

PALMINA

2008 Dolcetto Santa Barbara County



Dolcetto is one of the principal grapes grown in the Piedmont region of Italy and a favorite there among both winemakers and consumers. It is an “early to market” red wine which is immediately drinkable upon release and thought of almost like “comfort wine”. Amiable in the vineyard, easy to grow yet still imparting a sense of place in the resulting wine, Dolcetto thrives in the coastal conditions of Santa Barbara County. As in Italy, it is delicious with everyday dishes like pizza and pasta, a wine to simply open and enjoy!

“Dolcetto” translates to “little sweet one” - not because it is a sweet wine (it is perfectly dry) - because it is a friendly and easygoing grape to work with and so pleasurable in the glass.

This agreeable little grape is also expressive of vintage, and the extreme conditions of 2008 have produced a wine with depth and more complexity than in previous years. Springtime frosts and little rain in the growing season produced a tiny crop with petite berries and small clusters from both of the vineyards growing Dolcetto for Palmina.

Hand harvested a few weeks apart, the grapes from the Honea Vineyard in the Santa Ynez Valley and the Zotovich Vineyard in Sta. Rita Hills were each de-stemmed into small open top fermenters. A few days of cold soaking extracted a beautiful dark color, spice and soft tannins from the skins prior to the onset of fermentation. Aged for six months in neutral barrels, the wine was ready for bottling in June of 2009 and released at the annual “Dolcetto and Pizza Party” at the Palmina winery the following month.

A dark scarlet color with deep rose tinted highlights speaks to the depth of this 2009 vintage, while the brightness of the wine conveys its youthful character. The nose is spicy and very berry, with a hint of sandalwood mingling with Bing and black cherry aromas that waft from the glass. On the palate, red rhubarb and black plum skin reminders showcase the balanced acidity and tannin structure of the wine. Concentrated black raspberry and mulberry flavors are interlaced with a subtle earthiness – minerality from the Sta. Rita Hills marrying with warm loamy notes from the Santa Ynez Valley – and then leaving a lasting impression of raspberry and raw almonds at last sip. Dolcetto is the perfect picnic wine, a delightful interlude between white and heavier red wines at a multi-course dinner and the ultimate complement to *Pizza*, which is our featured recipe!

Enjoy in its youth and serve either at cellar temperature or chilled (which was a big hit at the wine’s debut at our Dolcetto & Pizza Party!)

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