



Savoia SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, 2003

When you see the “black label” from Palmina, you just know the wine is going to be something extraordinary. *Savoia* is such a wine, and more. Just four barrels of wine went into this unusual but sublime blend. The first release of *Savoia* debuted in 2002 and immediately sold out, and since this blend is only produced in exceptional years, we are pleased to announce a 2003 vintage of this wine.

A blend of Nebbiolo, Barbera and Syrah, *Savoia* brings together more than grapes – it crosses regional varietal borders and perhaps established “rules” about crafting a traditionally styled Italian wine. Adding a Rhone varietal to Italian, particularly the noble Nebbiolo, might be questioned by Italian wine aficionados. However, back in the late 1400’s, the House of Savoy ruled over both the Rhone Valley in France and the Piedmont region of Italy and so legacy runs through the lineage of *Savoia*. This noble heritage is reflected in the wine which also adds a classic Californian, new world tone.

Santa Barbara County is one of the few places in the world where the diversity in soils and micro-climates allow these three different grape varietals to be grown so perfectly, and within a few miles from each other. Two exquisite barrels of Nebbiolo were chosen for *Savoia* – one from the Stolpman Vineyard in the Ballard Canyon corridor and one from Rancho Sisquoc in the Santa Maria Valley. The one barrel of Barbera also hails from the Santa Maria Valley, impressively from the famed Bien Nacido Vineyard, and the singular and superb barrel of Syrah brings soft nuances of the Alisos Vineyard. The intriguing complexity in the wine is a direct influence of the multiplicity and quality of these different vineyards in Santa Barbara County.

The layers of texture, flavor and finish are the result of both meticulous winemaking and the craft of blending. Like a chef with an impressive spice cabinet, winemaker Steve Clifton chose these four barrels for their unique characteristics. Adding to the complexity of the varietals, the vineyards and the appellations are the spice and texture from the barrels themselves. Two of the wines were aged for one year in Slovenian oak, while the other two saw French oak. Once the four barrels had been chosen as the final “assemblage” for *Savoia*, they were blended and then returned to new Slovenian oak barrels for an additional year. In the late Spring of 2005, the new wine was raked and bottled unfined and unfiltered, and then underwent a few months of bottle aging before release in November, 2005. Only 190 half-cases produced.

Savoia is integrated and yet complex – with each wine providing its own personality and yet contributing selflessly to the overall impression. Notes of wild cherry, black berry and mocha are first apparent on the nose, with some nutty spiciness, floral notes and a hint of sweet vanilla. The first taste of *Savoia* reveals the incredible texture of this vintage – creamy, mouth coating, and palate pleasing, with a bit of fleshiness in the classic California style. The power of the blend is evident, with Barbera first beckoning a freshness, the Syrah adding a silkiness and the Nebbiolo accenting with elegant tannins and structure. Ripe raspberry, cumin and baking spice notes surround an earthiness in the wine which is then accompanied by black and red berry notes. These complementary layers of flavors and textures on the palate then lead to a long and lingering finish.