville. The 2011 vintage was challenging and required diligence in the vineyard to produce a stellar crop. Spring frosts impacted thin skinned and tight cluster varieties alike, but our estate Cabernet showed little adverse affect other than a natural thinning of the yield. Now in their 26th year, we continue to "dry farm" these vines by not allowing them any applied summer irrigation. Their roots must find water on their own and struggle in the final months of summer and early fall leading to a complexity and depth of flavor often unequaled in irrigated vineyards.

### IN THE CELLAR

The fruit was destemmed into a combination of small stainless steel tank fermenters, concrete vats, and open top *barriques*. Time on skins lasted 14 to 45 days. The fruit was then separated to "free run" and "light press" fractions. The Cabernet was aged in 100% new, tight grained, French Oak barrels for a lengthy 27 months. We employ a variety of cooperages for Cabernet including Boutes, Sylvain, Taransaud, Gamba and Alain Foquet. 100% native, spontaneous yeast and malolactic fermentations were also key ingredients in the making of this wine. The gentle use of gravity flow winemaking, whenever possible, is carefully exercised throughout the making of this and every Venge wine. Bottled unfiltered.

395 Cases Produced



100% Cabernet Sauvignon  
0.64 g/100mL T.A.,  
3.74 pH,  
14.9% Alc.

"A finished barrel sample of the 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon Family Reserve exhibits a dense ruby/plum/purple color in addition to sweet cassis, vanillin and spice notes. This will be a forward, precocious, sexy Family Reserve given the vintage conditions. The structure, massive foundation and power of the great years is not there, but that has been replaced by pure charm, lots of ripe fruit and a sensuous style. Most consumers probably prefer this style to a big blockbuster, and this 2011 should be hugely successful when released."

92-95 POINTS

Robert M. Parker, Jr.  
*Wine Advocate*