

2 0 0 4 B A R B E R A

After higher than average rainfall in February, a dry early Spring led to a problem-free bud break and set on the Home Ranch Vineyard. From April to the beginning of October only .87 inches of rain fell in Livermore, and temperatures seldom rose much past the average of 89° in July and August. Veraison on this ranch happens in stages with Sangiovese starting first followed by Barbera then Cabernet. In August, we begin taking sugar and acid readings. 2004 was fairly typical in that Barbera, being prone to high acid, hangs a good deal longer than its Tuscan counterpart, Sangiovese. Sugar levels rose rapidly in mid-August, and we harvested 6.1 tons of Barbera on September 15th. Extended hang-time allowed for the formation of wonderful flavors of strawberry, plum, red cherry and fennel. Brix levels at harvest were adjusted to allow for a clean fermentation, and the wine finished with an alcohol level of 14.6%. The wine went through malolactic fermentation in barrel and aged in predominantly American oak from December 2004 to August 2006 (21 months).

HISTORY

The Home Ranch is composed of three different blocks, totaling 5.8 acres. The Cabernet and Sangiovese blocks were planted in 1996 and the first vintage of wine from these grapes was made in 2000. The Barbera was planted in 1997; its first vintage was 2001. Originally part of a 90-acre vineyard dating back to the 1870s, the Home Ranch provides fruit for some of our most sought-after wines.

VINTAGE

Harvest Date: September 15, 2004

Fruit: 30.5° brix at harvest.

Fermentation: Primary and secondary fermentations were inoculated. Pressed off after 9 days.

Aging: 19 barrels, 47% new (American and Russian), 26% one year old, 27% two-four years old.

Barrel Time: 21 months

Date Bottled: August 22, 2006

Release Date: January 13, 2007

VINEYARD

Location: East of central Livermore Valley, planted on the leavings of the Arroyo Mocho riverbed.

Soil: Mixed, predominantly riverbed gravel with small amounts of clay on the northern end of the site.

Training: Vertical Shoot Position (VSP) trellis. Vines are planted in a 6' x 6' configuration.

GROWING SEASON

Rainfall: 14.13 inches.

Bloom: May

Weather: Wet winter led to mild early Spring. Less than 1 inch of rain from April to September. Temperate summer, an average July and August temperature of about 89°. Yield of Barbera was lower than in 2005.

ARTWORK

"Georgia on My Mind" is an original collage created by Connie Weddell in 1966. Connie is the late mother of our good friend, Doug Weddell. Connie painted many watercolors over the years, but this is her only collage. It depicts a country road in Georgia. We are honored to have it on our first Collector's Circle release of 2007.