



## **2003 MERITAGE**

### **Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wine - "90 POINTS – ONE PUFF"**

*March 2007*

The near-even mix of the top two varietals (Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon) in the blend gives this wine both succulence and admirable depth. Notes of black cherries, currants, briar and oak join in the fairly rich mix, and that same ripe, layered personality shows up in the mouth as well. The wine enters with Merlot's supple texture but then takes on the hard, grippy astringency of Cabernet at the back.

---

### **Colorado Wine News**

*January - March 2007*

Aged for 24 months in French and American oak, it is still a bit closed but has inviting aromas of smoky oak, blackberry, black cherry, currant, raspberry, white pepper, and cinnamon. All repeat as big, clean flavors laced with significant tannin and finish medium-broad and very long with a dollop of bitter oak in the middle at the back which doesn't detract when pairing the wine with food. Medium-bodied, well balanced, structured, and integrated, and it goes well with food. Good.

---

### **San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition 2007**

**GOLD MEDAL**

---

### **New World International Wine Competition 2007**

**GOLD MEDAL**

---

## 2002 MERITAGE

### **Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wine - "89 POINTS – ONE PUFF"**

*April 2006*

Very attractive in a softer, rounder style as befits its high percentage of Merlot, this medium-full-bodied bottling shows equally well on the palate as it does in its inviting aromas and finds its rounded mouthfeel nicely firmed up by a streak of solidifying tannin. Its cherry and currant character makes it one to consider even now, but its finishing astringency promises that it will age well for several years.

---

### **San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition 2006**

**GOLD MEDAL**

---

## 2000 MERITAGE

### **Wine Enthusiast - "89 POINTS"**

*Best of the Year 2003*

Approximately 70% Merlot, and the flavors follow suit: black cherries, plums and hints of dried herbs, picking up notes of coffee and chocolate. It's supple and easy to drink, finishing with some soft tannins.

---

### **Tastings.com - "88 POINTS" – HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

*October – December 2003*

---

### **Colorado Wine News – EDITORS' CHOICE**

*October – December 2003*

A blend of 70% merlot, 13% cabernet franc, 12% cabernet sauvignon, and 5% petit verdot. It spent 16 months in French and American oak and has a complex, soft bouquet of blackberry, plum, tobacco, sweet tar, chocolate, and toast. All repeat with the addition of licorice as rich, mouthfilling flavors laced with nice acidity and very ripe, smooth tannins. The finish is long and medium-broad for this excellently balanced, well integrated and structured wine which has nice depth and layers of flavors. It is easily and enjoyably drinkable now but will be even better with a few more years in the bottle. Very good. **BEST WINE**

---

### **North of the Gate Wine Competition 2003**

**GOLD MEDAL**

---

## **San Francisco Chronicle**

*April 15, 2004*

"The Chronicle's Wine selections"

### **Panel picks from 24 Sonoma County red Bordeaux-style and Meritage blends from 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002.**

Cassis, black cherry, baked prune and plum, coffee, mocha, toffee and cedar nose; similar flavors that are integrated; soft and generous on mid-palate; pronounced oak on the finish.

Price: \$28, Body: Full, Dryness: Dry

---

## **Santé**

*May 2004*

Full bodied and complex with red- and black-berry fruit, tobacco, chocolate, and herbal, earthy notes; bell pepper and black pepper finish. Roast beef.

---

## **Tasters Guild**

*October 2003*

**Wow!** Vigorous black fruit notes, spices, cigar box and vanillin oak in the exciting flavors. Moderate tannins suggest laying down as the flavors mix well with cassis, cherries and oak. A well seasoned skirt steak.

---

## **Indiana Living by Jill Ditmire**

*November 19, 2003*

**Wow.** Huge nose of ripe black cherries, tobacco and smoked plums. Rich, tooth-purpling concentrated wine with chewy fruit tannins and flavors of blackberries and smoke. Serve with bold food – smoked turkey, venison, pheasant and steaks.

---

## **Atlanta Homes & Lifestyles - "THE DEAL"**

*March 2004*

by *Elizabeth McDonald*

"Seeing Red Beyond Basic, These Red Blends Are Tops"

With 70% Merlot, some Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot (all Dry Creek Valley fruit) this rich, well-balanced mélange is representative of a commitment to excellence. The nose presents layers of spice and fruit with a hint of tobacco and earthiness. Red and black fruits explode in the first sip with jammy plum and tart black cherry. The supple finish is sprinkled with hints of smoke and pepper making for a strong but sophisticated ending. A perfect gift to give – or receive.

---

## **USA Today**

*January 9, 2004*

*Slips: by Jerry Shriver*

Red wines that merit a mention.

Here are some red Bordeaux-style blends I have found to be consistently enjoyable and are worth the search. Retail prices are approximate; Meritage wines are noted:

Dry Creek Vineyard Meritage, Dry Creek Valley, \$28

---

## **Louise Owens**

DALLAS MORNING NEWS

*February 4, 2004*

Rethink Sonoma when looking for a new red.

Napa, Napa, Napa seems to be the mantra for anyone looking for red wines from California. But try a sip of Dry Creek Vineyard Dry Creek Valley Meritage 2000 (\$20) and you might change your tune.

Founded in 1972 by winemaker David Stare, Dry Creek Vineyard was the first winery to open in Sonoma after Prohibition. Well known for white wines, the winery also has some gems in its red wine department. Mr. Stare has long been involved with the Meritage Society, a wine industry group devoted to the art of blending red wines in the traditional Bordeaux fashion, and began producing his own Meritage in 1988.

The 2000 Meritage is a superb blend of mostly merlot with cabernet franc, cabernet sauvignon and petit verdot. Deep purple with a warm cassis and mushroom nose and hints of eucalyptus, it's an elegant wine with soft tannins and a long, rich, black cherry-infused finish. Perfect for a chilly evening served alongside lamb chops or filet mignon.

---

## **Ben and Sheila Bodenstein - COMFORT WINES**

*August – September 2003*

A Meritage is a wine that is a blend of several varieties, with cabernet sauvignon usually being the major constituent. This is a Meritage that has been crafted to fit the American palate. The aroma is a compendium of interesting sensations, running from black cherries to tobacco to cedar. The flavor accents dark berries and cassis with a whole series of underflavors running from chocolate to mint. There is also a mineral quality in this wine that carries over to the long finish. The best word to describe this wine is elegant, and that is exactly what it is, an elegant, well crafted and thoroughly enjoyable wine.

---