

Cakebread Cellars



2016 Benchland Select Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Tasting Notes & Food Pairings

This blend of grapes comes from the benchlands of our vineyards in Oakville and Rutherford—including Hill Ranch, which surrounds the Rutherford home of Jack and Dolores Cakebread. Benchlands are the narrow regions that mark the transition from a valley's floor to steeper mountain slopes. This geographic position offers distinctive soil profiles for good root development, as well as mountain shade that protects grapes from extreme conditions, allowing them to ripen slowly and steadily. Our Benchland Select is a classic Napa Valley cabernet sauvignon expression, with bright boysenberry, and delicate violets; flavors of ripe blackberry, fig, and hints of dried sage on the palate lead into rich notes of sweet blackberry and dark chocolate over a long finish. Elegant tension between its dense fruit, bright acidity, and firm, supple tannins gives this wine depth and dimension. Enjoy with hearty stews, steaks on the grill, or fire-roasted vegetables. Age for another 7 to 10 years.

Vineyards

We seek out grapes for our 2016 Benchland Select cabernet sauvignon from Vine Hill Vineyard in Oakville (65%) and Hill Ranch in Rutherford (35%), sites that lie along the gently sloping western foothills of these two renowned appellations. The vineyards receive bright eastern exposure in the morning and cool shade from the Mayacamas mountain range in the afternoon. Gravelly benchland "bale loam" soils provide good drainage but also retain good water in the root zone; this helps us understand exactly how much water is needed to bring grapes to peak ripeness. Slight differences in microclimate and soil structure—Rutherford sits just to the north of Oakville—give this blend of two appellations a distinctive, opulent complexity.

Vintage

In 2016, budbreak in Napa Valley was earlier-than-average, followed by a fairly steady growing season with even temperatures and no heat spikes. Fruit ripened steadily, with extended hangtimes in the cooler spots; a warm, dry September helped grapes develop to full maturity. Harvest was earlier than usual as well—which was fortuitous, since October brought us one of the wettest months in recent history! We were excited to bring in another standout cabernet sauvignon vintage, with smaller yields of exceptional quality.

Winemaking

After harvesting our Benchland Select grapes from multiple vineyard blocks containing five superior cabernet sauvignon clones, we gently destemmed the clusters and fermented each lot in small, stainless steel tanks that give us optimum color, flavor and tannin extraction. Our winemaker Stephanie Jacobs selected yeast strains, fermentation temperatures, maceration techniques and barrel aging regimens according to the unique personality of each lot, capturing the finest attributes of each in the final blend. Our 2016 Benchland Select spent 22 months aging in French oak barrels, 61% new, prior to bottling in July, 2018.

Grape Variety	100% Cabernet Sauvignon	Alcohol Content	14.9%
Vineyards	100% Napa Valley	Total Acidity	0.64 G/100ml
Harvest Dates	September 24 – October 6, 2019	PH	3.73
Barrel Aging	22 Months Aging In French Oak Barrels, 61% new	Bottled	July 2018
Winemaker	Stephanie Jacobs		