

WINE ENTHUSIAST

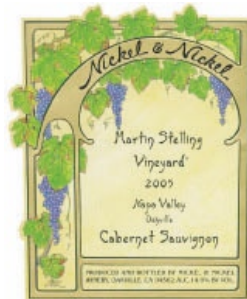
DECEMBER 1, 2008



96 Nickel & Nickel 2005 John C. Sullenger Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Oakville) This is a stunningly powerful 100% Cabernet, rich in fruit and well-oaked, that shows the authority of Oakville in a great vintage. Flooded with cassis, black cherries, dark chocolate and cedar, it's nonetheless too young in brisk tannins to fully express itself. A joy to drink, but needs time. Best after 2009 and for many years after. *Cellar Selection.*



95 Nickel & Nickel 2005 Vogt Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Howell Mountain) A beautiful Howell Mountain Cab that shows its terroir in the firm, rich tannic structure. And what gorgeous tannins they are, so refined and expressive. The fruit is perfectly ripe, suggesting currants, blackberries, red and black cherries, licorice and a hint of milk chocolate. Rewarding now, and should hold and improve for at least a decade. *Cellar Selection.*



94 Nickel & Nickel 2005 Martin Stelling Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Oakville) A big, powerful wine that needs aging. Lush, ripe fruit, bigtime oak, firm tannins and vital acidity each rule their respective kingdoms. But they'll come together in time. Massive in black currant, cherry and chocolate flavors, with strong new oaky vanilla and toast influences, the wine needs years to soften. Give it until at least 2010, and it should develop through 2015 in a proper cellar. *Cellar Selection.*



90 Nickel & Nickel 2005 C.C. Ranch Cabernet Sauvignon (Rutherford) Oakville specialist Far Niente turns to Rutherford for this single-vineyard, 100% Cab. The wine is soft and exceptionally ripe in blackberry and cherry fruit flavors, while lots of toasty oak adds vanilla accents that make the wine jammy. Doesn't have the structural complexity of the Oakville bottlings, but sure is tasty.