

2007 Neal Family Cabernet Sauvignon

"More great Cabernets were made in Napa in 2007 than at any other time in California history. Breathtaking is the word that best describes the quality of this near-perfect vintage" – James Laube, Wine Spectator



If you have not yet heard, 2007 is being billed as the greatest modern day vintage for Napa Valley Cabernet. In the most recent vintage charts from both the *Wine Spectator* and *The Wine Advocate*, they rate the 2007 Cabernet vintage in Napa 99 points and 96 points, respectively, both scores equaling the highest *either* publication has ever given to the region.

With so many great wines being produced in 2007, there's obviously a lot to choose from...and we've certainly tasted our share. However, from a price-to-quality standpoint, for us there's one that stands out above the rest. It is the Neal Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley. Given the vintage, this should come as no big surprise to those who follow the wine. However, despite it being our biggest selling under-\$50 Cabernet for several years running, we suspect many of you are still not familiar with it. The reason is likely due to the fact Mark Neal doesn't submit samples to the wine press. Accordingly, publications like *The Wine Advocate* have *never* reviewed it. Despite this, it has a cult-like following, built entirely by word of mouth and people actually *tasting* the wine (a novelty in this day and age). Its customer base is one of the most loyal we've ever seen for any Napa producer.

To understand Neal's success and popularity, it's important to know a little about their history...

Mark's father Jack began planting and managing vineyards in the Napa Valley over four decades ago, making them the third oldest vineyard management company in Napa County. They now control nearly 2,000 acres of ultra-premium Napa vineyards, making them one of the largest, most respected players in business. We can't divulge the names of the clients they supply fruit to, but let's just say they are well known and receive huge scores. Seeing the success that these other labels enjoyed, Mark Neal got the idea to start bottling small amounts of his best lots under his own label. He made a tiny amount in 1998, but 1999 was his first commercially released vintage. Despite no press on the wine, it became an instant hit at \$45 and quickly sold out. As word spread, the wine became harder to obtain in each subsequent vintage. Despite this—and this is the amazing part—Mark has NEVER raised his pricing. He could easily charge twice as much and still sell out. But to Mark, it's a matter of integrity and loyalty to his customers. Mark is indeed a rare breed in this industry and should be applauded for paying more attention to the market and less attention to his neighbors.

If you have not yet tried the Neal Cab, there's no better time to start than with the 2007 vintage. It's now in stock, but we urge you to act quickly. Back vintages are almost impossible to find, and it won't be long before the 2007 becomes a "back vintage" itself.

2007 Neal Family Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley \$44.99

A wine of near perfect harmony. Packed with intense fruit aromas of cherry, blackberry, cassis and sweet oak, there is also sweetness to the intense fruit and mouth watering, velvety structure. The resulting character makes this a great vintage for enjoying now as well as aging. All fruit sourced from Howell Mountain, Atlas Peak, Mt. Veeder, and Rutherford. It's 100% Napa Valley, 100% Estate Grown Cabernet Sauvignon, and 100% Organically Grown Grapes.

Cheers,

Woodland Hills Wine Co.

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