

PALMINA

Savoia

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, 2006



Wines crafted from a single grape varietal are often a sublime and perfect expression of the grape, the vineyard and the vintage. And they pair exquisitely with specific foods and cuisines. Wine blends are designed to have the grapes work in concert with each other – each lending their own particular strengths and uniqueness to the final outcome. Neither is better than the other – they each bring their own personality to the table. But, a blend that includes the noble Nebbiolo? Hardly ever.

Consider though, the meaning of the word “blend”. Merging, bringing together, intermingling. Lovely words like *mélange*, harmony, *misto*. And wine-speak like *cuvée* and the “marrying of flavors”. But with Nebbiolo?? Yes, Savoia is a blend of Nebbiolo, Barbera and Syrah. The name is a combination of history, tradition and modern winemaking. And the fusion of the different aromas, flavors, tannins, acids and structure of the three varietals can truly be called harmonious. As Nebbiolo specialists, it might seem odd to find the Cliftons using the alluring Nebbiolo as the linchpin in a blend. But to them, this is simply another expression of the finesse and power of the grape. And one which lends itself to being ready to enjoy earlier and with an expanded range of options for the table.

The name and logo are also a mingling of past and present history. In the 1400's, the House of Savoy reigned over both the Piemonte region of Italy and the Rhone valley, and so perhaps the noble Nebbiolo, table friendly Barbera and French Syrah had met before during that long and peaceful reign. The melding of the Palmina logo with the shield of the House of Savoy ties the story and the wine together.

The final blend includes 50% Nebbiolo and 25% each Barbera and Syrah. 2006 was a semi-drought year that produced smaller than normal crop yields with clusters and berries of petite, intense flavors. A year and a half later, a barrel selection of each varietal was made and the 2006 Savoia blend made and put back to barrel to integrate and marry. The finished wine was bottled the following Spring and allowed an additional six months of bottle aging prior to release.

Savoia is a wine where the aromas, flavors and textures build on each other. Like an orchestra that begins with one instrument and note, Savoia first entices with red raspberry aromas, which then mingle with floral notes of violet and then hints of tea. The up-front tannins are fine, dusty and layer in reminders of rhubarb and bramble before an explosion of black cherry, clove spice and pomegranate coats the palate. A crescendo of flavors from all three grape varietals – blackberries, currants, spice, earth – are lifted by a vivacious acidity and a persistent finish of dried cranberry uniting with a lingering potpourri perfume. A sensual treat.

One of Palmina's finest, the 2006 Savoia is finished with a traditional wax seal. It is delightful upon release and will continue to evolve and integrate with 5-7 years of cellaring. Please enjoy with food and a full table of friends and family!