

VINTAGE
2001

VARIETALS
96% Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot,
Syrah, Cabernet Franc, and Malbec

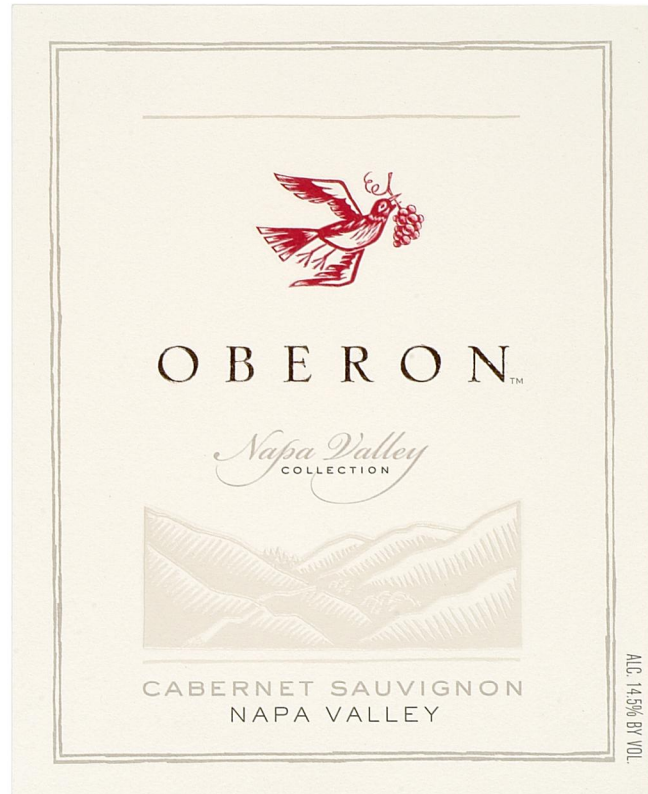
APPELLATION
Napa Valley

BARREL AGING
15 1/2 months in Chateau Barrels

CLARIFICATION
Barrel-to-barrel racking and fresh
egg white fining

ALCOHOL
14.5%

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE
\$19.99



WINEMAKING After gently destemming and crushing the hand-harvested grapes, we fermented the must (juice and skins) in stainless steel tanks. To naturally soften tannins and enhance varietal complexity, we gave the wine 17 days of skin contact. We then pressed the wine and transferred it to French oak barrels to undergo a long malolactic fermentation for roundness and depth. During the 15 1/2 months of aging in chateau barrels, we clarified the wine with barrel-to-barrel racking and then gently fined it with fresh egg whites to sculpt the tannins. A blend of Merlot, Syrah, Cabernet Franc, and Malbec added nuances to the lush berry flavor profile of the Cabernet Sauvignon.

VINEYARDS We selected grapes from several different regions within the Napa Valley, with both alluvial and volcanic soils, to give layers of complex flavors to our Oberon Cabernet Sauvignon.

VINTAGE Napa Valley's 2001 growing season experienced one of the longest bloom-to-harvest periods in recent history. We began crushing the grapes August 8, one of the earliest onsets to harvest in 20 years. Then the weather changes and harvest became one of the longest in duration, with the last grapes picked at the end of October. Flavor maturity lagged behind sugar accumulation so we played a waiting game, delaying harvest until the flavor maturity caught up. Cabernet Sauvignon is the last variety to ripen in the Napa Valley and we picked the grapes for Oberon during the last three weeks of October. The long hang-time on the vine resulted in rich, deep flavors, exceptional balance and mature, velvety tannins in the Cabernet grapes.