

THE  
**STEVEN KENT**  
WINERY

*2003 Cabernet Sauvignon*  
LIVERMORE VALLEY

The 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon, Livermore Valley, our seventh vintage, is a 100% Cabernet offering made from fruit grown on the McGrail and Home Ranch vineyards.

Though somewhat tight aromatically, with aeration this wine shows a beautiful integration of oak, black cherry, tar, and cassis. In the mouth, the wine's silky mouthfeel gives way to soft tannins and balancing acidity that carry the myriad flavors to a long conclusion.

Each vineyard was vinified separately and put into 75% new oak barrels for 16 months. A strict selection of barrels resulted in the final blend which went back into oak for another eight months before bottling.

#### **HISTORY**

The Steven Kent Winery was started in 1996 with the planting of our vineyard site and a mission to produce distinctive Cabernet from the Livermore Valley that could compete in quality with any other appellation. Our first vintage – 1996 – was released three years later to much acclaim, setting a quality benchmark for Cabernet from Livermore.

Though not beholden to 100% Cabernet wines, desiring instead to produce the best possible offering, most of our releases have been varietally pure. Our experience working with Livermore Valley fruit has shown this varietal, grown here, to be a hallmark of both complexity and grace.

#### **VINTAGE**

**Harvest Date:** October 2003

**Fruit:** Several different clones of Cabernet (7, 8, and 15) were harvested from two different sites within a week of each other. The fruit came in with brix levels of just over 25° and a complex, ripe flavor profile. Alcohol 14.1%.

**Fermentation:** After destemming and crushing the fruit was fermented in stainless steel tanks. After a cold-soaking period, the must was inoculated with yeast. Fermentation and maceration lasted about two weeks. Malo-lactic fermentation was induced in barrel.

**Aging:** A combination of American, French, and Hungarian barrels were used. About 75% of the barrels were new, with the majority of the rest being second use barrels. A very small percentage of third use barrels were also employed.

**Time in Barrel:** 24 months

**Date Bottled:** July 26, 2006

**Release Date:** January, 2007

#### **VINEYARD**

**Location:** The Home Ranch site is about 1.5 miles west of McGrail Vineyard. Both sites are in the eastern half of the Livermore Valley appellation. The sites are 500 to 800 feet above sea level, respectively.

**Soil:** Home Ranch is planted on riverbed gravel with intrusions of clay; McGrail Vineyard is planted on sandy loam.

**Training:** Both vineyards use the Vertical Shoot Position (VSP) trellising method.

#### **GROWING SEASON**

**Rainfall:** 12.98 inches

**Bloom:** May

**Weather:** Below average rainfall in the first quarter of the year led to a very wet April (three times the average rainfall), though bloom and set were not adversely affected. Below average rainfall for the rest of the year coupled with dramatic swings in temperature, especially in the heart of the growing season resulted in one of the most challenging growing years for us.