



DARIOUSH

2003 SIGNATURE MERLOT NAPA VALLEY

TASTING NOTES

Consistent with past vintages, the 2003 Darioush Signature Merlot maintains its distinctive style with fruit from our three estate vineyards, each providing unique flavor characteristics and textures to the finished wine.

Our Ashley and Estate vineyards near the winery provide lush black cherry fruit, fullness to the mid-palate and bittersweet chocolate nuances. Our Mt. Veeder Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, located at 1600' elevation, provide concentration and a mineral-earth texture consistent with mountain-grown fruit. A perfume of violets and blueberries is provided by small additions of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Attentive vineyard management and fruit sorting yielded nearly 30% less than previous vintages.

VINIFICATION

All lots were hand-harvested, hand-sorted and destemmed with 30% whole berry retention after slight maceration. Cold soaked for 72 hours in small fermentors. Pumped over through primary fermentation for extraction and tannin management. Pressed 28 days post-alcoholic fermentation with the pressed fraction kept separate. The vintage was racked into barrels after 48 hours of settling and aged 22 months in new French Oak. Bottled with minimal handling.

FOOD AFFINITIES

Grilled rack of lamb, spicy Italian sausage, pan-roasted duck-breast, herb-en-crustured ahi tuna and aged cheeses.

APPELLATION

Darioush Estate vineyards in Oak Knoll, Mt. Veeder and Napa Valley

VINTAGE

2003

COMPOSITION

94% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot

COOPERAGE

Aged for 22 months in new French oak, 3-year seasoned Château barrels coopered in Bordeaux from forests in the center of France, notably Tronçais

WINEMAKER

Steve Devitt

RELEASE DATE

January 2006

RELEASE PRICE

\$44.00

AVAILABILITY

812 cases