



SAN SABA VINEYARDS MERLOT, 2003

Tasting Notes:

Given the warm mornings, breezy afternoons, and cool evenings of the Salinas valley, this Merlot has developed aromas of dark cherry fruit, spices, coffee, and smoke. Cabernet franc, petite syrah, and petite verdot were blended with the Merlot to give it depth and complexity. Its intensity and structure will allow it to age gracefully for years to come.

Vintage:	2003
Appellation:	Monterey
Blend:	87% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petite Syrah, 2% Petite Verdot
Maturation Data:	16 months in small oak barrels
Alcohol:	14.3%
R.S.	.1%
Case Production:	450 cases
Release Date:	June 1, 2005

2003 Vintage

Winter was very cold; the vineyard even had a rare snowfall. Spring had steady, cool temperatures and good rain. Bud break was late, in April, due to the cold winter. Temperatures spiked to unusually high levels in June and July but cooled off again August through November, giving the grapes time to develop good phenolics. Overall, the year was one of ripeness and quality.

Production Notes

The merlot vines had cluster thinning at veraison and twice again before harvest to ensure even ripeness. Grape clusters were fermented before dryness to enhance varietal character. After fermentation, this merlot was aged in a combination of oaks for 16 months. Careful barrel selection and blending were focused on accentuating the best of the vineyard characteristics.