



ANCIENT PEAKS



FAMILY ESTATE WINES FROM MARGARITA VINEYARD



VINEYARD:
MARGARITA VINEYARD

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:
MERLOT (85%) • ZINFANDEL (10%)
PETIT VERDOT (4%) • PETITE SIRAH (1%)

AGING REGIMEN:
19 MONTHS IN FRENCH AND
AMERICAN OAK BARRELS

FINAL ANALYSIS:
ALCOHOL: 14.5%
TA: .65 PH: 3.62

CASES PRODUCED:
2,233



2007 MERLOT | PASO ROBLES

We proudly include Merlot in our small family of wines as a varietal that excels at our Margarita Vineyard. Here, well-drained soils and reliable coastal breezes guide the grapes to optimal intensity and structure. The result is a wine that truly captures the essence of Merlot, with silky black fruit flavors and a luscious texture.

VINEYARD

The 2007 Merlot comes from Block 7 at Margarita Vineyard. This block occupies the sloping crown of a shale-riddled hill, where the shallow soils naturally limit vine vigor, resulting in small clusters with deep flavors. The block is planted to two Merlot clones for enhanced complexity, specifically Clone 03 and Clone 181. Margarita Vineyard is situated along the top of the Cuesta Grade, approximately 22 miles south of the city of Paso Robles and just 14 miles as the crow flies from the Pacific Ocean. Here, the surrounding peaks of the Santa Lucia Mountain Range act as a gateway between the ocean-cooled environs below the grade and the warmer climes above the grade. When the days heat up in the areas north and east of Margarita Vineyard, the air rises to create a vacuum that pulls marine breezes and fog inland over the peaks, and right through the vineyard. This phenomenon creates one of the coolest growing environments in the Paso Robles appellation, resulting in fruit of uncommon depth and structure.

WINEMAKING

After destemming, the must was cold soaked for 48 hours prior to fermentation for a gentle extraction of initial color and flavor. A quarter of the Merlot was fermented in small one-ton fermenters with regular punchdowns, while the remainder was fermented in stainless steel tanks with frequent pumpovers. Several of the bins were fermented with native yeasts for enhanced complexity. After fermentation, the lots were racked to a combination of French and American oak barrels, where they aged for 19 months. Small lots of Zinfandel, Petit Verdot and Petite Sirah were incorporated into the final blend for enhanced aromatic and textural dimension.

TASTING NOTES

The 2007 Merlot begins with generous aromas of plum, raspberry, mocha and toasty vanilla. The palate is smooth and supple, unfolding with deep flavors of black cherry, blackberry, plum and cassis. Accents of clove spice accompany juicy tannins on a long, balanced finish.

CUISINE PAIRING

The deep, supple flavors of the 2007 Merlot are an excellent match for richly flavored fare. Recommended pairings include grilled lamb chops, whole-roasted duck, beef and barley stew, and sirloin steak with garlic butter.