



2005 *M* BY MICHAEL MONDAVI

Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

100% Cabernet Sauvignon

100% Animo Vineyard

100% Atlas Peak

100% Napa Valley

ANIMO VINEYARD

Michael Mondavi's grandfather taught him as a boy that all great winemakers, first and foremost, have respect for their soil. Making wine from the roots up, he said, is the only way to create a truly unique wine instilled with a sense of time and place. When Michael chose his vineyard site over a decade ago, his grandfather's words were not far from his mind. He named his vineyard "Animo" ("soul" in Italian) because he wanted *M* to reflect his passion for great wine, the spirit of Napa Valley, and his family's long history of winemaking. Planting the vines for *M* on those 15 acres of rocky, volcanic soil, perched high atop Atlas Peak, he knew that, with the right care and attention, the soil would instill a heartiness and potency into the vines that would carry on into the grapes and the glass.

HARVEST NOTES

The 2005 harvest in Napa Valley culminated a long, cool growing season that ripened the grapes in Animo Vineyard to perfection. Regardless of vineyard block configuration, the focus for harvesting these grapes is always on flavor and ideal ripeness. Michael, his son Rob Mondavi, and winemaker Tony Coltrin spent many hours walking, tasting, and flagging small areas to be harvested - the end of a few rows, a circular plot in the middle of a vineyard block, even just one side of the vines in an area - in order to achieve the absolute peak of balance, ripeness, and flavor, resulting in as many as 12 different picking zones. Even the prized Crown Block, on a small knoll in the corner of the vineyard, may take as many as three separate picks to be perfectly ripe and balanced. Animo Vineyard's 2005 harvest began in the higher-elevation Crown Block on October 3, with the lower blocks picked from October 24 through November 1.

WINEMAKING

The fruit's rich flavors, ripe tannins and balanced acidity enabled Michael, Rob, and Tony Coltrin to craft an *M* Cabernet Sauvignon of surpassing richness, elegance and harmony. After the grapes were gently hand-harvested, de-stemmed and lightly crushed, the juice was fermented in small punch down tanks at 27-30°C. An extended post-fermentation maceration of 18-22 days fully married the wine's rich black fruit flavors and supple, sculpted tannins. The young wine was then moved to barrel for malolactic fermentation. During its 22 months in French oak barrels (85% new) the wine was raked several times. Determined by taste, the 2005 *M* received four rack and return movements. It was clarified with a light egg-white fining in barrel, using organic eggs from Rob's "estate" chickens, and spent 12 months in bottle prior to release. Stylistically reminiscent of the legendary Mondavi cabernets of the late 1960s and early 1970s, *M* is a prestige wine reflecting the *animo*, or "soul," of its maker: compelling depth, dynamism, elegance and nobility.