



## 2004 TEMPRANILLO JOHN SMITH VINEYARD

Appellation: San Benito County

pH: 3.75%

Alcohol by volume: 14.5%

T.A.: 068 g/100ml

R.S.: .02%

Produced and bottled by:

Kenneth Volk Vineyards

5230 Tepusquet Road

Santa Maria, CA 93454

[www.volkwines.com](http://www.volkwines.com)

### Winemaker's Notes

Tempranillo is the quintessential indigenous red grape of Spain, and has been grown in the Spanish wine regions of La Rioja and the Ribera del Duero since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. A large-clustered variety with medium-sized, thick-skinned berries, Tempranillo can also have large shoulder wing sub-clusters and very distinct, purplish-blue colored berries at maturity.

The John Smith Vineyard is located east of Hollister, California in the San Juan Valley, and is owned and managed by Ron Siletto. Originally an apricot orchard, the property was replanted to Tempranillo, Pinot Grigio, and a small block of Graciano by Ron in the 1990's. Although more than 30 miles from the coast, this property is a very cold vineyard site situated directly east of Moss Landing on Monterey Bay and the six mile deep Monterey Canyon abyss. The Monterey Canyon's deep, cold water is a dramatic cold sink moderating the climate dramatically in this region, which is the primary reason for the near-constant fog along the coastline of Monterey and Santa Cruz in the summertime. The soils of the John Smith Vineyard were rendered from the sedimentation of an ancient freshwater lake, and the topsoil is a gravelly loam above a rocky clay subsoil.

The Tempranillo is planted on its own roots and is trained to a bilateral spur-pruned cordon with catch wires to vertically position shoot growth. In comparison to most other wine grape cultivars, Tempranillo tends to have relatively low acidity and an elevated pH. The first time I worked with this vineyard in 2004, the decision was made to try to utilize many of the traditional production techniques of old school Rioja. After hand-harvesting, the fruit was destemmed and only partially crushed into 1.5 ton, open-top fermentors. Following a day of cold soaking, the fermentors were inoculated with T-73, a Rioja yeast selection. The cap was punched down by hand two to four times per day, and primary fermentation lasted approximately nine days. The fermentors were then dry-iced and sealed for an additional week of post-fermentation maceration.

Following basket pressing, free run and press fractions were combined and gross-settled for several days prior to barreling down. A mixture of new Hungarian, new American and neutral French Burgundy-shaped cooperage was used to age this wine. The wine was racked twice, egg white fined and coarse filtered during its 30-month barrel aging prior to bottling.

The finished wine is garnet-colored with aromatics of red-berried fruits, vanilla, lavender, and cocoa. On the palate, the wine is soft, with a silky, lactic mouth feel and flavors of plum, strawberry, and mocha. This medium-bodied wine can be paired with a wide variety of cuisine such as; herbed pastas with carbonara or marinara sauces, egg-based dishes such as quiche or frittatas, or hearty meals of lamb, rabbit, duck confit, or osso buco.