



2010 NAPA VALLEY CABERNET SAUVIGNON

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. Years later, when Michael chose the vineyard site for *M*, those words were not far from his mind. His daughter Dina named the vineyard "Animo" ("spirit" in Italian) because of the feeling of energy that permeated the site and clearly expressed its sense of place. This vineyard, high atop Atlas Peak on 15 acres of rocky, volcanic soil, would carry on its *terroir* through the vines into the grapes and, ultimately, finish in the glass.

HIGH-ELEVATION BLOCKS

The blocks located at the highest points of the Animo vineyard provide the fruit for *M*. These blocks, at an elevation of up to 1,350 feet, are typically the first portion of the vineyard to ripen. Their vines produce a classic expression of Cabernet Sauvignon with exceptional concentration, depth and balance.

HARVEST NOTES

The 2010 growing season in Napa Valley was dramatic, but resulted in excellent quality fruit with great flavor concentration. The early vine development was slowed down by a cool summer and then sped up by bursts of heat in August. By carefully monitoring the vineyard, we stayed patient and waited for the grapes to achieve phenolic maturity. Michael, with the assistance of his son Rob and Tony Coltrin, spent countless hours walking, tasting, and flagging small areas to be harvested in order to achieve the absolute peak of balance, ripeness, and flavor. The picking of these blocks began on October 19, 2010.

WINEMAKING

The fruit's rich flavors, ripe tannins and balanced acidity enabled Michael to craft *M* Cabernet Sauvignon with unmatched richness, elegance and harmony. After the grapes were gently hand-harvested and the individual clusters selected, they were de-stemmed and lightly crushed into small punch down tanks. After a five day cold soak period, the juice was fermented at 27-30°C. Extended post-fermentation maceration brings the total skin contact time to 28-32 days fully marrying the wine's rich black fruit flavors and supple, sculpted tannins. The young wine was then moved to barrel for malolactic fermentation. Due to the vintage conditions that resulted in ripe, massive tannins, it was determined to extend the wine's time in French oak barrels (87% new) to 28 months in order to soften and mature the tannins for a perfect balance. Determined by taste, the 2010 *M* received seven rack and return movements. It was clarified with a light egg-white fining in barrel, using organic eggs, and spent 15 months in bottle prior to release.

Stylistically reminiscent of the legendary Mondavi cabernets of the late 1960s and early 1970s, crafted by Michael, *M* is a prestigious wine reflecting the *animo*, or "spirit," of the vineyard: compelling, dynamic, and elegant.

100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Animo Vineyard, Atlas Peak

3.95ph, 5.05 TA, 14.84% alc. by volume