

# Hundred Acre 2006 Kayli Morgan Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

*An obsession to be savored.*

EVERY FINE WINE begins with an exceptional place—and so do some fine winemaking careers. When Canadian-born investment banker Jayson Woodbridge began to visit the Napa Valley in the 1990s, he had no idea that his love for the area would ultimately reshape his life. “I really got quite homesick not being in the Valley,” he says. “It has a presence to it that belies the place itself. It’s something more than just mere land. The way the light hangs in the sky—it has this energy that is greater than other places in the world.”

In 1998, while looking for property, he came across a slope above Beringer’s Chabot Vineyard that was for sale. The topography reminded him of an amphitheater: The hillside curved from east to west in a south-facing, 180-degree arc. “I just said right there, ‘I’ve got to do this,’” Woodbridge recalls.

He hired prominent vineyard manager Jim Barbour, who had planted the Chabot Vineyard back in the mid-1970s, to rehabilitate his new property, now known as the ARK Vineyard. As work got under way, he asked Barbour about purchasing another



*Hundred Acre 2006 Kayli  
Morgan Vineyard Cabernet  
Sauvignon Napa Valley \* DuMOL  
2006 fimm Pinot Noir Russian River  
Valley \* Hourglass 2006 Blueline Vineyard  
Merlot Napa Valley \* JC Cellars 2006  
Rockpile Vineyard Haley's Reserve Syrah*



*The founders of DuMOL continue to produce stunning Pinots that appeal to the senses as well as to the intellect.*

property, the Kayli Morgan Vineyard, located at the base of Howell Mountain, which he had been eyeing. Barbour, who had developed that vineyard as well, heartily approved. Woodbridge promptly bought that land and, with the assistance of winemaking consultant Philippe Melka, produced the inaugural vintage of Hundred Acre, a 2000 Kayli Morgan Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon.

"I told Jim and Philippe right at the beginning that I wanted to take winemaking to a whole new level," he says. "If we couldn't achieve that, we weren't going to be making wine that year. It was basically no compromise for Hundred Acre."

Woodbridge's exacting standards are manifest in the seductive charm of the 2006 Kayli Morgan Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (\$750 per three-bottle case), which, like the refrain of a familiar musical phrase one can't quite place, gradually draws one in, absorbing one's thoughts and engulfing one's senses. Purple black in color and darkly luscious, this full-bodied red has intense aromas and flavors—black raspberry, cassis, melted dark chocolate, and roasted coffee—that seem the embodiment of its maker's own passionate obsession.

"I love the energy, the excitement of the potential that each new vintage has," Woodbridge says. "To achieve it, you have to release yourself—let yourself go into the wine, where you're

kind of dreaming it in your head. With certain wines, you're actually getting the heart and soul of the person that made it." —BRETT ANDERSON

*Hundred Acre, 707.967.9398,  
www.hundredacre.com*

WHILE THE BORDEAUX varietals deliver immense satisfaction, their beauty—like that of a Cubist abstract—tends toward the bold, the bright, and the linear. Pinot Noir, on the other hand, relies on subtle forms and delicate layers of light and shadow to suggest, rather than render overtly, its impressionistic landscapes of sensation. At least *French Pinot Noir* does: Critics often complain that red Burgundy's California cousins, whose massive ripeness is more akin to Cabernet Sauvignon, lack this mesmerizing power. If this is perhaps true of some wines, it is not the case of those that come from Sonoma County's Russian River Valley—the Golden State's own Côte d'Or—where Kerry Murphy and Michael Verlander, founders of DuMOL, continue to produce stunning Pinots that appeal to the senses as well as the intellect. The **DuMOL 2006 finn Pinot Noir Russian River Valley** ([www.dumol.com](http://www.dumol.com), \$80) has opulent blackberry and plum flavors with earthy undercurrents of mushroom, nutmeg, and anise. —B.A.

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When Ned Smith purchased six acres of land in St. Helena, Calif., he had no ambitions for the site other than to grow a bit of Zinfandel to make wine for his friends and family. Shortly after Smith passed away in 1990, however, the hillside vineyard became infested with phylloxera, and his son Jeff persuaded his mother to allow him to replant it. Jeff learned from Mark Kliewer, dean of the viticulture program at the University of California, Davis, that the property's unique location at the narrowest point of the hourglass-shaped Napa Valley would be ideal for Cabernet Sauvignon. Kliewer's analysis inspired a new wine, as well as a new label, and Hourglass' Cabernets, produced by winemaker Bob Foley, have received high praise—and high scores—ever

since. Still, Jeff and wife Carolyn's concern may soon be equally renowned for the Merlot grown on its newly acquired Blueline Estate Vineyard located north of St. Helena. The **Hourglass 2006 Blueline Vineyard Merlot Napa Valley** ([www.hourglasswine.com](http://www.hourglasswine.com), \$75) is exceptionally dark, roiling with aromas of black cherry, grape lozenge, coffee, and plum. The wine's mouthfeel is velvety and dense, its ripe red-apple and cinnamon-spice finish culminating in cool graphite mineral. —B.A.

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Jeff Cohn, the former winemaker at Rosenblum Cellars, producer of particularly fine vineyard-designate Zinfandels, stepped out on his own in 2006 to devote his full energies to JC Cellars. His modus operandi resembles

that of his former employer, Kent Rosenblum: establish relationships with the finest growers across the state to produce modest quantities of immodestly great wine. Although he produces more than 20 different Rhône-style wines in his Oakland, Calif.-based warehouse-cum-winery, the Syrahs he has sourced from the Rockpile Vineyard—a rugged scrap of terrain situated on a peak above Lake Sonoma—are his masterpieces. The **JC Cellars 2006 Rockpile Vineyard Haley's Reserve Syrah** ([www.jccellars.com](http://www.jccellars.com), \$60) is as intense and generous as the vineyard is spartan and bleak. The scent of wildflowers greets the nose, while unctuous brambleberry juice and concentrated black-cherry liqueur wash over a deep core of ripe tannins. —B.A. ☐