


JOSEPH PHELPS
 V I N E Y A R D S



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JOSEPH PHELPS	2007	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	NAPA	(not yet released)	RED	(87-89)
JOSEPH PHELPS	2006	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	NAPA	(\$54.00)	RED	88
JOSEPH PHELPS	2005	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	NAPA	(\$50.00)	RED	89
JOSEPH PHELPS	2007	CABERNET SAUVIGNON BACKUS VYD.	OAKVILLE	(not yet released)	RED	(96-98)
JOSEPH PHELPS	2006	CABERNET SAUVIGNON BACKUS VYD.	OAKVILLE	(\$250.00)	RED	93+
JOSEPH PHELPS	2005	CABERNET SAUVIGNON BACKUS VYD.	OAKVILLE	(\$225.00)	RED	94
JOSEPH PHELPS	2007	EISREBE	NAPA	(\$50.00)	SWEET DESSERT	93
JOSEPH PHELPS	2007	INSIGNIA PROPRIETARY RED WINE	NAPA	(not yet released)	RED	(95-97)
JOSEPH PHELPS	2006	INSIGNIA PROPRIETARY RED WINE	NAPA	(\$200.00)	RED	(94-96)
JOSEPH PHELPS	2005	INSIGNIA PROPRIETARY RED WINE	NAPA	(\$200.00)	RED	95
JOSEPH PHELPS	2007	SAUVIGNON BLANC	NAPA	(\$32.00)	WHITE	87

The Joseph Phelps offerings from Napa include the **2007 Sauvignon Blanc**, one of their finest Sauvignons over recent vintages. Fresh fig, melon, and lemon grass notes as well as good depth and abundant fruit are found in this pure, lively, vibrant, medium-bodied Sauvignon. Enjoy it over the next 1-2 years.

The Cabernet Sauvignon program consists of three wines, the Cabernet Sauvignon, their famous proprietary red wine called Insignia, and their single vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon from the western hillsides of Oakville, called Backus. The regular Cabernet is a solidly made, reliable effort usually comprised of about 85% Cabernet Sauvignon and the rest Merlot, Petit Verdot, and occasionally Malbec. The **2005 Cabernet Sauvignon** possesses aromas of *crème de cassis*, bay leaf, and spice box as well as soft tannins, medium body, and luscious fruit. It is a delicious, French-styled effort to drink over the next decade. Denser with more tannin in addition to a more monolithic personality, the concentrated **2006 Cabernet Sauvignon** needs more time to evolve and reveal its full potential. Anticipated maturity: 2009-2018. The **2007 Cabernet Sauvignon** exhibits a grapy, black currant personality, with elegant licorice and earthy characteristics offered in a medium-bodied, richly fruity style. There is more texture, and the wine's complexity should emerge with more aging.

Since 2004, 100% of the Bordeaux varietals used in the Insignia proprietary blend have been from estate vineyards. The beautiful, dense ruby/purple-tinged **2005 Insignia** (a 12,500-case blend of 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Petit Verdot, and 1% Merlot) possesses sweet aromas of black cherries, cassis, chocolate, camphor, and a subtle hint of roasted herbs. Medium to full-bodied and elegant, with a European style imposed on the rich, velvety, California fruit, this *cuvée* will benefit from several years of bottle age, and should easily keep for three decades. There are just under 15,000 cases of the **2006 Insignia**, a blend of 95% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Petit Verdot. Made in a dense, full-bodied, muscular style, it is less charming than the 2005, with high tannin, extract, and richness. The blackberry and cassis characteristics are accompanied by notions of damp earth, subtle oak, licorice, and forest floor. It, too will benefit from 3-4 years of bottle age, and should drink well for two decades or more. Perhaps the most brilliant Insignia since the 2002 and 2001 is the **2007 Insignia**, composed of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot, and 1% Malbec. An inky/purple color is followed by aromas

of espresso, smoked herbs, graphite, *crème de cassis*, and licorice. Full-bodied, opulent, flamboyant, and silky-textured, it possesses fabulous concentration as well as spectacular purity, depth, and length. This should be a captivating wine to drink when released, and age easily for 25-30 years. The debut Insignia, the 1974, which seemed almost too tasty and precocious when it was released in the late seventies, is still going strong at age 34! The 2007 is easily as good.

The single vineyard offering comes from Oakville's Backus Vineyard. There are typically 1,500-2,500 cases produced from this biodynamically farmed vineyard. The dense **2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Backus Vineyard** (93% Cabernet Sauvignon and the rest Petit Verdot and Malbec) offers sweet *crème de cassis* aromas interwoven with scorched earth, espresso roast, and licorice. Full-bodied as well as elegant with sweet tannin, gorgeous purity, and admirable depth, this effort has developed beautifully since I tasted it last year. It appears to have 25 or more years of aging potential. A blend of 94% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Petit Verdot, and 2% Malbec, the **2006 Cabernet Sauvignon Backus Vineyard** is performing even better than it did from barrel last year. A dense ruby/purple hue is followed by scents of creosote, burning embers, black currants, cedar, and spice box. Dense, rich, powerful, and concentrated, it is a deeper, more broodingly backward offering than its 2005 counterpart. The 2006 represents the more muscular side of the Backus Vineyard, whereas the 2005 is the more elegant, European-inspired effort. The finest of this trio is undoubtedly the **2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Backus Vineyard**, a blend of 94% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot, and 3% Malbec. Explosive aromas of black currant and blackberry fruit intermixed with crushed rocks, acacia flowers, and hot earth jump from the glass of this inky/blue/purple-tinged Cabernet. There is superb density, a full-bodied, multidimensional mouthfeel, an expansive, savory mid-palate, and a dazzlingly long finish with high, but sweet, ripe tannins. This is a seamless example of Cabernet Sauvignon at its finest. It should be drinkable when released, and age effortlessly for 3+ decades.

Lastly, the **2007 Eisrèbe**, made from 100% Scheurebe, has 7.8% alcohol and 23 grams of residual sugar. It falls between an Auslese and Beerenauslese in style, offering notes of marmalade, maple syrup, and caramelized tropical fruit, terrific acidity, and beautiful purity. It should be consumed over the next 3-4 years. Tel. (707) 963-2745; Fax (707) 963-4831