

FRANCISCAN

Cuvée Sauvage

2006 CHARDONNAY

Carneros, Napa Valley

Franciscan was the first winery in Napa Valley to revive the lost art of wild yeast fermented Chardonnay. Fermenting using only the wild, native yeasts from the vineyard is risky, and most winemakers in California thought it too arduous and unpredictable to attempt. Franciscan succeeded in 1987, and introduced *Cuvée Sauvage*.

We start with our finest lots from Carneros. We don't add yeast—we just put the juice in the barrels and wait. Very patiently. Eventually nature takes over, sometimes after several suspenseful days, moving along at a leisurely, unpredictable pace. Unlike commercially cultured yeast, wild yeast consists of numerous strains, each with its own character. As one strain expires, another comes forward, adding more and more complexity and body to the wine.

Thanks to wild yeast fermentation, each barrel has a distinct aroma and flavor profile. Thus, *Cuvée Sauvage* offers an exceptional opportunity for the winemaker's art of blending. To ensure the highest quality, only 15%-20% of the barrels made the final cut.

"Extravagant" is how *Cuvée Sauvage* is often described, since it is the culmination of so much care. 2006 was warm in July and moderate after with cool, persistent fog in August and early September. This created early flavor development yet slow ripening. Even at 21-22 Brix, the tropical, honey, and lychee flavors of Carneros were coming through already. We started harvesting Sept 19, 10 days to 2 weeks later than normal, and finished comfortably before the light rain of October 4-5.

- Janet Myers, Winemaker

APPEARANCE	Delicate lemon yellow.
AROMA	Rich and layered, with honey, green apple, mineral and cream aromas, and hints of bright citrus and vanilla.
FLAVOR	Full-bodied, round and lively, with bosc pear, honey, lemon, stone fruit, and rich notes of toasty oak. Supple mid-palate has sweet notes of vanilla and cream, followed by a long, mineral, finish with crisp acidity.
VARIETAL COMPOSITION	100% Chardonnay
APPELLATION	Carneros
FERMENTATION	100% wild yeast
OAK AGING	15 months <i>sur lie</i> in oak, 100% new
ALCOHOL	14.5%
RELEASE DATE	February 2008