

# PALMINA

## **Nebbiolo** **Honea Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley, 2006**

Mention the word “Nebbiolo” to Steve or Chrystal Clifton and their eyes light up. They love making it, tasting it, cellaring it, talking about it. Let’s just say that “Nebbiolo” (the Piemontese word for Nebbiolo) has gotten under their skin. Each vintage they nurture and invent, tweak and cajole the wines into becoming even more alluring. Their dedication to showcasing the best of Nebbiolo and the individual vineyards in which it is grown has year after year resulted in an invitation to represent California at the *Convegno Internazionale Sul Vitigno Nebbiolo* (International Convention on Nebbiolo) held each year in Piemonte, Italy.

As a grape, Nebbiolo requires attention and patience. It must be grown in the right place, and must be carefully cultivated throughout its long growing season, as it is one of the first to bud and one of the last to pick. It needs a well-draining slope, sunlight, shelter from wind - and it needs meticulous attention and care with farming. The Honea Vineyard answers all these requirements – and more. Here, the soil is shallow sandy loam, streaked with limestone and planted to the Michet clone of Nebbiolo, which produces smaller clusters and lower yields. The result is a wine that speaks to both its sense of place and varietal purity. 2006 marks the second vintage of Nebbiolo, Honea Vineyard.

Having overseen the growing of the vines and grapes those five years from planting to harvest, Palmina owner/winemaker Steve Clifton then nurtured the wine in the cellar. From crush to bottling, the Honea Nebbiolo has seen the hand of a patient craftsman and artist. Aged for 48 months in Gamba barrels prior to bottling, and then aged for an additional year before release, only 150 cases were produced.

There is a lot going on in this glass of wine. Still displaying the violet-maroon color of a young Nebbiolo, floral aromas waft from the glass even before a swirl. A bouquet of red rose and lavender mingles with sandalwood and toasted herbs – cinnamon, roasted chili spice, lavender. On the palate, the wine has a feminine and earthy/rustic quality that weaves tastes and textures. Sour cherry and red rhubarb meld with vanilla bean and damson plum. Orange pekoe tea and a milk chocolate texture, and a pretty garden herbal component. Complex and intriguing, inviting yet another sip. The 2006 Nebbiolo, Honea Vineyard is a beautifully structured wine with supple tannins and vibrant acidity in beautiful balance. A beautiful wine for your cellar, and will continue to gain complexity with age.