

PALMINA

2010 Arneis Honea Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley



Palmina is all about the intertwining of food and wine, and pairings of each around a table. Pairings are sometimes about wines themselves. Like yin and yang or salt and pepper, these wines have been enjoyed as an accompaniment or foil to each other over the decades. So it is with Arneis, the rich and rascally “white Barolo” that for centuries has been grown in the sandy hills of Piemonte and consumed at the table alongside Nebbiolo.

Arneis (literally translated as “little rascally one” in local dialect) is choosy about where it is grown, requiring sandy and chalky soil, moderate temperatures and meticulous farming in order to produce a wine of distinction. The Honea Vineyard fits these exacting qualifications for Arneis, with the fog-laden mornings and warm sun-filled days allowing the grapes to ripen fully and still retain natural acidity. There, Palmina

owner/winemaker Steve Clifton and the Honea family planted one of only two certified Arneis vineyards in California to the vineyard’s ancient alluvial soils.

2010 was a cool growing season, resulting in a longer hang time on the vine for the later ripening Arneis. The grapes were hand harvested in October and upon arrival at the winery that morning were whole-cluster pressed. At that point, Clifton decided to further his foray with this grape, and permit it to naturally showcase its unique characteristics. A native fermentation with indigenous yeast took place in barrel (2/3 neutral oak and 1/3 stainless steel), followed by naturally occurring malo-lactic fermentation in the wine in oak. The wine aged on lees until bottling time in the early summer of 2010, and was then cellared for a few months of bottle aging to allow all layers and components to fully integrate.

A steely, strawlike color invites a swirl, which unleashes a delicate and floral nose of bee pollen, pear blossom and kaffir lime. The first sip rewards the palate with complex layers of flavors and texture – soft Anjou pears, clementine peel, spicy notes of white sage, and nuances of brazil nuts. The rich flavor profile is enveloped by both a lilting acidity and a creaminess, and finishes with a persistent and lingering minerality. This is a medium-bodied, complex and intriguing wine that can be enjoyed chilled or at room temperature, enjoyable now or cellared for 1-2 years. Arneis is a superb complement to rich foods, such as our featured recipe *Walnut Crusted Halibut*. And of course, it is also the perfect white wine to pair with the red Nebbiolo!