

GOVERNMENT WARNING: (1) ACCORDING TO THE SURGEON GENERAL, WOMEN SHOULD NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES DURING PREGNANCY BECAUSE OF THE RISK OF BIRTH DEFECTS. (2) CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IMPAIRS YOUR ABILITY TO DRIVE A CAR OR OPERATE MACHINERY, AND MAY CAUSE HEALTH PROBLEMS.
® REGISTERED TRADEMARK

CONTAINS SULFITES

Vineyard Production:
131 tons from 108 acres
Selection: 27%

2002 Monte Bello Estate Vineyard, bottled May 2004

After an unusually early start to 2001's growing season, 2002 settled back to normal. The merlot crop was reduced by May rains during set, but cabernet yields—making up for last year—were extravagant, and we thinned rigorously to ensure ripening. We harvested the thirty parcels as flavors developed, dividing them into thirty-six separate lots of three to six tons each. Color and tannin developed easily, so in order to prolong the natural-yeast fermentations, we radically reduced circulation of juice over the cap. Delaying the first assemblage until March allowed the wine to stabilize. We initially chose ten of the most intense lots for the Monte Bello, adding four more in May, at the second assemblage. Eighty-seven percent of the wine aged in new, air-dried american oak barrels; as our ongoing control, thirteen percent—an uncommonly large proportion—aged in new french oak. To moderate the firm tannins, we made numerous experimental fresh-egg-white finings, deciding only this month that the unfinned wine was more classically Monte Bello. Beautifully structured and balanced now, it will reach another level of complexity with six to eight years in bottle, and age fully over the next twenty. PD (1/04)

www.ridgewine.com

408.867.3233

RIDGE 2002
CALIFORNIA
MONTE BELLO®

**MONTE BELLO VINEYARD: 74% CABERNET SAUVIGNON,
18% MERLOT, 8% PETIT VERDOT**
SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS ALCOHOL 13.3% BY VOLUME
GROWN, PRODUCED & BOTTLED BY RIDGE VINEYARDS
17100 MONTE BELLO ROAD, BOX 1810, CUPERTINO, CA 95015