



### THE FACTS

**Varietal Composition:** 88% Merlot & 12% Cabernet Franc

**Appellation:** Paso Robles

**Vineyard & Block:** Sculpterra Vineyards, Hillside

**Finished Alcohol:** 14.0%

**Residual Sugar(G/F):** 0.06 g/100ml

**Total Acid:** .65 g/100ml

**pH:** 3.70

**Bottling Date:** May 22, 2013

**Release Date:** November 1, 2014

**Total Production:** 176 Cases

**Retail Price:** \$32.00

### THE VINTAGE

2012 was a remarkable year for the Frankel Family Estate and Sculpterra Winery. The quality of our fruit was at an all time high! Growing conditions were outstanding, with a hot spring, a scourging summer and pleasant fall. Merlot loves the hot weather, producing wines of heightened fruity aromas and deep color in the glass. The vineyard is situated atop the Frankel Family Estate and totals just 8 acres. Vines are oriented north-south, and the soil is comprised of clay-loam mixed with limestone and stony outcroppings. We planted the vineyard in 1995 and train the vines on a trellis; vertically positioning the spurs, shoots and canes. The 2012 crop was perfect, averaging 3.0 tons per acre. The fruit was impeccably clean at harvest and the clusters were uniform. We hand harvested the fruit October 3rd and immediately took the fruit to Sculpterra for processing.

### THE WINEMAKING

The fruit was gorgeous at harvest! We saw amazing berry uniformity and very small berry size. Therefore sorting was not necessary; each cluster was a winner! The grape skins were very thick and juice was dark coming from the crusher. We cold-soaked the fruit for 2 days before yeast inculcation. We let the fruit do the talking, and consequently minimal interference was implemented during the winemaking. Fermentation lasted 12 days, before we pressed, settled and racked the wine down to barrels. We used all neutral barrel aging for this wine which allows for heighten fruit expression. The barrels were topped and tasted/evaluated every six weeks. We bottled the wine after a total of 20 months of barrel age.

### THE TASTE

Sculpterra Winery produced 176 cases of estate grown 2012 Merlot; a wine with terrific structure, a steady form, and layers of plentiful zesty flavors. The aromas feature blackberry, blueberry crisp, plum, dark chocolate, ground pepper, walnut, and vanilla. This handcrafted Merlot will age very well in the bottle, its tannic backbone and core fruit make for a wine that is ready to drink right away or after some time in the cellar. The blending with Cabernet Franc adds dusty qualities, cherry fruit and an extra coating of big tannins.

-Paul Frankel, Winemaker