



## **SAN SABA VINEYARDS MERLOT, 2004**

### **Tasting Notes:**

Aromas of dark fruit wrapped with caramel and smoke lead to a wine with a luscious, dense texture. Black cherry and plum flavors fill the mouth, along with hints of black pepper, coffee, cocoa, and menthol. Wonderfully even across the palate, this merlot finishes with vanilla and lingering notes of toasted oak.

### **Appellation:**

Monterey

### **Blend:**

95% Merlot, 5% Malbec

### **Maturation Data:**

10 months in small oak barrels

### **Alcohol:**

14.1%

### **R.S.**

0.1%

### **Case Production:**

575 cases

### **Release Date:**

July 11, 2006

### **2004 Vintage**

A warm winter and spring resulted in early bud break. Temperatures stayed warm and by mid-May, degree days were 10% ahead of normal. There was a heat spike late August during which many vineyards picked. We kept the clusters on the vine to develop further and temperatures cooperated, cooling off for the last month. Even with this extra time, harvest was September 28, two weeks earlier than normal.

### **Production Notes**

This wine is the result of extensive vineyard work- new trellising, cluster thinning after veraison, and leaf stripping to expose the ripening clusters to sunlight. Harvesting was done by hand in several passes to ensure even ripeness. After fermentation, the wine was aged in an assortment of oak barrels from various coopers to give additional interest and complexity. Barrels were blind tasted for selection into the final blend. Remaining lots were blended into Bocage Merlot.

### **Awards**

Gold: Lone Star Wine Competition, Critic's Choice Award