

# BLACKSTONE

## SONOMA RESERVE RUBRIC 2006

### SONOMA RESERVE

As a Sonoma-based winery for nearly 20 years, we take great pride in crafting these wines from Sonoma County's finest growers and appellations. They represent the very essence of the finest vineyards in our own backyard, giving Blackstone its signature fruit-forward style along with backbone and complexity.

Rubric is Blackstone's first signature red blend. The name Rubric is inspired by the ancient linguistic roots of the word red, paying tribute to the strong tradition of red winemaking at Blackstone. Rubric provides our winemaker, Gary Sitton, the freedom to create the finest red wine he can from Sonoma County, one that best expresses each unique vintage. Gary carefully selects the regions, vineyards, blocks, and grapes he likes best each year, and the result is Rubric.

### VINEYARDS

The majority of the grapes chosen for the 2006 vintage of Rubric were picked from Dry Creek Valley. Known for experiencing intense heat during the summer months, these vineyards yielded complex, dark fruit with full, rich texture. Dry Creek Valley fruit was complemented by fruit selected from Sonoma Coast and Sonoma Valley, where the strong maritime influence provided bright red cherry fruit with soft, supple tannins.

### WINEMAKING

The grapes were hand-harvested at optimal ripeness, for a balance of dark, sweet fruit and mature, supple tannins. The grapes were then crushed and cold soaked for 3-5 days to maximize flavor and color extraction, then pressed just prior to completing fermentation, emphasizing forward fruit characteristics. The wine was aged in a mix of French, American, and Hungarian oak barrels for 20 months.

### TASTING NOTE

The Blackstone 2006 Sonoma Reserve Rubric exhibits a dark, inky black hue, displaying aromas of black cherry, blackberry jam, cassis, cigar box, and coffee, with a hint of toasted spice. This stunning blend carries layered flavors of ripe, jammy black fruit with undercurrents of caramel, vanilla, coffee, and varietal herbaceousness. This is a concentrated wine with a rich mouthfeel and silky texture. Fine, supple tannins provide a lingering finish perfect for pairing with braised short ribs, herb-coated lamb, or dark chocolate soufflé.

### TECHNICAL DETAILS

Varietals:

*59% Cabernet Sauvignon*

*10% Merlot*

*8% Petit Verdot*

*8% Syrah*

*7% Cabernet Franc*

*6% Petite Sirah*

*2% Tannat*

Total Acidity: *5.9g/l*

pH: *3.8*

Alcohol: *14.5% alc/vol*

Cases Produced: *10,000*

Vineyard Sources:

*59% Dry Creek Valley (Hamilton Vineyard)*

*20% Sonoma Coast (Sonoma Royale Vineyard)*

*15% Sonoma Valley (Fouche Vineyard, Vadasz Vineyard)*

*6% Alexander Valley*



# A CLOSER LOOK

## FRUIT SOURCING

*Dry Creek Valley* ~ A warm interior valley of Sonoma County that has nice cool nights that bring out the acidity in the fruit, and also produce fruit with increased levels of tobacco, cedar, and spice.

*Sonoma Coast* ~ A cool growing region with a fruit profile similar to the Russian River Valley, but varying from site to site based on soil type and exposure. It adds bright red fruit and a hint of mintiness, with an overall silky texture and mouthfeel.

*Sonoma Valley* ~ A warm growing region on the northern end of Sonoma County that gets progressively cooler as you move south toward Carneros and San Pablo Bay. Produces bold reds with ripe black fruit characters of berry, cassis, and plum.

*Alexander Valley* ~ A warm interior valley of Sonoma County that produces rich, powerful reds with excellent fruit intensity and very low levels of herbaceousness.

## WINEMAKING

The fruit for the 2006 Sonoma Reserve Rubric was hand-picked at night to ensure it was delivered cold to the winery. The fruit was crushed and cold soaked for three days, then left on the skins for approximately 30 days for extended maceration. Using 100% native yeasts, Winemaker Gary Sitton allowed fermenting must to reach approximately 90°F in stainless steel tanks to ensure maximum extraction of color from the skins. The wine was then pressed, settled, and racked into barrels for malolactic fermentation. The 2006 Sonoma Reserve Rubric was 100% barrel aged to integrate oak flavors and tannins into the wine, and develop complexity from secondary aging characteristics.

## COOPERAGE

The 2006 Sonoma Reserve Rubric was 100% barrel aged for approximately 20 months in a rotation of 60% French oak, 20% Hungarian oak, and 20% American oak barrels (30% new oak). Sixty percent of the barrels were a Medium Toast, which adds vanilla and caramel aromas and flavors, as well as moderate levels of oak tannin for increased breadth and fullness of mouthfeel. Forty percent of the barrels were Medium Plus Toast barrels, which adds heavier toast characteristics such as smoke, char, toasted marshmallow, and spice.

Gary Sitton chose the following coopers for aging the 2006 Sonoma Reserve Rubric: Taransaud, François Frères, Treuil, Nadalié, Trust, B. Kadar, Canton, and TW Boswell.

*“The winemaking goal with the Sonoma Reserve Rubric is to create a fruit-forward Cabernet Sauvignon blend with unparalleled depth and richness. It has wonderful texture, traditional herbal characters, coffee, and cedar, with layers of depth and complexity from extended aging in new oak barrels.”*

*Gary Sitton, Winemaker,  
Blackstone Winery*

