



# 2004 Hilltop Reserve Syrah



### *Vineyard Notes*

Located on a mountainside high above Dry Creek Valley, the rocky soils of Paolo's Vineyard produces intensely flavored grapes at naturally low yields. The hilltop of Paolo's Vineyard always produces the most powerful wine, and its exceptional quality in 2004 merited a reserve bottling. Using sustainable practices and organic materials, we farm our estate vineyards without chemical fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides.

Yields were pushed lower in 2004 due to the cold, wet, dark spring of 2003 (grape bunches are formed internally the spring before they emerge). Our regulated deficit irrigation practices caused the individual grapes to be much smaller thus even more intensely flavored. Given the smaller number of bunches with smaller berries in 2004, we were further rewarded with wonderfully mild and even summer temperatures—the harvest was our earliest on record. What a spectacular year!

### *Winemaker's Notes*

In our newly-built estate winery, not even 50 yards from our vineyards, the Syrah grapes were destemmed but not crushed, carefully hand sorted, and held in stainless steel for a three-day cold soak. The ten-day whole berry fermentation was conducted in open-top tanks to highlight complex flavors on the palate. After a gentle pressing, the wine aged for 24 months in French oak barrels. Unfined and unfiltered.

### *Tasting Notes*

The aroma of the 2004 Hilltop Reserve Syrah opens with deep, rich blackberry and cherry underpinned by bittersweet chocolate, espresso, and bacon. Black pepper and clove hint at its spicy complexity. The full-bodied palate balances the huge, luscious fruit with a velvety firmness. This wine carries the hallmarks of Montemaggiore: rich and mouth-filling yet elegant, with well integrated oak, smooth tannins and a long finish.

Montemaggiore Syrah will improve with time in your cellar. If opened within the first few years of release, we suggest you decant it for an hour or two.

### *Technical Data*

Varietal Blend .....	95% Syrah 5% Cabernet
Average Sugar at Harvest .....	27.1° Brix
Alcohol .....	14.8%
Cooperage .....	100% French
Percentage New Oak.....	67%
Harvest Date.....	Sept 9, 2004
Bottling Date .....	Sept 2006
Cases Produced .....	150
Optimum Consumption .....	2009-2017
Suggested Retail Price .....	\$45 per bottle