

GRGICH HILLS ESTATE



FIRST PLACE
(Sauvignon Blanc category)
2006 Colorado State Fair

Napa Valley FUMÉ BLANC Dry Sauvignon Blanc ESTATE 2005 GROWN

VINTAGE: 2005 will be remembered for its long, cool growing season. The year began with heavy rains, then a spell of 80-degree weather in early March triggered budbreak. The Sauvignon Blanc vines began blooming right on time in May. The generally cool summer allowed the grapes to ripen smoothly and completely, without any major heat spikes to confuse them. Mildew was not a problem for us as in some cool years due to our biodynamic farming practices.

VINEYARD: Our Fumé Blanc is estate grown, meaning we control everything from the ground to the bottle. We feel this is essential to achieve the kind of quality, balance and consistency that is Grgich Hills' hallmark. The grapes for this wine are grown at our cool American Canyon and Carneros vineyards that rest in the southern tip of Napa Valley, not far from San Pablo Bay, which spills into San Francisco Bay. The coolness controls vigor and allows the grapes to develop a crisp liveliness that is impossible to achieve in warmer areas. After a short crop in 2004, this vintage returned us to normal yields which, with a vigorous varietal like Sauvignon Blanc, helped the vines to be better balanced and produce rich flavors. We picked the grapes when their aromas, acidity and sugar were perfectly balanced.

THE WINE: We believe winemaking is an art, not just chemistry and technology, so we aim for a distinct Grgich Hills' style of wine. We fermented 50% of the grapes in stainless steel tanks and 50% in 3-year-old oak barrels, using only naturally-occurring yeasts. We aged the wine four months in neutral barrels to allow the wonderful fruit to show, not mask it behind new oak. Our 2005 Fumé Blanc displays classic varietal flavors of grapefruit, lemongrass and a touch of minerality, a full mouth feel and long finish. This versatile, flavorful white wine is a great companion to a wide variety of food flavors and textures.

Winemaker's Notes

Alcohol	14.2% by volume
Fermentation	50% stainless steel 50% 3-year-old French oak
Harvest date	September 6-24, 2005
Sugar	23.5 degrees Brix
Bottling date	February 16, 2006
Release date	May 1, 2006
Residual sugar	0.20%
Total acid	6.9 g/L
pH	3.36
Time in oak	4 months
Type of oak	3-year-old French oak
Production	17,400 cases (12/750 ml.) 2,020 cases (12/375 ml.)
Blend	100% Sauvignon Blanc

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points

Here is a big, potent Fumé that is rife with both very deep fruit and loads of varietal herbs, and its generous mix of melons and grass is framed with very evident oak. Full and close to oily in feel, it has the weight and richness of Chardonnay but is solidly and unmistakably Sauvignon Blanc from beginning to end. There will no doubt be those who think it too much of a good thing, but it will never be accused of timidity, and it will stand up to appropriately full-flavored foods. And, for those with a yearning for older Sauvignon Blancs, the Grgich bottlings have frequently exhibited incredible staying power.



P.O. Box 450 • 1829 St. Helena Highway • Rutherford, CA 94573
Phone (707) 963-2784 • Fax (707) 963-8725 • www.grgich.com

