

# *2001 Dashe Cellars*

## *Cabernet Sauvignon Alexander Valley*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This is the first Cabernet Sauvignon that we have ever released at Dashe Cellars and we were lucky to start out with the 2001 vintage—one of the most highly acclaimed vintages for Cabernet Sauvignon in the past decade.

Our Cabernet Sauvignon is a great example of why the winemaking philosophy of Dashe Cellars works for intense red wines. Since we combine both French and American winemaking techniques—both Michael and Anne have worked in top Bordeaux wineries such as Ch. Lafite-Rothschild and Ch. La Dominique, and Michael has worked in Cabernet producers such as Ridge Vineyards and Far Niente—we were able to extract the intensity of flavor and aroma of a California Cabernet Sauvignon but with a complexity, subtlety, and lush texture of a more European wine. It truly is an example of “the iron fist in a velvet glove,” showing wonderfully intense Cabernet flavors, along with a perfumed aroma, layers and layers of fruit and spice, and a long, complex finish. This is a wine that you can enjoy now but can also lay down for many years in your cellar where it will improve significantly with age.

The grapes were grown on one of our favorite vineyards in Alexander Valley—the Todd Brothers Ranch—on a spectacular red rock slope above the town of Geyserville. This rocky environment makes the vines struggle and limits the production to less than 3 tons per acre, resulting in wines of greater intensity and complexity. In 2001, a long and mild Indian summer allowed the grapes to ripen slowly and evenly, resulting in a perfect balance between fruit intensity and acidity.

### **PRODUCTION**

The grapes were crushed into our smallest fermentation tank (1500 gallons) and allowed to slowly start fermentation using the native yeasts, in essence creating a “cold soak” period where the wine develops its most intense color and flavor. During fermentation the temperature was allowed to get above 90° F, to aid in the extraction of color and flavor. We let the wine stay on the fermented skins for 23 days, at which time we pressed the grapes in a gentle membrane press so as not to extract dry or harsh tannins.

We aged the wine was aged for 15 months in 100% French oak barrels, with about 30% of the wine aged in new oak. Every three months we raked the wine out of barrel to clarify the wine and aid in its development. In our blending trials, we found ourselves creating a classic “Bordeaux blend,” including Petit Verdot, Merlot, and Malbec in the final blend. We fined the wine with egg whites to remove harsh tannins and give the wine a silky, velvety texture. As the wine aged in the bottle, we found the wine increasing greatly in texture and complexity, and we believe that this will be quite a long-lived wine, able to age 15 years or more.

### **PRODUCTION NOTES**

Varietals: 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot, 2.5% Petit Verdot, 2.5% Malbec  
Appellation: Alexander Valley  
Sonoma County  
Alcohol: 14.1 % by vol.  
Time in oak: 15 months  
Oak: 100% French oak; 30% new  
Production: 550 cases, 750mL

Release date: April 1, 2004  
Sugg. retail price: \$38.00 bottle  
Optimum time for consumption: 2005-2018

### **TASTING NOTES**

**Color:** Dark purple-black.  
**Aroma:** Cassis, blackberry, chocolate, black pepper, clove, vanilla  
**Taste:** Intense blackberry and cassis, ripe plum, chocolate, earthy, minerals, velvety texture in the midpalette, balanced and complex, firm tannins that soften in the finish, long sweet finish of blackberries that lasts for minutes.