



Herb Lamb Vineyards 1997 HL Cabernet Sauvignon

Tasting Notes

Countless wine critics have hailed the continued quality of wines that have been produced from this vineyard, whether by winemakers Mike Trujillo, Helen Turley or Mark Aubert. There is a definite intensity of ripe berry flavors, with a good backbone of fruit and an underlying layer of deep blueberry flavors. Ours are not grapes to be taken lightly, and a tasting of the early 1990's wines from Herb Lamb Vineyards will prove that these wines will live a long, intensely fruit driven life.

The 1997 HL Cabernet Sauvignon was aged in 100% new French oak from Taransaud and Nevers barrels. The ripeness of the vintage shows an intensity of blackberry, cherry and currant as well as sweet blueberry, with attractive soft tannins. Our hillside soils offer a complexity of fruit flavors with hints of chocolate, herbs, spice and leather. Paired with the sweetness of new oak, richness of fruit extraction and firmness of the tannins, this elegant wine should offer years of aging potential.

Because our children were in 4-H for many years, our freezer has always been the source of home-grown pork and lamb, grown as an addition to the prized animals taken to the fair. Some of our most memorable meals are comprised entirely of home-grown vegetables, meat, fruit and, of course, wine! The rich, intensity of our wine should be paired with a hearty meal of rich flavors, like a leg of lamb with garlic, or a pork roast with dried fruits cooked slowly in the oven.

Winemaking Notes

The 1997 HL Cabernet Sauvignon was our first release, and we were fortunate that the 1997 vintage was hailed as one of the finest of the decade in Napa Valley winemaking. Everything seemed to go right, from the ideal weather cycle to the generous yields to the exceptional grape quality, and gave us fully mature grapes with high extract and rich fruit flavors.

We had buckets of rain in 1997, causing floods throughout the Napa Valley for the second year in a row. Then dry, warm spring weather prompted an early bud break in March. The summer became a textbook season of morning fog and warm days, causing an earlier ripening than anticipated. Grape growers, who usually took family vacations in August before harvest, suddenly found themselves picking and hauling grapes instead. Two brief rainfalls in August and again in September were followed by warmer fall weather which lengthened the growing season for later ripening varieties like our Cabernet Sauvignon.

We harvest our grapes by hand, sending crews into the long terraced rows with small picking bins, which the pickers fill with 40 pounds of fruit and then race back to dump into the ½ ton boxes that are hauled down the rows behind a tractor. In 1997, we made several trips to the winery to haul in boxes as the pickers just kept coming with more and more fruit. It only takes the crew of 8 pickers 2-3 days to pick each of the blocks in our little vineyard, but in 1997 we had to have them back another day to continue picking one of our largest crops on record.

Production and Technical Data

Production:	50 cases
Vineyards:	Herb Lamb Vineyards
Appellation:	Napa Valley
Barrels:	100% New French Oak
Alcohol:	14.2%

