



88 - Yao Family Wines 2010 Napa Crest Proprietary Red

90 - Yao Family Wines 2010 Yao Ming Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

95 - Yao Family Wines 2010 Yao Ming Family Reserve Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

The influx of well-known internationals to Napa Valley to produce wine is symbolic in Yao Ming's efforts. The world-famous Chinese basketball player is making Napa Cabernet Sauvignon, and reading his back label message there is a humility and candor that I found refreshing for such a bigger than life personality. I tasted three Yao Family Wines cuvees.

The least expensive offering is the 2010 Napa Crest Proprietary Red. Made from three Bordeaux varietals (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot), it is a tasty, medium-bodied, richly fruity effort with a healthy dark ruby color, good spice, lots of black currant and incense notes, an attractive roundness, and a sensual, seductive personality. Drink it over the next 5-6 years.

The opaque ruby/purple-colored 2010 Yao Ming Cabernet Sauvignon exhibits attractive aromas of blueberry and blackberry liqueur, licorice and graphite. Seamlessly put together with ripe tannin, nicely integrated wood, acidity and alcohol, a rich, medium to full-bodied mouthfeel, no hard edges and a long finish, this is an impressive wine that should drink well for 10-15+ years.

The 2010 Yao Ming Family Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon possesses an opaque blue/purple color as well as a gorgeous bouquet of spring flowers, red and black fruits and subtle toasty oak. Full-bodied and impeccably made with beautiful texture, length and richness, it can be drunk now, but will stand the test of time for 15 or more years.

I am aware of all the arguments that major celebrities lending their names to wines is generally a formula for mediocrity, but that is not the case with Yao Ming. These are high class wines. The two Cabernets are actually brilliant, and the Reserve bottling ranks alongside just about anything made in Napa.

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