

PALMINA

2005 Nebbiolo Santa Barbara County



If there is one winegrape that is puzzling, mysterious, complex and downright addictive to growers, winemakers and consumers alike, it must be Nebbiolo. Experts cannot even agree on whether the word Nebbiolo is based on “nebbia” in reference to the predictable fogs during harvest time in the Langhe or because the grapes take on a silvery blue skin color resembling fog or whether “nobile” meaning “noble” was the root of the name. Fussy in the vineyard, finicky in the cellar, requiring time and patience on the part of consumer and winemaker – there is one thing that *is* certain. Nebbiolo is all about where it is grown. Originating in north Italy, wines crafted from the Nebbiolo grape are named after sense of place – Barolo, Barbaresco, Gattinara. And now, Santa Barbara County.

With a topography and climate mimicking those of the Piedmonte, Santa Barbara County’s transverse valleys, proximity to the sea and mountains ringing the area combine with Nebbiolo-loving soils, warm sunshine filled days and cold, brisk nights to provide a textbook perfect location to grow this intriguing grape. Then, years of experience working with Nebbiolo in the cellar, dialogue and debate with colleagues in Italy, a quest for continual improvement and patience, patience, patience adds the complexity and elegance that is the hallmark of Palmina’s Nebbiolos.

This inaugural bottling of a Santa Barbara County blend is designed to showcase the region as a whole, layering in various components of clones, soils and characteristics from the Sisquoc Vineyard in the Santa Maria Valley and the Stolpman Vineyard in the Santa Ynez Valley. These layers and nuances from these two exceptional vineyards are designed to work together to make a wine that is immediately enjoyable, clearly demonstrates the promise of Nebbiolo from Santa Barbara County and expresses winemaker/owner Steve Clifton’s dedication to and passion for this grape.

A glance at the garnet color wine foretells of the depth and complexity before even a swirl or a sip. This is a serious looking wine with an intense nature. A whirl in the glass coaxes spicy and dark red fruit aromas of cranberry, wild herbs and rose petal. A silky texture guides the wine to the taste buds, delivering notes of blueberry, sour cherry and a hint of loose tea leaf. Feminine and masculine at the same time, wisps of earth and vanilla bean mingle with the fruit notes. Beautifully balanced, the bright acids in the wine beg for a meal, the fine tannins bring structure and substance and the finish is graceful and persistent.

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