



2006 Cabernet Franc

Appellation: Paso Robles

**Varietal: 97% Cabernet Franc
3% Merlot**

pH: 3.55

Alcohol by volume: 14.8%

T.A.: 0.66 g/L

R.S.: 0.07 %

Malic Acid: 9mg/100ml

Produced and Bottled by:

Kenneth Volk Vineyards

5230 Tepusquet Road

Santa Maria, CA 93454

www.volkwines.com

Winemaker's Notes

Growing Season and Variety

2006 was a remarkable vintage that seems to have been underrated, having been sandwiched between the exceptional and abundant vintages of 2005 and 2007 in Paso Robles. What set 2006 apart from the prior and subsequent vintage was that it was a smaller crop, and the exceptionally cool September provided several additional weeks of hang time, allowing for gradual maturation of Bordeaux varieties. The fruit for this bottling came from the Carmody McKnight Vineyard and the Starr Ranch Vineyard, both located in western Paso Robles. Cabernet Franc's ability to make stand-alone wines seems to be under-appreciated in comparison to Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. This is a bit ironic since modern DNA genetic analysis indicates that Cabernet Franc is a parent to both Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Unlike its offspring, Cabernet Franc is more site-specific as to where it will display its true potential. Cabernet Franc is probably best known for being a major component in the world class wines of the Grand Cru Château Cheval Blanc and Château Ausone of Bordeaux's Saint Émilion AOC as well as the Super Tuscan Sassicaia of Tenuta San Guido.

In the Cellar:

Each vineyard's fruit was picked by hand, transported to the winery in refrigerated truck trailers and fermented and aged as a separate lot. The Starr Ranch fruit was crushed and destemmed into 1.5 ton open top fermentors and inoculated with a combination of D-254 and Assmanshausen yeast strains. The cap was punched down two to six times daily over the course of a ten-day fermentation. The Carmody McKnight fruit was crushed and destemmed into an insulated tank and saw several days of cold soak prior to inoculation with Assmanshausen yeast. The tank was pumped over using a Toad pinwheel irrigator in combination with a Mazzei air injector for the first two days post yeast inoculation to provide ample oxygen during the lag phase of the yeast growth. As fermentation started in earnest the tanks were pumped over two to four times daily. At mid-fermentation the tank received several screened Aussi-style rack and returns for seed and jack stem removal. Near the end of fermentation pumpovers were decreased to once a day. Fermentation was followed by a two week maceration to help soften and integrate the sustainable tannins of this wine. Both vineyard lots were pressed in a Hypac basket press and allowed to settle several days prior to barreling down. A mixture of new, two and four-year-old Bordeaux cooperage of Vicard, Demptos and Seguin Moreau was employed for cellaring. Aged for 22 months prior to bottling, Merlot from Carmody McKnight Vineyard was used as the primary topping wine for these lots.

In The Glass

This tightly wound wine displays aromas and flavors of mint, cocoa, anise, cranberry, raspberry, orange peel, red pimiento and culinary sage. The firm mid-palate tannins and clean lactic finish of this wine make it a great pairing with rich cuts of beef, rosemary-seasoned lamb, roast duck, spicy carnitas and chicken mole.