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MERLOT

WINE PROFILE:

- .Vintage: 2002
- .Vineyard Sources: Santa Barbara County; Los Alamos and Santa Ynez Valley
- .Fermentation: Closed top with pumpovers and open topped with punchdowns
- .Harvest Date: Starting in late September (Santa Ynez) and finishing in late October (Los Alamos)
- .Varietal Composition: 95% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc

TASTING NOTES:

2002 was one in a continuing series of dry years in Santa Barbara County. Consequently, the Merlot crop was smaller than average, meaning that berry size was small and the grape skins were thick. This gave the wine a strong dose of rich color.

These late ripening grapes were hand harvested and de-stemmed, leaving many whole berries, into a temperature controlled stainless steel tank. For the first week the must was "cold soaked" to extract color, aroma and flavor in the complete absence of alcohol. Then the must was inoculated with a pure culture of Bordeaux Red yeast which was selected from many naturally occurring "native" fermentations and fermented for another week to dryness. The wine was aged in 1-5 year old French oak barrels for 18 months. Five percent Cabernet Franc was blended in shortly before bottling, adding another dimension of spicy fruit and perfume to the black cherry, raspberry and red licorice aromas and flavors of this cool climate Merlot. Enjoy over the next 3-4 years with red meat and vegetarian dishes. DRG 4/04

TECHNICAL DATA:

- .Wine pH: 3.70
- .Wine Acidity: .66
- .Alcohol: 13.7
- .Suggested Retail price: \$18



THE TASTE OF SANTA BARBARA