

PALMINA

2009 *Lumina* Sparkling Nebbiolo, Santa Maria Valley



“Nobile” – perhaps the description from which Nebbiolo originated. And what more noble role than the ultimate celebratory wine, one with petite bubbles, effervescence in body and character, and a lovely, delicate color? Introducing the fifth entry to the Palmina Nebbiolo family – a sparkling version that hails from the Nebbiolo grown for Palmina at Rancho Sisquoc in the Santa Maria Valley. For those of you who know the history of Steve and Brewer-Clifton, you’ll remember that he and Greg first started that winery making sparkling wine. Delightful as a celebratory wine, but also a perfect companion to many a meal, a Palmina sparkling wine has been in Steve’s plan for awhile. A small experiment was happily consumed by staff and family, and the first official release is now available.

The Nebbiolo grapes were picked earlier than those for Palmina’s still wines to retain the natural acidity of the grape and still showcase the spice and fruit profile of the varietal. Pressed to stainless steel to ferment, the still wine was then moved to neutral French oak barrels to age for six months. The young wine was then placed into bottles and a small dose of sugar and yeast solution (the *triage*) was added. As the yeast consumed the sugar the effervescent bubbles were produced, along with a light lees sediment. Over the next few months the bottles were gradually turned upside down (*riddled*) to collect these lees in the neck of the bottle. Then the most exciting part of this “methode champenoise” occurred – *degorgement*. The crown cap was removed, the built up pressure in the bottle popped the sediment out of the neck, a champagne cork was quickly inserted, a wire cage applied and the silver capsule of Lumina added to complete the process. Finally – time to open one in a toast to a long process and delicious wine!

A light coral pink hue gives the first indication of the aromas and flavors to follow. A strong perfume of raspberries and citrus mingles with the essence of fresh baked bread. A second smell reveals lemon cream and tiger lilies. On the palate the wine dances lightly with bubbles just slightly more intense than cremant. The flavors sing of guava and papaya with fresh squeezed lime. The finish is parchment dry and lingering with a flavor of baked berries.

Lumina is for celebrations of all kinds – a beautiful sunset, a new addition to a family, a well-deserved day off or a simple get together with friends. It is a beautiful wine to enjoy with food, before a meal, with a meal or as the crowning touch with a simple dessert.