

BENZIGER

FAMILY WINERY

2003
BENZIGER
FUME BLANC
North Coast

VINIFICATION: Our winemaking focus is to craft a true-to-varietal, crisp, fresh, bright, fruity Fume Blanc with a nice subtle grassiness and a hint of vanilla from fermenting on oak. After strict canopy management and crop thinning, the lots were tank fermented in stainless steel. The special care that encouraged the perfect fruit-to-acid balance in the vineyard was also taken in the cellar to ensure the same balance in the bottle. The wine was bottled in February 2004. Alcohol 13.9%, Total acidity .61, pH 3.3, Residual sugar .03%.

VINTAGE: The season began on a wet note - we got almost a year's average rainfall in December 2002 – but an unseasonably warm spring gave us an early bud break in March. The vines began to grow and the weather turned cold and wet again in April; depending on location we had rain between 20 to 26 days of the month. This cool overcast weather virtually stopped vine growth and filled the soil with water. As it turned out, April rains and soil moisture ended up being the big story of 2003. Warm weather in May got things going again with explosive growth, then June cooled off and it became apparent that it was going to be a late harvest. There were rumblings about similarities with 1998, but with record heat in July, the situation looked hopeful. August cooled some but brought a tropical weather pattern and the fear of rain. The weather warmed in late September and it became a challenge to control sugars while waiting for flavor maturity. Once harvest began in mid-September, but thanks to a cooling trend, we were able to bring in fruit with great ripeness and maturity through October. 2003 was unique and, weather-wise all over the board. But we got what we needed at critical times and most varietals fared beautifully.

TASTING NOTES: It is fruity in style, with subtle oak and herb overtones. In aroma, it smells of apple, lemon grass, and vanilla; on the palate, it is full bodied, softly textured, and medium long on the finish. Enjoy with tuna fish sandwiches, grilled prawns basted in olive oil and garlic, wilted spinach salad with bacon dressing, pasta primavera, fried chicken, and roast pork.

Terry Nolan, Winemaker

VINTAGE
2003

PRICE
\$13

RELEASE DATE
September 2004

AVAILABILITY
Available Nationally

APPELLATION
North Coast

www.benziger.com