



CONTINUUM 2008

71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Cabernet Franc, 7% Petit Verdot and 5% Merlot

VINTAGE NOTES-2008 was the second year in a row of drought like conditions with rainfall down by more than 60% Napa wide. Bud break began in mid-March after more than a month of dry weather which set the stage for a hard frost, from late March to mid April; 27 days of serious cold hit the Napa Valley. Happily Continuum's estate vineyards on Pritchard Hill were protected from most vagaries of the weather as a result of our higher elevations and westerly aspect. A heat spike during flowering in May did lower our crop levels but weather patterns were fairly mild from that point on until late August when a week long temperature jump pushed picking forward. However, no sooner did the heat arrive than it left again and the remainder of the harvest proceeded cooler than normal. Overall fruit quality from the estate was very good to excellent in 2008. Our non estate growers also did well especially with Cabernet Sauvignon and Petite Verdot; Cabernet Franc was more uneven with some lots very good while others underperformed and so did not make the grade.

WINEGROWING-The vast majority (70+%) of the 2008 Continuum was grown on Pritchard Hill in the western facing Vaca Range above Oakville. Our 62 acre estate vineyard features a variety of western and south facing aspects with plantings of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot and Merlot. The remainder of the 2008 blend was sourced primarily from Oakville with a sizeable dollop of Stags Leap from a vineyard planted by Tim in 1973.

HARVEST DETAILS-All fruit was harvested over a period of five weeks from September 18 through October 25th with the Merlot and then the Cabernet Sauvignon harvested initially and the Petite Verdot and Cabernet Franc picked last.

PRODUCTION-The grapes were selectively hand-harvested into small lug-boxes, sorted before and after de-stemming, then gravity fed into small French oak barrels, French oak tanks or cement tanks for fermentation. From pre to post soaking, including fermentation, the wine had a total maceration time of up to 35 days. During this time, pump overs and below the cap lees stirring were enacted daily. In addition, rack and return was performed 3-4 times in each fermentation tank prior to pressing. After completing fermentation the barrels and oak and cement tank lots were drained, with pomace pressed separately, to 100% new small French oak barrels for malolactic fermentation. The lees were kept with the new wine in barrel for an extended period of stirring, to enrich the body, nourish the wine and polish the tannins. The wine was clarified slowly and naturally through the use of traditional settling and racking techniques and bottled without fining or filtration. Blending of the 2008 took place over a period of months as each vineyard and lot of wine was tasted and carefully considered. In the end, 25% of the potential lots were declassified as they did not meet Continuum's quality standard. In total, the 2008 Continuum spent 20 months in barrel.

TASTING NOTES- The 2008 Continuum is wonderfully balanced and deeply sensual wine; we believe it is the finest wine we have ever made. The majority of the fruit, more than 70%, is from our Pritchard Hill estate vineyards and these higher elevation sites with their red rocky soils grow Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petite Verdot and Merlot with real nerve, vitality and concentration. In general, the 2008 lots, especially those from Pritchard Hill had a wild, mineral power and texture which is readily apparent in the finished wine. The 2008 has great density and life; a powerful core of ripe fruit perfectly balanced by polished, supple tannins leading to a long, nuanced finish. Aromas of black plum, mulberry, and coffee spice lead to black cherry, bitter chocolate, tobacco and graphite flavors. A wine of exquisite power and elegance, its inherent harmony and balance make it delicious now, while assuring tremendous ageability.

DECANTING- For the fullest sensory experience we encourage decanting, allowing Continuum to breathe before serving. Decanting awakens the wine's more purely fragrant expression and enhances the suppleness on the palate.

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