

2021 Favia Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville Napa Valley

It makes perfect sense that Oakville has become the most heralded slice of the Napa Valley (the "tenderloin," as Robert Parker has called it). Our blocks at Oakville Ranch—high above the eastern edge of the Valley, organically farmed on red, rocky, iron-rich soils—have produced some of the most compelling wines in the area for many years. It is these red hillsides that continue to astound us year after year, the wines having such power, intensity, and strength of character.

This pure Cabernet Sauvignon wine was carefully fermented and on the skins for twenty-plus days, gently pressed and put straight to barrel for malo-lactic fermentation. Aged in 50% French oak barrels for 22 months, with minimal racking and without fining or filtration. We feel this hands-off approach to the *élevage* is the best way to bring focus to the vineyard. As always, this wine shows dark, brooding notes of blackberry, cassis, and sun-drenched soil, along with delicate notes of baking spices and bay laurel. On the palate, the entry is narrow and precise, then almost immediately the impression expands and becomes mouth-filling and rich, leading to a long, powerful finish. The tannins are sleek but muscular, indicating a long life ahead in the cellar.

22 months in barrel, 1 year in bottle. No fining or filtration. French oak, 50% new.
100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Vintage Notes and Reviews

The 2021 growing season fell in the middle of a multi-year drought in California. With very little winter and spring rain, the vines worked hard to develop canopies, and in the end set a relatively small crop. Luckily, summer temperatures were relatively mild, with only a couple of days with peak temperatures over 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38C). This meant that the fruit was able to mature slowly, and fruit quality at harvest was balanced and concentrated. In fact, the ample sun exposure of the fruit led to remarkable phenolic development, with the grapes at harvest having very dark color and highly structured tannins.

The harvest arrived relatively early, and at Favia we were harvesting our Oakville fruit beginning on September 7. The mild temperatures allowed us to continue harvesting methodically for over a month, with the last Coombsville Cabernet Sauvignon coming into the winery on October 13. This long harvest gave us a broad spectrum of blending components with which to craft our 2021 wines.

Across the board, the 2021 wines from Favia show great depth, pleasant natural acidity, and strong varietal expression. The vintage shows all the power and richness expected from Napa Valley, and with a tannic backbone that will allow the wines to age for decades to come.

JEB DUNNUCK August 2023 – 99 points

Lastly, the 2021 Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville may be the finest wine I've tasted from this estate, although the 2016 might have something to say about that. Ripe blackcurrants, fresh blue fruits, huge minerality, full-bodied richness, a dense, concentrated mid-palate, and incredibly pure notes of chocolate, loamy earth, tobacco, and lead pencil all define this sensational Oakville Cabernet Sauvignon. The tannin quality as well as the overall balance are just about off the charts. This warrants 4-5 years in the cellar and will have 2-3 decades of overall longevity.

JAMES SUCKLING December 2023 - 99 points

The red fruit and tile aromas with terra-cotta come through clearly here. Then there's sage and bark with cedar undertones. Leaves, too. Then turns to blue fruits. Full body with lovely tannins that are velvety and energetic from the underlying acid and earth character. Excellent finish. Drink after 2028.

ANTONIO GALLONI/VINOUS October 2023 - 98 points

The 2021 Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville soars out of the glass. Inky dark cherry, gravel, licorice, graphite and chocolate saturate the palate. Vertical, dense and explosive, the 2021 is wonderfully deep and expressive. There's plenty of Oakville Ranch tannin, but it is so well-balanced.

JANE ANSON – Review not yet published

JOE D'ANGELO/INTERNATIONAL WINE REPORT – Review not yet published

favia