



LIQUID GOLD *from* NAPA VALLEY



2005 *Wine Notes*

Appellation

Napa Valley

Harvest Dates

November 11 – November 16, 2005

Varietals

90% Semillon
10% Sauvignon Blanc

Aging

31 months in French oak (100% new)

Fermentation Time

3 – 20 weeks

Release Date

October 2008

Residual Sugar at Bottling

12.0%

Director of Winemaking

Dirk Hampson

Winemaker

Greg Allen

VINEYARD *Notes*

The 20-acre Dolce Vineyard is located in Coombsville, east of the city of Napa, and is situated at the base of the Vaca Mountains, which define the eastern border of the valley. The volcanic soil is loose and well drained, and the west-facing vineyard is protected from the prevailing winds so that the damp, morning fog – a very important factor in the development of Botrytis cinerea – hangs longer among the vines, often until midday. A combination of high humidity followed by drying conditions encourages, but does not guarantee, the growth of Botrytis. As the mold develops, its coverage is seemingly random with individual berries succumbing to Botrytis at different rates, if at all.

HARVEST *Notes*

The growing conditions over the 2005 season were nearly ideal. The occurrence of rain in May and June was worrisome, but ultimately of no consequence – other than washing the dust off the grapes. The warm, sunny days that marked July, August and September yielded ripe Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc of exceptional quality. The return of rainy weather in late October proved to be just enough to promote an abundance of desirable mold. The development of the mold and the subsequent concentration of the grapes progressed rather quickly. Remarkably slow, yet meticulous, picking passes were made through the vineyard blocks over six consecutive days in mid-November, with the last of the botrytized clusters harvested just before the significant rainstorms of late November.

SENSORY *Evaluation*

Aromas of stone and citrus fruits – pear, peach, and orange rind – are balanced by more subtle layers of honey and an earthy minerality. The 2005 Dolce will retain its youthful fruitiness for the first two or three years in bottle, after which its bottle bouquet will emerge as a complement to the ripe fruit. The texture is coating on the palate but the sweetness is held in balance by a mouthwatering oiliness. Flavors of concentrated and ripe citrus fruits dominate in the mouth and linger through the finish, which is both long and coating in texture. Dolce's style, driven by the ripeness conferred by California's abundant sunshine, is particularly notable in this vintage. Given the opportunity to age, this wine will develop a perfume in the bottle that will add spice to the concentrated, fruit-driven aromas.

