



**Judd's Hill  
1998  
Cabernet Sauvignon  
Napa Valley**

**Tasting Notes:**

The 1998 Cabernet can be described as having a moderate to full body with medium tannins. The fruit flavors are highly extracted, leaning toward bright black cherries and black raspberries, with overtones of earth and cedar, coupled with nuances of oak. This is one of the most approachable wines we have ever produced. Drink it upon release or cellar it for a few years. It's all there with this wine.

You may notice some toasty aromas from the new generation of three year air dried American oak barrels which we have been introducing gradually into our winemaking program. We love the balance of flavors from the French and American cooperage. As our style of winemaking demands very little flavor contribution from wood, we enjoy using a palette of different oaks just to fine-tune the "seasonings" to our liking.

**Winemaking Notes:**

1998 was a much maligned vintage from California's north coast counties. The weather was uncooperative at bloom and set, causing an extremely small crop. Now that the '98s have been in the bottle for a year, the pundits are changing their tune, grudgingly admitting that perhaps they were a bit premature in their criticism of early barrel samples.

It was a late harvest with most of the grapes picked during the third week of October. Sugar levels ran between 23.50 and 24.00 brix, producing about 13.7% alcohol in the final blend; in good balance with the tannins and moderate acidity (0.60g/100ml).

The 1998 Judd's Hill Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of cab, merlot and franc from our own hillside vineyards, as well as cabernet from two of our favorite neighbors: the Howell Mountain vineyard of Clark~Claudon and the Rutherford Bench ranch of Julie and Pat Garvey. This is a blend truly made in heaven. It combines the highly structured tannins we have all come to respect from the slopes of Napa Valley with the silkiness of grapes grown on the valley floor...a great cuvee which should mellow into a wine of beautiful finesse.

