

Arthur Earl
2003
Carrari Vineyard
Santa Barbara County
IL RE

- Vineyard:** The Barbera and Nebbiolo grapes for this blend are from the Carrari Vineyard located on both sides of Highway 101 just south of the town of Los Alamos. This is one of the oldest vineyards in Santa Barbara County and most likely the largest vineyard of Italian varieties, both in acreage and number of varieties. The vineyard is mostly flat with heavier soils, both of which can lead to overproduction of grapes and lower quality wine, but when farmed properly, as it is by the Lucas & Lewellen vineyard team, the result can be excellent, as we have seen in this, and our other wines, from this vineyard.
- Vinification:** The grapes are destemmed but not crushed in an attempt to have as many whole berries in the fermenters as possible. We believe this results in a slower fermentation, perhaps at lower temperatures, which prolongs the extraction of colors, flavors and tannins. We use two sizes of fermenters, the smaller holds about one and one-half tons of must (grapes and juice), while the larger holds four tons. The cap of solid materials that rises to the top of the fermenters during fermentation is punched down three to four times a day during fermentation. The must soaks on the skins in the fermenter for about twenty-four hours before yeast is added. When there is just a small amount of sugar left (about one degree brix) the wine is pressed into a stainless steel tank and allowed to settle for about one to three days. The wine is then racked off the lees into barrels to finish fermenting and begin the aging process.
- Aging:** Each variety was kept separate during aging. After racking into mostly neutral French and American oak barrels, the wines were aged in barrel for 19 months. In January, April and August the wine was racked off its lees, the barrels were washed, and the wine was returned to the barrels. This process was repeated twice more before bottling.
- Finishing:** In May, 2005, the wines were racked off their barrel lees and blended into one tank, where the new wine was fined with egg whites. It then went through a light filtration prior to bottling.
- Comments:** Barbera and Nebbiolo are Italian varieties, produced throughout the Piedmont region, and are, in fact, the most planted grapes by far in that part of Italy, and in other parts of the Northwest. Italian Barberas and Nebbiolos can be very dark in color and equally full-bodied, even heavy and acidic, but these wines produced in the coastal regions of California are more medium in color and body and softer in tannin and acidity. This blend is a full-bodied but soft-textured wine with minimal tannins and good acidity. It exhibits wonderful aromas and flavors of fruit, mostly cherry, and is a pleasant, easy drinking, red wine that is very food friendly. 222 cases made.