



Fratelli Perata Winery

2003 Merlot, Estate

Our original Merlot vines come from the old standby clone everyone in California planted in the 1980's, not any choice at the time. Then in the 1990's, premium clones from Bordeaux became available. We planted these vines and now use some for our Merlot, Wine Club Special Selection, and the rest with our "bread and butter" Merlot. This 2003 is heavier than usual, with a rich palate and fruity aromas. The new American oak it aged in is integrating with the wine, and it is approachable now, but will benefit from 3 to 7 more years of bottle age. As with most of our wines, the guideline is to pick your moment, it will be good. Just had the 1992 Merlot with PanOlivo's cassoulet. Excellent. Younger wines require fuller flavored foods. Just remember, we still have 2 kids in college, so don't wait too long. You may note we have 2 bottlings of this vintage. The 2003 vintage is strikingly similar to the 1988, which was one of California's best. Due to its depth, small berry size and our not filtering the wines, we tested a group of barrels for extended barrel aging. So far, so good! Look for the later bottling in the tasting room Fall, 2007. Pair with all things mushroom and especially Parmigiano Reggiano, as in Mushrooms au Gratin.

Harvested	September 27 -30
Brix	25.75
Fermented	In 1 ½ ton lots for 13 days, punched down 4 times per day
Pressed	To all new American oak barrels, 1.5 bar of pressure
Alcohol	13.2
TA	6
Bottled	3 barrels bottled September 9, 2006, 7 bottled May, 2007
Production	234 cases