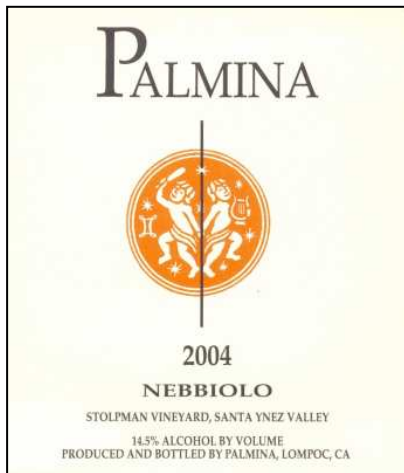


PALMINA

2004 Nebbiolo, Stolpman Vineyard Santa Ynez Valley



Whether the name “Nebbiolo” is due to the grapes noble heritage (“Nobile”) or because of the frosted appearance of the grape skins (“nebbia” translates to “fog” in Italian), there is one thing that is certain. This is a grape of distinction that produces wines that are prized and cherished. Nebbiolo originated in the 14th century in the east-west valley in the Lombardy region of northern Italy at the foot of the Alps and now is most famous for the Barolos and Barbarescos of the Piemonte. However, the noble Nebbiolo is not widely planted despite its reputation for greatness in the glass. It is notoriously difficult to grow and vinify, extremely sensitive to soil and climatic conditions and can be moody and unpredictable during fermentation, cellaring and aging. Nebbiolo demands the patience and skill of both the grower and the winemaker.

In Santa Barbara County there are only a handful of vineyard sites that grow Nebbiolo. The Stolpman Vineyard is one of those perfect combinations of climate, soils, location and farming that can produce Nebbiolo grapes of character and quality. Located in the Ballard Canyon area of the east-west Santa Ynez Valley, the layered soils and long growing season allow Nebbiolo to fully ripen when hand harvested in late November.

Once delivered to the winery, even more care and attention must be paid to this thin-skinned and finicky grape. The Clifton’s experience over the years and their relationships to growers and winemakers in the Piemonte are evident in the resulting wine. There is a reason that Palmina is consistently invited to represent California at the International Nebbiolo Symposium held each year in Italy. After fermentation, the new wines are aged for one year in 50% Slovenian and 50% French oak barrels, one half of which are new. The wine is then moved to 3500liter oak uprights to integrate and tame the tannins for an additional 18 months before being bottled. Another six months of bottle aging before release ensures that the elusive and seductive fruit notes of Nebbiolo are captured.

The 2004 Nebbiolo, Stolpman Vineyard is a ruby-colored wine with beautiful clarity and brick-red edges. A swirl in a decanter and the glass encourage this sometimes taciturn wine to unleash those classic aromas of cranberry, red plum and rose petals – and then earthy notes of tar and a hint of smoke. On the palate, Nebbiolo’s reputation for that yin-yang of “sweet and savory” is confirmed, with layered bursts of dried black cherry and raspberry mingling with herbs d’provence and earthy, brambly accents of porcini mushroom. The balance of fruit, tannins and acid is there with depth of fruit and texture melding with the elegance and light grip of the tannins, a teasing bite from the acid and a round, lingering finish.

The 2004 Nebbiolo is definitely a food wine, and the incredible beauty of the wine can only be appreciated when combined with a meal. A sip of wine, a bite of a nicely-grained cut of meat – sublime! We recommend pairing the 2004 Nebbiolo with braised meats or hearty stews.

Known for its ageability, the 2004 Nebbiolo will continue to evolve and gain complexity with cellaring.