



MARCUS NOTARO, Winemaker

A PASSION FOR CABERNET SAUVIGNON brought Marcus Notaro to Col Solare as winemaker with the 2003 vintage, but Notaro's history with Col Solare goes back to the beginning.

"I was working in the cellar at Chateau Ste. Michelle during the 1995 harvest, when the first vintage of Col Solare was being made there," explains Notaro. "When I taste that wine today I can still remember the best fruit that came in that year, and it's great to see how the wine has evolved in the bottle and compare it to what we're doing at the estate winery on Red Mountain today."

Notaro, who has been making red wines in Washington since 1995, is drawn to the Col Solare vision of creating a top Cabernet Sauvignon-based blend from Washington's finest fruit.

"I love the complexity of Cabernet," he says. "It makes a rich, powerful wine. It's why I'm up here on Red Mountain, home of some of the best Cabernet in the state."

As winemaker at Col Solare, Notaro manages the winemaking process from grape to bottle, working with vineyard managers and growers, overseeing winemaking regimes and carrying out blending trials. He also works with Marchesi Antinori Head Enologist Renzo Cotarella and Ste. Michelle Wine Estates Senior Vice President of Winemaking and Vineyard Operations Doug Gore to evaluate final blends of each vintage.

Notaro has developed a strong rapport with the Antinori vineyard and winemaking teams during frequent travels to the Antinori estates in Tuscany. That experience has helped him foster an international perspective that fuses both partners' winemaking philosophies into Col Solare.

Notaro continues to learn from the Antinori tradition of prioritizing quality with a goal to achieve a balanced wine with a concentration of flavors and complexity. He subscribes to the Antinori philosophy of blending wines early, based on tasting trials that begin in the vineyard. "Tasting is critical,"



he relates. "Our decisions are based on tasting first, and then on vision."

Maintaining an exacting attention to detail in the vineyard is an equally critical part of the Antinori winemaking philosophy, and one Notaro has followed at the 28-acre Col Solare estate vineyard, which is planted entirely to Italian specifications.

"Antinori's vineyards are meticulously looked after, with careful monitoring of fruit maturation – from exposure to trellising to getting the right yields on the vines, they are always looking to get more concentration from the fruit," explains Notaro.

While Notaro's experiences in Italy and in-depth knowledge of Washington winemaking guide him in fusing Washington and Tuscan winemaking styles with each vintage of Col Solare, it is Red Mountain and its fruit that provide the real inspiration.

"Everything begins in the vineyard and then it all comes together in the cellar," he says. "Basically, you need to do what the vineyard and the vintage tell you. I feel very lucky to be doing that here on Red Mountain."

COL SOLARE™ RED MOUNTAIN WINERY AND ESTATE VINEYARD

PH: 509.588.6806 | 50207 ANTINORI ROAD, BENTON CITY, WA 99320 | COLSOLARE.COM