



Fratelli Perata Winery

2000 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, ESTATE

The 2000 vintage at Fratelli Perata again demonstrates how the flavors held in the small Cabernet Sauvignon clusters can be transformed into a luscious glass of wine. The westside of Paso Robles is deservedly well known as a premium red wine producing area. With hillside vineyards located in the Templeton Gap, with dry farming the vines, with new French and American oak barrels to balance big fruit flavors, we've produced a beautiful millennium Cabernet Sauvignon.

By the way, let's explain dry farming. We know if the vines are watered during the late summer, the berries in the clusters swell. This causes the skin/pulp ratio to fall, reducing color and flavor, but giving more juice. If the vines are watered mid-summer, the canopy grows, shading the clusters, which reduces color and mature flavors. Vines are often watered during the dormant season, after harvest and winter, to supplement "normal" rainfall. Before the leaves fall, this builds up carbohydrates in the root system, benefiting the vines. We do not water at all, except to establish young vines, or after three consecutive years of drought. We want the vines to live, but not be decorative vegetation, at the price of the final product. Balance, balance, and balance: the winemaker's tightrope.

The 2000 vintage is a blend of 3 hills of Cabernet Sauvignon. Harvesting by hand began October 8th and continued to October 21st, 2000. This enabled us to harvest each location as it reached the desired sugar/acid balance of just over Brix at 24 and pH of 3.5. The grapes were destemmed, and fermented in vats holding only 1 ½ tons. These were allowed to ferment for 16 days, punching down the cap by hand 4 times per day. At the end of this primary fermentation, the wine was pressed to 1 ½ bar in a stainless steel bladder press and moved to 30% new oak barrels.

These wines are unfinned and unfiltered. The lees were removed simply by racking the clear wine to clean barrels several times over the period of barrel aging. Neither enzymes nor other chemical magic were added to the juice to produce the soda pop clear, insipid wines commonly produced. We believe the best wines are made with excellent fruit gently handled by a winemaker who is more artist than chemist. Gino's brother (fratello), Joe, is adamant that our Cabernet Sauvignon meets his high (read: deep and rich) standards. This wine is worthy of bottle aging, allowing time to silken and meld its elements of fruit and oak.

The Cabernet was bottled on September 7, 2003. Total cases: 322. Joe has reserved his cases and offers the rest to his extensive circle of friends, our Buon' Amici. Flavorful, deep red wines pair well with juicy meats, or Pine Nut Loaf.