

Joseph Phelps

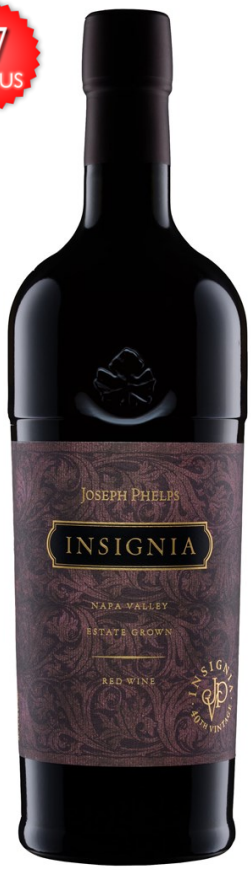
The 2008 Joseph Phelps Insignia is a richly structured Napa Valley classic, offering deep fruit concentration, minerality, and polished tannins from a vintage marked by extremes.

JOSEPH PHELPS
VINEYARDS

Insignia 2008

California, USA

97 vinous



Alcohol :14,50 %

Composition: 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Petit Verdot, 4% Merlot

Region and Vineyards

The 2008 Insignia is composed of fruit from six estate vineyards situated across some of **Napa Valley's most renowned AVAs**, each chosen for its unique contribution to the blend's complexity and balance. The largest share (32%) comes from **Suscol Vineyard**, located in the cooler southern Napa Valley, known for preserving acidity and vibrancy.

The **Yountville Vineyard** (23%) in the **Oak Knoll District** offers plush fruit and floral elegance, while **Barboza (14%)** and **Las Rocas (13%)**, both in the **Stags Leap District**, provide structure, graphite minerality, and fine tannins. **Home Ranch** in **St. Helena** (13%) brings ripe black fruit and richness. Finally, **Banca Dorada (5%)** in **Rutherford** contributes the classic dusty tannins of this historic sub-region. These vineyard parcels ripened under a season of climatic contrasts, resulting in lower yields but high-quality fruit with excellent ageability.

Winemaking

The 2008 blend consists of **89% Cabernet Sauvignon**, **7% Petit Verdot**, and **4% Merlot**. Following harvest from September 8 to October 24, each lot underwent a **five-day cold soak** to enhance color and aromatic extraction, followed by fermentation and **extended maceration of up to 40 days**, intensifying depth and mouthfeel.

The wine was matured for **24 months in 100% new French oak**, sourced from top coopers to ensure a balanced integration of oak spice and texture. This extended élevage imparted creaminess and refined structural elements, allowing the wine to age gracefully while maintaining freshness and precision.

Tasting Notes

- **Color**: Vibrant garnet with deep intensity and youthful clarity.
- **Aroma**: Rich aromatic layers of roasted coffee, graphite, and ripe black fruit, with hints of mineral smoke and subtle dried flowers.
- **Palate**: Creamy and structured, with concentrated notes of blackberry, plum, dark chocolate, and iron-like minerality. The mouthfeel is velvety and persistent, ending with excellent length and balance.

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Insignia 2008

Did you know?

The 2008 growing season was marked by a **historic spring frost**, the longest since 1971, followed by heat spikes in September and October. These extremes led to a naturally **low-yielding vintage**, enhancing the concentration and structure of the fruit, particularly in Cabernet Sauvignon—a key to the vintage's enduring quality.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Dry-aged New York strip steak**: Enhances the wine's ripe fruit and tannin structure with umami-rich beef.
- **Mushroom and black garlic risotto**: A vegetarian pairing that mirrors the wine's earthy and creamy character.
- **Braised lamb shanks with rosemary and olives**: Accents the dark fruit and graphite tones with herbal and savory depth.
- **Aged gouda or Comté**: Cheese with nutty complexity pairs beautifully with the wine's texture and aged character.

97 vinous

Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (VN) : 97 Points (2008)

The 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon Insignia is a towering, statuesque wine bursting with blackberry jam, tar, spices, leather and licorice. It shows fabulous depth and richness backed up by serious, imposing tannins that suggest it has a long life. Ideally, the 2008 should be purchased by those who can be patient; it is not a wine for those seeking immediate gratification. The blend is 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Petit Verdot and 4% Malbec. (AG)

95

Robert Parker (RP) : 95 Points (2008)

The 2008 Insignia, a blend of 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Petit Verdot and 4% Merlot that achieved 14.7% natural alcohol, is one of the more abundant vintages as there were 16,650 cases produced. Aged 24 months in new French oak, all from estate vineyards in Rutherford, St. Helena, Stags Leap and Oak Knoll, it exhibits a beautiful opaque purple color along with a sumptuous bouquet of creme de cassis, incense, forest floor, spring flowers, blueberries and subtle new oak. It possesses sweet tannins and cuts a full-bodied swath across the palate. (RP)