

ABEJA



2004 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

HARVEST DATES: October 5, 2004 – November 5, 2004

VARIETAL COMPOSITION: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

VINEYARD SOURCES: Sagemoor Bacchus & Dionysus, Hedges Red Mountain, Katherine Leone

APPELLATION: Columbia Valley

OAK COMPOSITION: 100% French, medium toast; 60% new, 40% one & two year old

BARREL AGING: 20 months

CHEMISTRY: Alc. 14.5%, pH 3.75, TA .54 g/100ml

BOTTLING DATE: June 28-29, 2006; **RELEASE DATE:** March 1, 2007

OPTIMUM TIME FOR CONSUMPTION: Through 2017

I had hoped that the growing season of 2004 wasn't going to be as warm as it was in 2003. But I hadn't hoped for the other extreme, which was to start the year with a January cold spell that caused bud, cane, and trunk damage in our two estate vineyards. After these damaging temperatures, we were fortunate that not all of our estate fruit was lost. Additionally, we have built strong relationships with our growers, who grow fruit for us in other quality areas of Eastern Washington. Geographical diversity and strong working partnerships make it possible for us to produce exceptional Cabernet Sauvignon even from more difficult vintages.

With the exception of the Walla Walla Valley portion of the blend, which usually makes up twenty-five to thirty-five percent of the total, the fruit sources are similar to the previous three vintages. Slightly over fifty percent comes from our friends at Sagemoor Farms and their Bacchus and Dionysus vineyards, thirty percent is grown on Red Mountain, and the balance is from the Wahluke Slope.

From the beginning, at Abeja, a primary focus in our cellar has been evaluating how each of our vineyards responds to different barrel types and with the 2004 Cabernet, we have made a lot of progress pairing our vineyards with the best coopers.

I am very proud of this wine and feel it is one of our best examples of classic Washington State Cabernet. It is opulent, powerful, and full-bodied, with great balance and those signature Abeja qualities of finesse, femininity, and continuity. A complex mosaic of aromatics, rich fruit, and spice enters your palate and continues with a smooth, seamless texture throughout, with an exceptional, long finish. It has everything we look for in a Cabernet from our region.

Recently filling the freezer with really nice, grass-fed beef has rekindled my fondness for this meat. I recommend an extra-thick cut covered with mushrooms. Pascal Sauton of Carafe Restaurant in Portland, Oregon paired this wine with braised pork cheeks and green lentil salad, which was a perfect match. One last thought on beef: a simple patty on artisan bread (I like to shape the patty to the bread) with fresh greens is hard to beat.

For this wine, the music pairings echo the food. I am thinking Charlie Pride's *Burger and Fries* or Jimmy Buffet's *Cheese Burger in Paradise* or Frank Zappa's *Calling any Vegetable*. We need dessert too, so how about Spinal Tap's *Cups and Cakes*. Enjoy the 2004 Cabernet and happy eating!

John Abbott—*Winemaker*