



2004 CLARET Carmody McKnight Vyd

Appellation: Paso Robles

pH: 3.44

Alcohol by volume: 14.51

T.A.: 0.66 g / 100mL

R.S.: 0.15 %

Malic Acid: 0.02 g / L

Lactic Acid: 0.65 g / L

Produced and Bottled by:

Kenneth Volk Vineyards

www.volkwines.com

2004 Claret, Carmody McKnight Vineyard

“Claret” is an old English term for a red Bordeaux wine (as opposed to a specific appellation of origin or a varietal specific wine). We’ve chosen this Medieval name for our 2004 red wine, in lieu of calling it “co-fermented red wine from classic red Bordeaux varieties.” It is, in fact, a vineyard designate of 39% Cabernet Franc, 33% Merlot, and 28% Cabernet Sauvignon.

The Carmody McKnight Vineyard is located in western Paso Robles on Chimney Rock Road in the rain shadow of the Santa Lucia Coastal mountain range. The soil profile of this vineyard site is unusual in that it has volcanic red loam topsoil over calcareous clay subsoil.

The grapes from this site are capable of producing darkly pigmented, well structured wines with complex flavors. The 2004 vintage started off very promisingly with a uniform bud break and uniform shoot growth on all canes. Unfortunately the Paso Robles’ Westside growing region suffered from a late spring freeze that destroyed much of the potential crop.

Historically, Kenneth Volk Vineyards would harvest each grape variety we purchase from this ranch separately to ensure optional maturation. However, it was evident that our allocated rows were not going to produce very much fruit in 2004. We made the decision to let the fruit hang in hopes of harvesting all varietals at the same time in order provide enough fruit to adequately fill an open-top fermentor.

Merlot typically ripens earlier than the Cabernet Sauvignon with Cabernet Franc generally coming in later. We chose to harvest all three varieties when the Merlot was just slightly overripe, the Cabernet Sauvignon was at optimal ripeness, and the Cabernet Franc had reached seed maturity and adequate Brix levels.

Each variety was picked separately and weighed to determine the percentage of each in the cuvée. The fruit was then destemmed and partially crushed into an open-top fermentor. We used ICV D-254 yeast to inoculate the must after an overnight cold soak. During fermentation, the must received a combination of hand punchdowns and pumpovers twice a day to maximize extraction. Several rack and return drainings were performed mid-fermentation for seed and jack stem removal, and to ensure complete cap-wetting.

Following cap-fall, the tank was drained and pressed. Free run and press wine was combined and settled for 2 days prior to barreling down. A combination of Demptos, Seguin Moreau and Vicard Bordeaux barrels were used to age the wine.

The resulting 2004 Claret has aromas of ripe cherry, blackberries and clove. Rich fruit flavors of cherry and plum are followed by generous tannins and a long finish. The bright fruit, low pH, and excellent structure of this wine make it a candidate for extended cellaring. We recommend serving with rich cuts of meat, grilled poultry or with pasta.