

The Wine Advocate



The WINE ADVOCATE®

Closing Date: 6-30-05

L'AVENTURE	2003	CABERNET SAUVIGNON ESTATE	PASO ROBLES	(\$65.00)	92+
L'AVENTURE	2003	CUVEE COTE A COTE	PASO ROBLES	(\$80.00)	96
L'AVENTURE	2003	ESTATE CUVEE	PASO ROBLES	(\$80.00)	94
L'AVENTURE	2002	OPTIMUS ESTATE	PASO ROBLES	(\$50.00)	92
L'AVENTURE	2003	SYRAH ESTATE	PASO ROBLES	(\$65.00)	91

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Former resident of St.-Emilion, Stephan Asseo, continues to produce creative and "adventurous" wines that possess singular personalities as well as loads of potential for both near-term drinking and long-term aging. The dense ruby/purple-colored **2002 Optimus Estate**, an innovative blend of 50% Syrah, 46% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 4% Zinfandel, offers a complex bouquet of briery fruit interwoven with cherries, *crème de cassis*, licorice, truffles, and smoke. Ripe, with crisp acidity, medium to full body, abundant concentration, and a savory, round mouthfeel, this lovely red should drink well for a decade. The superb **2003 Syrah Estate** offers more of everything, including an ink/purple color and classic blackberry, espresso roast, cherry, and smoky aromas. An exuberant Syrah with terrific fruit intensity, a full-bodied, unctuous texture that cascades over the palate, and a 30+ second finish, this beautiful, complete, full-throttle 2003 combines power with elegance. It will drink well for 7-10 years.

The inky/purple-tinged **2003 Estate Cuvée** (66% Cabernet Sauvignon, 28% Syrah, and 6% Petit Verdot) exhibits a restrained/reticent bouquet. With coaxing, lovely aromas of camphor, cassis, truffles and vanilla emerge from this full-bodied, powerful, sweet blend. It boasts both profound depth and formidable structure. Forget it for 2-3 years and enjoy it over the following 10-15. One of the sexiest wines in this portfolio is the **2003 Cuvée Côte à Côte**, a compelling blend of 34% Grenache, 33% Syrah, and 33% Mourvèdre. Its inky/purple color is accompanied by a gloriously heady perfume of acacia flowers, kirsch liqueur, blackberries, and licorice. A chewy display of concentrated red and black fruits interwoven with lavender, licorice, and floral notes emerges from this complex 2003. With decent acidity, fabulous purity, and a multilayered, long finish, it should be even better in 2-3 years, and will keep for more than a decade. Lastly, the **2003 Cabernet Sauvignon Estate** boasts a dense ruby/purple color in addition to aromas of smoke, black currants, cigar tobacco, and incense. This powerfully constructed, layered Cabernet builds incrementally on the palate displaying terrific ripeness, huge tannins, and plenty of mass and structure. Forget it for 2-3 years, and drink it over the following 12-15, although I suspect it may last for two decades. Tel. (805) 227-1588.

