



## **DOLCETTO Zotovich Vineyard SANTA RITA HILLS, 2004**

Dolcetto has been called “gregarious”, and is produced in Italy under seven different DOC classifications. The origin of the grape has been traced back to the fifteenth century, making it one of the oldest known grapes in the world. It ripens easily and early, and produces wines in a wide range of complexity – but always with a very fruit-forward component. It is said that the Piedmontese have a portion of Dolcetto running through their veins!

This is the first year that Palmina has produced a Dolcetto wine, and it is fitting that the grapes come from a vineyard in the acclaimed Santa Rita Hills. The Zotovich vineyard is located between the cities of Buellton and Lompoc, and enjoys the coastal influence of this extreme appellation. Cold foggy mornings lead to sunshine in the early afternoon, which is quickly followed by coastal breezes. The sandy marine deposit soils and a long growing season lead to wines with great balance, spiciness, and minerality not achieved elsewhere.

Located just a few miles from the winery, the fruit was harvested by hand, and then de-stemmed at the winery just an hour later. The wine was then cold-soaked to extract flavors and those nice soft tannins from the skins before being inoculated with yeast and completing primary fermentation. This was then followed by malo-lactic fermentation, which contributed a rich mouthfeel to the wine. Upon completion, the wine was gravity fed into large neutral oak barrels, and then racked to stainless steel for the one month before bottling to retain its fresh Italian style.

The word “Dolcetto” means “little sweet one” – although the Palmina version is truly neither sweet nor little! The first indication that this is no Beaujolais is that of the color of the wine in the glass, which is a deep magenta with almost bright purple edges. You just know it’s going to be a Palmina interpretation of a Piedmonte classic. There is black fruit on the nose and the palate – dark cherries, black plums, blackberries – along with an earthiness of the region. Hints of violets and a toastiness speak to its balanced, rounded, totally enjoyable nature. Think of a rich blackberry jam on toast Mmm. We do recommend serving the wine slightly chilled for maximum enjoyment. This is a perfect summertime red, with soft tannins and balanced acidity.

Try this with our good friend Mario Batali’s *Puntine di Maiale con Polenta* (Pork Ribs with Polenta), or with your own famous grilled recipe, as it is superb with barbecue! Just 220 Cases produced