

# VERGARI 2003 CABERNET SAUVIGNON PASO ROBLES



This is the first Cabernet Sauvignon released under the Vergari label. The grapes come from the Premiere Vista Vineyard, located north of Paso Robles, near Ranchita Canyon Road. I liked the site from the moment I first laid eyes on it in the late-90s. The vineyard had that certain something that told me quality grapes would grow there.



During the harvest, I took a *huge* risk with the pick, because I went against conventional wisdom--rather than wait for the Brix (grape sugars) to climb into the high-20s and have the berries shrivel up, I picked while they still had the right varietal flavors and were well-formed. As a result, the natural grape acids did not "crash". Thus, the fermenting must did not need a tartaric acid addition, as is so often the case in a warm growing area like Paso where overripe grapes tend to lose too much acidity through respiration.



I transported the grapes myself in a refrigerated truck to keep them cool and fresh in transit to the winery. The clusters were then destemmed into  $\frac{3}{4}$ -ton, open-top fermentors. Once the fermentation began, I tasted the wine to follow its progress. I punched down the fermenting must three and sometimes four times a day to get the desired color and flavors. After a gentle squeezing at the press, we barreled the wine into a combination of new and previously-filled French oak cooperage. After 18 months of aging it was time to bottle. This sounds simple, but at every step of the way there were decisions to be made. For all intents and purposes, this wine was practically hand-made (granted, there was some assistance from equipment, but this did not prevent me blowing my back out doing punch downs!).



I hope that you enjoy drinking this wine as much I enjoyed making it. It has the right combination of fruit aromas and barrel notes in the nose, and is rich and full-bodied with a lengthy, seamless finish. I want my wines to deliver in the palate what the nose promises, and I believe this wine succeeds.

100 cases produced  
Bottled March 2005



**Aromas:** Black currant, blueberries, plums, spices and a hint of oak toast

**Flavor:** Ripe fruit flavors, balanced acidity and supple tannins with a seamless finish.