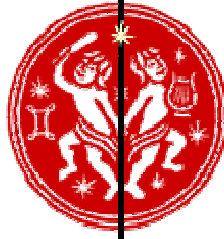


PALMINA



2005 Arneis

Honea Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley

An ancient grape that dates back to the 15th century, Arneis is best grown in regions with warm/hot days and cool, fog-laden nights to allow the thin-skinned grapes to fully ripen and still retain their natural acidity. Home base for this intriguing grape is the Roero Hills region, north of Alba in the Piemonte. It has also found a near perfect home at the Honea Vineyard in the Alamo Pintado area of Santa Ynez Valley where the micro-climate and the long growing season produce grapes of classic character, with a California “zing”. Brought back from near extinction by forward thinking Barolo producers in Italy, the varietal is sometimes also known as “Barolo Bianco”, and is as difficult a grape to grow as its Nebbiolo namesake. In fact, depending upon the town or the region in the Piemonte, “arneis” translates to “stubborn”, “difficult and demanding person” or “little rascal” for its demanding viticultural characteristics.

Honea Vineyard is planted entirely to Italian grape varietals, and exclusively for Palmina. Meticulous farming and carefully managed crop size produced a stellar first vintage of Arneis from the property. Harvested by hand, the grapes were delivered to the winery at dawn’s early light to retain cool temperatures and crisp, firm grapes. The grapes were then whole-cluster pressed to 1/3 each stainless steel, neutral French oak barrels and new Gamba 500-liter puncheons. The use of these various fermentation vessels sculpts the wine into the complex layers displayed in the wine – delicate aromatics from the stainless steel fermented wine, texture and structure from the Gamba barrels, and mid-palate fruit notes from the neutral oak. Blended to stainless steel, the 2005 Arneis was bottled in the spring of 2006 and allowed three months of bottle aging before release.



Back in the day in Barolo, producers used to blend a bit of Arneis into Nebbiolo to lend intensity to the nose and an elegant softness to the palate. It is easy to see why...and also why Arneis is a wine that can definitely stand on its own. A steely, strawlike color invites a swirl, which unleashes a delicate and floral nose of clover honey and acacia. The first sip coats the palate with complex layers of flavors and texture - pears, firm just-ripe peaches, a hint of fennel and apple peel are surrounded by both a lilting acidity and a creaminess from the barrels. On the finish, almonds and a flinty minerality persist and linger. This is a medium-bodied, complex and intriguing wine that should be enjoyed within 1-2 years of bottling.

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