

J. LOHR

VINEYARDS & WINES

2001
J. LOHR ESTATES
Los Osos

Paso Robles, Merlot

VINTAGE

The 2001 vintage produced some outstanding red wines. Although very similar to the vintage of 2000, we realized that the successes of 2000 required longer grape hang time to achieve optimum development of color, flavor and fragrance. So we were mentally prepared in 2001 to let our grapes ripen far beyond typical “sugar ripeness” – picking only after a flavor break was tasted. Merlot is the earliest of our Bordeaux varieties to ripen and as such was the “guinea pig” for determining phenolic and flavor maturation by tasting. In 2001 that “flavor break” occurred almost one degree Brix higher than in 2000 at just over 26 degrees Brix.

MERLOT

The 2001 release of Los Osos Merlot marks our fifth vintage from plantings of primarily French Merlot clones #181 and #314. Unlike our softer, less tannic Cabernet Sauvignon, where fermentation beyond dryness (or extended maceration) can be desirable, we have learned that twice daily tasting from the mid-point of fermentation to near dryness is critical to ensure that we press just prior to the buildup of gripping tannins, producing concentrated, yet supple Merlot. The Merlot was grown on Nacimiento-Los Osos Complex, Arbuckle-San Ysidro and Arbuckle-Positas Complex soils of our estate in Paso Robles. They are well drained but relatively poor soils with chalky or gravelly components.

TECHNICAL DATA

Origin:	Los Osos, Paso Robles Vineyard
Composition:	Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot and Petite Sirah
Brix at Harvest:	26.1° average
Total Acidity:	0.58 g/100 ml
pH at Bottling:	3.63
Alcohol:	13.9% by volume
Residual Sugar:	Dry
Vinification:	Stainless steel fermented Malolactic fermentation in stainless steel tanks
Maturation:	18 months aging in 32% New French, Hungarian and American oak barrels Three months bottle age
Bottling Dates:	June 2003

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

The 2001 vintage of Los Osos Merlot is dark, purple-red in color with complex red and black fruit aromas of black currants, black cherry, blueberry, plum and violet with a bouquet of vanilla, mocha, roasted nuts and toast. A soft, yet generous wine with a sweet texture full of blackberries, mulberries and black currants with brown spices from the barrel aging, make the 2001 Merlot drinkable now, but with the complexity and structure to develop beautifully with extended bottle aging.