



THREE SAINTS

2003

MERLOT

Santa Ynez Valley

2003 THREE SAINTS MERLOT SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

VINTAGE NOTES

Another cold, dry winter preceded an early bud break followed by a very cold April. Rain, mildew and windy conditions combined to create a small fruit set. Alternating hot and cold spells punctuated the growing season that culminated with a sustained heat wave that lasted for almost 5 weeks during harvest time. As a result, fruit ripened thoroughly but very quickly and many wineries did the majority of their picking in the course of one week.

VINEYARD AND WINEMAKING NOTES

Star Lane Vineyard is located in the eastern end of the Santa Ynez Valley on the southern slope of Ranger Peak. The vines are situated in a variety of sheltered canyons with many of the plantings on steep hillsides that range from 900 to 1,500 feet. There are thirty-four different blocks of Cabernet Sauvignon and eleven blocks of Merlot planted at Star Lane Vineyard. Winemaking follows the traditional Bordeaux model, with warm fermentations, a long maceration and quarterly aerated rackings. In each vintage, we carefully select individual blocks that best represent the personality and the quality of this vineyard's unique location. In 2003, we selected grapes primarily from blocks 7A, 17 and 8. This wine was aged for 20 months in 40% new French Oak barrels.

TASTING NOTES

Full aromas of black cherry & plum are accented by the characteristic licorice note we find in all of our Merlots. This lush & generous wine offers up juicy flavors of black fruit, wild cherry and plum and an earthy undertone that is the hallmark of the Star Lane Vineyard. Rich and velvety in texture, our 2003 Three Saints Merlot is delicious presently and will reward a few years of careful cellaring.

THREE SAINTS WINES

After a ten year search throughout California, Jim and Mary Dierberg selected Santa Barbara County as an ideal area to produce world class wines. Three Saints wines are a vivid expression of carefully selected grapes from our vineyards which are located in three of Santa Barbara County's premiere grape growing regions: Santa Ynez Valley, Santa Maria Valley and Santa Rita Hills.

FINISHED WINE

Composition: 96% Merlot ; 4% Cabernet Franc

Appellation: Santa Ynez Valley

Alcohol: 14.8%

Total Acid: 5.6 g/L

Production: 1400 cases



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