

2004 CABERNET SAUVIGNONS
THE LOIN & NUCLEUS
Both from the Estelle Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley

Winemaker's Notes:

I think both of these wines are great. Having come from sections in the Estelle Vineyard not too far apart, there is definitely a kinship between the two. At the same time they are quite different. THE LOIN represents purity. It stems from a single, solitary relationship; one variety from one small patch of soil. Being all Cabernet Sauvignon, it has more spice and is earthier. In a sense, it seems more rustic, more *sauvage*. While NUCLEUS comes from a similar soil, it is comprised of more clones and has Merlot in its blend. It seems more refined. It is a wine that says, 'while the ingredients are important, so is the winemaking.' THE LOIN is the answer as to why the French use mostly Cabernet Sauvignon in Bordeaux. NUCLEUS is the answer as to why they blend.

I would say THE LOIN is actually the more approachable of the two right now. Mixed into its plum/black cherry nose is an irony, flinty quality. In the 2003 bottling, this was very iodine like, almost like blood. In 2004, it's less amplified and better integrated. The wine is super earthy, like you can almost smell those beautiful rocks that are laced in to its soil. It also has an exotic allspice and clove expression that seems to suggest somehow that the grapes have come from smack dab in the middle of the Santa Ynez Valley. The tannis are prevalent, but soft and dusty. With a steak, it's good right now.

NUCLEUS's fruit is more tightly wound up right now and its tannins are more astringent; something I attribute to the different clones of Cabernet. It may also have something to do with the fact that NUCLEUS is not so steep and the soil is a bit deeper. Why that would make the wine tighter, I am not sure, but it is a fact about the site. NUCLEUS's nose is all about boysenberry and cassis, like something you would smell in a great, dare I say, North Coast Cabernet. There is also a bit of this flintiness that THE LOIN has. If there's spice I'd say its vanilla and maybe a pinch of nutmeg. But the spice seems built around the fruit, as opposed to THE LOIN, whose fruit seems built around its spice and earth. While most wineries blend in Merlot to soften a Cabernet, I think it is interesting to note that the Merlot thus far in NUCLEUS has been huge. It has been perfectly farmed and picked dead ripe. It's the kind of stuff that's worthy of being bottled by itself. I don't use it to dilute something; rather I use it to bring forward the concept of a NUCLEUS.

Last year I discussed the impetus behind the name THE LOIN. It was all about the attempt to isolate something special. The *loin* is always leanest and one of the most sought after cuts of meat. It is not usually ground into hamburger. The 12 acres of Cabernet Sauvignon on the beautiful, rock showered hillside at the highest point at the Estelle Vineyard struck me the same way. It's beautiful, and it needs nothing else to be that way.

NUCLEUS on the other hand is more about diversity. NUCLEUS is a bigger section on the ranch. It has four clones of Cabernet Sauvignon, a nice chunk of Merlot, and starting to mature in 2006 will be some very encouraging Petit Verdot. Interestingly, NUCLEUS is located in the crux of a turning point of some of Figueroa Mountain's foothills. Along Roblar Avenue, these hills, which represent the first point at which the deep alluvial Santa Ynez Valley floor transcends into mountains, run east-west. Right at NUCLEUS they turn and start to run north-south as they parallel Mora Road. While it is interesting, is it really significant? I don't know. But I do like the idea of geological formations butting up against each other, with all kinds of cool rocks and stuff upwelling at that point. It's like a point of tension, and I like making wines from those kinds of places.

2004 CABERNET SAUVIGNONS
THE LOIN & NUCLEUS

Both from the Estelle Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley

Another part of the concept is that the *nucleus* of a living cell is the headquarters. It's the inspiration, so to speak, that motivates and activates all the operations of the cell, as well as how that cell communicates to all the other cells around it. In Italy, all roads lead to Rome. Historically, Rome was the artistic and cultural center of the universe. When the first twenty or so years of the this century in the Santa Ynez Valley are looked back upon as the beginning of the new epoch in the production of fine Cabernet Sauvignon, I believe it will be the largest section, making the best wine at the Estelle Vineyard, that will be thought of as this epoch's epicenter, its motivating force, its nucleus. It will be then for Cabernet Sauvignon in Santa Ynez what Sanford and Benedict is now for Pinot Noir in the Sta. Rita Hills.

Like the hot tip of a comet, also know as its nucleus, a point that leads the way as the comet hurtles through space, propelled by its own momentum, NUCLEUS at this point is leading the way. THE LOIN is about the primitive; one Cabernet in one dirt. NUCLEUS is about diversity and exploration.

Cheers,
Bryan

THE LOIN Technical Notes:

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

100% Cabernet Sauvignon,
100% Estelle Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley

VINIFICATION:

19 months in French oak barrels
50% new barrels

FINISHED WINE:

pH: 3.75
TA: 6.9g/L
Residual Sugar: Dry
Alcohol: 15.0%

BOTTLING DATE: May, 2006

RELEASE DATE: April 2007

PRODUCTION: 210 Cases

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$50.00

NUCLEUS Technical Notes:

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

76% Cabernet Sauvignon,
24% Merlot
100% Estelle Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley

VINIFICATION:

19 months in French oak barrels
50% new barrels

FINISHED WINE:

pH: 3.75
TA: 7.2g/L
Residual Sugar: Dry
Alcohol: 14.5%

BOTTLING DATE: May, 2006

RELEASE DATE: April 2007

PRODUCTION: 127 Cases

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$50.00