



## THE ULTIMATE EXPRESSION OF FLAVOR

### 2003 J. LOHR *Hilltop Vineyard* Paso Robles, Cabernet Sauvignon

#### VINTAGE

September 22<sup>nd</sup> was the first day of harvest for Hilltop Vineyard blocks 55 and 56. 2003 was a year for very low rainfall, producing modest yields and very tiny Cabernet berries. Particularly in the Hilltop blocks, we are trying to provide dappled--not direct--sunlight on the fruit to protect the anthocyanin pigment from damaging high temperatures. In the Hilltop Vineyard, we harvested purely based on flavor -- with Steve Carter and Daniel Shaw tasting fruit in the vineyard every couple of days. Ripeness came quickly with warm September weather turning the seeds and peduncle (stem of the grape bunch) a nutty brown with easily extractable skin pigment and a soft berry pulp. Our final grape chemistry was Cabernet Sauvignon harvested at over 26.2 degrees Brix with excellent depth of color and beautiful ripe red fruit aromatics.

#### TECHNICAL DATA

Origin: J. Lohr Hilltop Vineyard, Paso Robles, San Luis Obispo County

Composition: 95% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2.5% Cabernet Franc, 1.5% Malbec, 1% Petit Verdot

Harvest Dates: September 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2003

Process: Harvested early afternoon, destemmed and crushed to stainless steel fermenters

Harvest Numbers: 26.2° Brix average, pH=3.84, Total Acidity 0.49 g/100 ml

Vinification:

Yeast: Lalvin D254

Fermentation: Stainless steel fermented

Temperature: To 90°F

Extended Maceration: 9 days

Malolactic: Inoculation and completion in new French oak barrels

Maturation: 20 months in 100% new French oak barrels

Barrel Type: 83% new French oak Bordeaux Chateau Ferré-style barrels (60.9 gallons), 17% second fill French oak barrels

Forests: Center of France

Coopers: Tonnellerie Sylvain, Libourne, Demptos, St. Caprais de Bordeaux, Seguin Moreau, Margaux, Merpins, Taransaud, Cognac, Tonnellerie Bossuet, Bordeaux

Post-Maturation: Racked from barrels, unfiltered to bottle

Bottling Numbers:

pH: 3.61

Total Acidity: 0.72g/100ml

Alcohol: 14.5% by volume

Res. Sugar: Dry

#### WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

Very dark, youthful red-purple in color, the 2003 vintage of J. Lohr Hilltop Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon has elegant aromas of black cherries, blackberries and black currants, with a bouquet of mint and toasty oak. The 2003 Hilltop Cabernet is a plump, mouthful of wine with a suppleness and ample texture and balance, reminiscent of Bordeaux's finest Cabernet Sauvignon-based wines with the structure to age for 10 to 15 years. Enjoy with rosemary-infused lamb, beef bourguignon, and rich vegetable stews.

*Jeff Meier, vice president of winemaking*