



MADRÓN A

2010 Barbera – Hillside Collection

Hillside Barbera

Barbera, known for its great berry fruit and high acidity, is an Italian variety most famously coming from the northern part of Italy in Piedmont. In California, wineries let the crop hang for further ripening to allow the acidity to drop to a palatable level. Fruit characters are riper, with dark cherry and dried fruit aspects dominating. At our 3,000 ft elevation, the fruit characters are fresher with high-tone cranberry mixed in with the cherry and blackberry, making a rich, ageworthy wine of exceptional quality.

The Vineyards

Although we have been producing Nebbiolo for many years off of our Enyé and Sumu Kaw vineyards, these wines have been used exclusively for blending into our Nebbiolo program. The grapes for this Barbera, however, were grown at our neighbor's ranch, the Cardanini's. The vines are grafted on to a drought-resistant rootstock with the same clone of Barbera we use in Pleasant Valley. With a vertical shoot-positioned trellising system and carrying a good crop, this vineyard naturally balances its acidity level in the fruit letting the winery focus merely on the freshness of the fruit and tannin levels. Copious amounts of leaf removal gives us fruit that is uniformly ripened and a joy with which to work.

The 2010 Vintage

This has to be one of the nicest domestic Barberas I have ever tasted. Fresh and inviting, there is no aspect of over-ripeness that sometimes hampers California Barbera. The nose is intense with raspberry and cranberry, dark cherry and blackberry, and a whole layer of spice that's too complex for me to even dissect. Instead, I'm content to just absorb the interesting cohesion of the wine while anticipating the palate. Although with its freshness one might expect a boatload of acidity, the wine is amazingly lush with a full-body and rounded tannins. But I wouldn't call this wine fat! This Barbera is balanced with tart cherry and ripe blueberry with just a hint of smoky spice. The tannins are exceptionally rounded for such a young wine, promising a great lifetime of aging.

Suggested Food Pairings

Fresh and rich, this Barbera is meant for summertime barbeque. That's not to say a great stew in winter won't showcase the wine, but think now grilled meats with great seasonings (with salt!).

Facts

Appellation: El Dorado

Cardanini Vineyards (our neighbor)

Blend: 100% Barbera

Fermentation: An extended skin contact, with one pump-over or "rack and return" daily until dry

Bottled: July 14th, 2011

Alcohol: 13.9%

pH: 3.54

TA: 0.62 /100ml

Production: 246 cases

Suggested Retail Price: \$20.00