

J. LOHR

ESTATES

FLAVOR SECOND TO NONE

2006 J. LOHR *ESTATES* Los Osos Merlot, Paso Robles

VINTAGE

The 2006 vintage saw a return to below average rainfall for Paso Robles, and with it came smaller vine canopies, smaller clusters and smaller berries in our Bordeaux varietals. In the case of Merlot, we not only had a very strong vintage in 2006, but we also welcomed a significant amount of fruit from J. Lohr's vineyards located along Creston Road. Finally, we were blessed with no significant heat events after veraison, and had very mild weather conditions straight through harvest. This allowed sugar, flavor and tannin ripeness to simultaneously come together to produce Merlot full of bold and generous varietal and regional expression. The fruit reached optimal maturity over a period of three weeks, with harvest beginning September 11th and finishing October 4th.

MERLOT

Traditionally, we harvest our estate-grown Merlot grapes across a range of sugar ripeness. The early picks usually capture the classic varietal definition of Merlot, while the fruit harvested later adds depth and intensity to the wine. Clone and rootstock combinations and soil variation add complexity to our J. Lohr Estates Los Osos Merlot. We grow our Merlot grapes in Nacimiento-Los Osos, Arbuckle-San Ysidro and Arbuckle-Positas complex soils on our Los Osos vineyard in Paso Robles, where these well-drained but relatively poor soils have chalky or gravelly components.

TECHNICAL DATA

Origin: Los Osos, Paso Robles vineyard

Composition: 82% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4.5% Cabernet Franc, 3.3% Malbec, 2.7% Petit Verdot and 2.5% Petite Sirah

Brix at harvest: 24.2 - 27.9° Brix

Total acidity: 0.69 g/100 ml

pH at bottling: 3.52

Alcohol: 13.87% by volume

Residual sugar: Dry

Vinification: Stainless steel fermented. Malolactic in barrel, racked and blended after fermentation

Maturation: 16 months aging in 30% new American and Hungarian oak barrels

Bottling date: March 2007

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

The 2006 J. Lohr Estates Los Osos Merlot has a dark plum red color with purple hues. The aroma is dominated by blueberry, raspberry and cherry fruit and layered with lifted spicy, cedary oak. The palate is greeted by an array of red fruits similar to those on the nose, with tar, cedar and forest floor adding complexity. The wine has a full mid-palate and finish that carries the wine through, with a lingering hint of fruit and licorice spice. This wine would be ideal with roasted beef or lamb with a berry-based reduction sauce. Enjoy now or within ten years.

Jeff Meier, winemaker