

2002 HOPE'S CUVÉE CHARDONNAY



Harvested at 24.6 Brix, on August 19, 2002

14.2% Alcohol

0.65 TA / 3.55 pH

101 six-packs produced

Release Date: January 2004

Hope's Cuvée was first made in 1995, in the memory of Ray Signorello Jr.'s mother, Hope Signorello. This wine not only is made with the highest quality fruit, but it is made with passion, devotion and love from the Signorello family. We miss you Hope!

HARVEST NOTES: The growing season began with several vineyards experiencing frost in April. In late May unexpected rain caused a bit of loss, but at the same time it helped thin out the crop and give the vines a shot of moisture going into summer. In late September and early October, Napa experienced a few manageable heat spikes speeding harvest to a close. The 2002 vintage will be remembered by a long, mostly mild growing season that ended in a hectic, compressed harvest. The final result of the vintage is expressed through excellent, intense colors and flavor concentration.

WINEMAKING NOTES: Careful pressing of whole clusters minimized skin contact. This gentle process helps the wine achieve balance as well as develop a silky mouth-feel and enhances the aging potential. Using native yeasts, the wine fermented in French oak barrels with 100% of the wine undergoing a second, malolactic fermentation. Tonnelleries: François Frères and Damy. Oak types: Allier, and Tronçais. The wine spent 10 months on the lees in French oak (36% new) followed by racking and bottling on July 29, 2003. To preserve fruit intensity and body, the wine was not filtered. The Hope's Cuvée represents the best two barrels from the entire estate program selected through extensive tastings by our Proprietor, Ray Signorello Jr.

TASTING NOTES: The nose opens with apple and mineral aromas. Ripe fruit flavors, especially of apple and pear enhance the broad palate. French oak provides a touch of spice with hints of clove, cinnamon and nutmeg. Hope's Cuvée is very similar to our Estate Chardonnay but with an extra dimension of depth and concentration from the meticulous barrel selection. Drinkability: Now to 2012.

VINEYARD NOTES: Hope's Cuvée was grown exclusively on our estate vineyard on the east side of the Silverado Trail in the Oak Knoll area. This shallow, rocky hillside vineyard, planted in 1980, stressed the vines sufficiently during the growing season to ensure intense varietal character. We employed a variety of techniques in managing each vineyard's micro-climate including vertical trellising, leaf removal, and crop reduction.