



# YAO FAMILY WINES

## WINEMAKING

Yao Family Wines sources the grapes for its YAO MING® Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon from prestigious Napa Valley vineyards with a reputation for excellent fruit and selects individual blocks to blend for flavor and texture in its world-class wines. The winemaking begins in the vineyard, as every farming decision throughout the growing season can affect the quality of the resulting wine. The grapevines are pruned in winter to achieve balanced green shoots in the spring. The vines are thinned at six different phases during their development, until they have the ideal fruit cluster to vine canopy ratio. This balance is essential to achieve a low grape yield, rich flavors and optimum ripeness.

Director of Winemaking, Tom Hinde, blends four of the five classic Bordeaux varietals for the YAO MING® Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. The predominant grape is Cabernet Sauvignon with small percentages of Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Petit Verdot added to provide texture, color intensity, flavor and tannin balance to the final blend. Each variety in each block is farmed separately to achieve maximum flavors and ripeness.

Harvest begins when the grapes exhibit textural ripeness, mature tannins and optimal Brix to produce wines with structure and elegance. The grapes are hand-harvested in the early morning to ensure cool temperature delivery to the winery

Once at the winery, grapes are hand-sorted and de-stemmed, then lightly crushed and placed in stainless steel tanks. Tom tracks each lot of grapes from individual vineyard blocks and ferments them separately under cold temperature-controlled conditions. He uses artisan winemaking techniques throughout the entire process to allow the character of the vineyards to speak in the wines.

The basic character of the wines forms early in fermentation when color, tannin and flavor components begin to emerge. Fermentation is conducted using native yeasts from the vineyard, which create subtle nuances in the wines from each individual site. The wines undergo an extended maceration and stay in contact with the grape skins and seeds to extract more color, tannin and flavors. Following fermentation, the wines are gently pressed in a traditional small wooden basket press. The wines are then aged exclusively in 100% French Oak barrels for at least 18 months. Individual barrels from each lot are then hand selected by taste for the final blend.