



## OPUS ONE 2003

### VINEYARD

Looking out across Opus One's vineyard, one immediately senses a difference. Cultivated with passion and a singular vision, Opus One's three meticulously hedged vineyards are unique in the Napa Valley. There is a continuity in the way the vines are planted, tended and harvested that imbues each vintage with unwavering quality.

### WINEMAKING

Great Winemaking begins in the vineyard. At Opus One, traditional approaches are taken wherever they work best. And when modern techniques benefit the winegrowing process, they are used.

The Grapes are hand-sorted: any leaves or imperfect grapes are discarded. Only gravity is used to move the berries from the destemmer into the stainless steel fermenting tanks below. Stainless steel is the perfect material – it provides a cool and gentle beginning to the fermentation process.

Because Opus One makes only one wine, each tank can be dedicated to a single lot of grapes: each tank is used only once during harvest, so fermentation and maceration need never be rushed. The long, warm maceration in temperature controlled tanks draws out myriad rich flavors and colors from the skins, seeds, and pulp. The tanks are raised so the free-run wine can flow into new French oak barrels; the remaining skins tumble easily into wooden basket presses. In another gentle, unhurried step, the skins, seeds, and pulp are pressed. Like the free-run wine, the pressed wine is put into barrels to be aged. To provide backbone to the wine, Opus One's winemakers add a portion of this wine to the final blend.

Fining, which occurs midway through barrel aging, also illustrates the hand-crafted nature of Opus One. Added to the wine in barrel, fresh egg whites attract the very small particles that would otherwise remain in suspension. Fining Clarifies and polishes the wine.

Once the wine is safely in barrel, the topping, racking, and fining processes begin. During the first year, the winemakers continually evaluate each barrel; an inverted glass bung, used as a stopper for the first eight to ten weeks of barrel aging, allows the wine to be easily topped.

### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The harvest of 2003 began on September 17th and concluded on November 2nd, the day before the Start of heavy autumn rains. A moderately deep garnet, the 2003 Opus One offers aromas of blackberry, plum, hazelnut, graphite, olive oil, cocoa and dried cherries. The wine presents a soft, rich entry; nuances of dark chocolate, black licorice and herbs linger on the finish.

### VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 3% Malbec, 2% Petit Verdot.

**SKIN CONTACT:** 32 days

**BARREL AGING:** 20 months on New French Oak barrels