Groth

1997 RESERVE CABERNET SAUVIGNON

OAKVILLE, NAPA VALLEY

VINTAGE: Mother Nature came through for us in 1997. Following horrendously light yields from the 1996 vintage, she came at us with both barrels loaded in 1997. An early bud break got things rolling in February. Harvest started a bit earlier than normal but finished very early. Our Cabernet, which usually is picked toward the end of October, was ready to pick in early September. Tonnage was high, sugars were stellar, and we were not subject to the predicted rains that raked other parts of Northern California. 1997 was a substantial year all the way around!

WINEMAKING: The Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot grapes that make up our Reserve Cabernet blend are grown on our two estate vineyards. The Cabernet Sauvignon is sourced from our Oakcross Vineyard in Oakville, in the heart of Napa Valley, a district renowned for producing full, lush, and elegantly structured Cabernet. The Merlot comes from our Hillview Vineyard south of Yountville, where the variety develops an earthy firmness that complements Oakville Cabernet beautifully.

Fermentation was carried out over a seven-day period in small, temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks at an average temperature of 85°F. After pressing and settling, both the Cabernet and the Merlot were transferred to new French Nevers oak barrels for extended aging. Twenty-four months in barrel contributed a sweet vanilla character that married seamlessly with the wine's natural black cherry and blackberry aromas and flavors.

Blending with the Merlot took place just prior to bottling, ensuring depth, richness, and harmony in the finished Reserve wine.

VARIETAL COMPOSITION	APPELLATION	AGING
86% Cabernet Sauvignon	Oakville	24 months in 100% new French Oak,
14% Merlot	ALC: 14.1%	then 12 months in bottle