

# ROBERT HALL

*2005 Meritage*

*Hall Ranch Paso Robles*

## *Winemaker's Notes*

Our 2005 Meritage presents elegant aromas of black currant, cassis and ripe plum, complemented by intriguing earthy nuances of cedar and chocolate. The color is deep ruby red, dense, and reflects the intensity of this vintage, the vineyard, and the careful selection of our finest lots. On the palate the wine shows exceptional depth of flavor with firm but velvety tannins. This classic blend of four noble grapes produces a wine of finesse and character featuring our estate-grown Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Malbec.

## *Vintage/Viticulture*

The 2005 vintage will be remembered as a bountiful season in Paso Robles. An unusually wet winter brought us in excess of 150% of our normal average rainfall. This abundance of precipitation provided the vines with the moisture necessary to grow a luxuriant canopy. Managing this large crop to obtain small berry size and concentration of fruit color and flavor was the challenge, and was achieved by carefully monitoring irrigations and by thinning the crop. Cool temperatures started the season and continued until just before veraison, when we experienced a short heat wave through veraison. We then returned to perfect sugar building weather to finish the season, allowing in lengthy hang-time for excellent flavor maturity. The result of this vintage is richly colored wines with superb intensity of ripe flavor.

All of our Hall Ranch Vineyards unite to compose our 2005 Meritage. The Cabernet Sauvignon originates in the stony decomposed granite soils of our "Bench Vineyard," which wraps around the winery overlooking the Huerhuero Creek. The Cabernet Franc and Malbec are rooted in the loamy soils of the "Terrace Vineyard," found on the rolling terrace above the south bank of the Estrella River, while our Merlot develops in the clays of the "Home Vineyard" situated on the slopes of the rolling hills just east of the winery.

## *Fermentation/Maturation*

Our 2005 Meritage was produced from hand-harvested grapes picked in mid-September. Following harvest the grapes were crushed to small tanks and inoculated for fermentation. Fermentation and maceration lasted 10 days and was assisted by traditional hand pump-over to maximize color and flavor release. Subsequent to fermentation the wine was drawn off and the skins were pressed. After a short settling period the wine was racked into French oak barrels where it completed malolactic fermentation and matured for 20 months. Prior to bottling the wine received a final racking to stainless steel where the blend was assembled and the wine prepared for bottling.

## *Statistics*

Total acidity: .60%

pH: 3.66

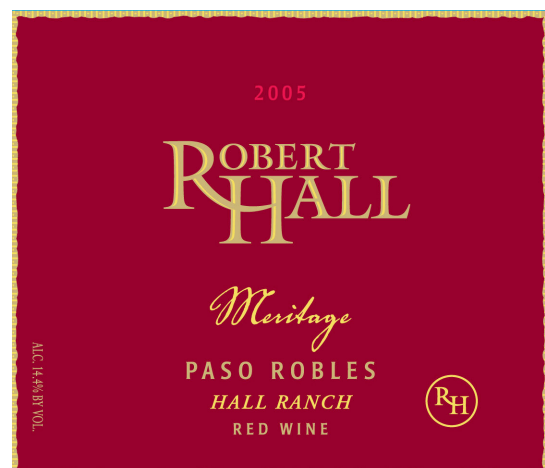
Alcohol: 14.4%

Blend: 49% Cabernet Sauvignon, 42%

Cabernet Franc, 7% Merlot and 2% Malbec

Barrel Aging: 20 months

Bottling date: June 2007



*"The Essence of Paso Robles"™*

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