

ALHONA

VINEYARDS

❧ 2004 MERLOT, CARMEL VALLEY ❧

Alhona Vineyards is proud to create Merlot from a beautiful area deep into Carmel Valley, called Cachagua. This was once the ancestral home of the Esselen Indians. As a result, mortars and pestles used by the Esselen are uncovered from time to time, and their presence is always felt. The land is composed mostly of sand, gravel, and rock; thus, rock walls are prevalent on the ranch's property.

In 1991 Rick and Patti Alhona, along with their sons Chris and Matt, began the arduous task of planting the grapevines that would bring forth the wines they aspired to make. Summer temperatures range daily from 80 to 95 degrees; and, at night the temperature often falls to 60 degrees and below. Not only has Carmel Valley proven to be a magical area for the Alhonas, but it has also demonstrated itself to be a perfect climate for viticulture; in this case, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Rick Alhona makes wine holding the values of the following, "To make good wine is essential, to make great wine is an obligation." To that end, the subsequent information represents the **2004 Alhona Merlot**.

Tech Data:

Vineyard Source:	Alhona Vineyards
Appellation:	Carmel Valley, California
Varietal:	100% Merlot
Harvest Date:	September 28, 2004
Sugar at Harvest:	25.5 Brix
Barrel Aging:	12 Months, American Oak
Total Acidity:	0.63 g/liter
Ph:	3.55
Alcohol	14.1%
Fermentation:	350 Gallon Fermenters: Primary and malolactic completed in 10 to 15 days
Cases Produced:	251 Cases (750 ML)

Rick Alhona's Winemaker Notes:

This 2004 Carmel Valley Merlot is a big black wine, with black cherry aromas that lead to bold flavors of cassis, plum, blackberry, and hints of chocolate. It exhibits good select tannins on the palate, yet it has a soft and accessible, silky smooth finish.

It's a true food friendly wine, pairing well with cheeses, as well as Lamb-Stuffed Eggplant.

Suggested Retail: \$24.95