



HAWK WATCH WINE CLUB



Here come the 2009 reds! I always love this time of year for several reasons, not least of which is because it's the time that we begin bottling and releasing our new red wines. After sleeping quietly for 24-28 months in oak, most of these wines are now ready for bottle. We have been working diligently since the beginning of the year getting several of them in bottle along with a group of new whites as well. So, February marks the release of 3 of our newest additions to the family; our 2011 Orange Muscat, 2009 Merlot, and 2009 Zinfandel. We are also sneaking a bottle of our unreleased 2009 Malbec into our Reds-Only member's shipment, and will release that wine to everyone in the coming weeks. And we have so many more coming down the pike too!

We'd like to take a few minutes as well to thank everyone who came forward and made a donation to Living Free Animal Sanctuary in January. A week after the donations were collected we went to Idyllwild and presented Living Free with a truckload of items for the animals as well as a sizeable Petco gift card we purchased with your generous monetary donations. While we were there we visited with the cats and dogs and (as usual) had a tough time leaving without taking a few animals home! We encourage you all to take a drive to Idyllwild to check out this place. It is truly remarkable and worth a side trip for sure.



Your Wines

Zinfandel anyone? Finally after being sold out of our 2008 Zin for a few months, our **2009 Zinfandel** is ready and raring to go! Every wine club member will receive a bottle of our newest Zin as well as our newly released **2009 Merlot**. Again we have taken the approach with this Merlot as we have with our previous Merlot; that Merlot need not be boring, one-dimensional and uninteresting. On the contrary! Merlot can be fat, juicy, ripe and wonderful if given the chance. We hope you will agree when you taste our 2009. Our mixed club members will receive a bottle of our newest white as well, or **2011 Orange Muscat**. Sourced entirely from our own Rattlesnake Vineyard this wine is beautifully aromatic and soft on the palate with just enough crisp acidity to balance the 4% residual sugar. Finally, our reds-only club members will receive a bottle of our **2009 Malbec**. This is a pre-release and is a wine you will want to lay down for a few months before opening. Torture, I know but hey, it's unreleased for a reason!

Zena and Zoro's Mouser Blog

OK, so there's this big pallet of wine back here that says "Library Wines" on it and we have seen our folks taking bottles from it recently. I think that means they are tasting all the older wines and updating the website with library tasting notes. We also heard them talking about releasing a few cases of some of the library wines and making them available for sale! That's crazy talk!!! But we know what we heard...



2011 Orange Muscat

The Muscat family of grape varieties encompasses over 100 separate sub-varieties and is one of the oldest wine grapes known to man. For certain, one of the most unique varieties of this ancient grape is Orange Muscat. The wines produced from Orange Muscat are insanely fragrant with layers of peaches and pear blossoms in the nose, with hints of tangerine and honey in the palate. Just enough residual sugar and bright, crisp acidity make this wine deliciously fresh and lively.

2009 Merlot

Slowly but surely Merlot is making a comeback. It's astounding that a movie such as "Sideways" could have such a profound and lasting impact on a grape variety. Acres of Merlot vineyards were replaced with Pinot Noir after the movie's release and it is only recently that this old workhorse variety has been given a second chance. Merlot can be beautifully aromatic, fruit forward, rich and inviting. Our 2009 shows notes of wild blackberry and cherry with elements of cocoa, black tea and a rich complex palate. Although the wine is very nice now, it will improve dramatically in 6-8 months and continue to age gracefully for 4-6 years.

Wine & Cheese Pairing Suggestions

We love cheese and there is nothing better than the perfect wine and cheese pairing. Here are a few suggestions that might be fun to experiment with. Many of these cheeses may be found at the Temecula Cheese Company!

Orange Muscat

*Beeleigh (England), Gorgonzola (Italy),
CranberryWensleydale (England), Montbriac
(France)*

Merlot

*Ossou Iraty (France), Manchego (Spain),
Garrotxa (Spain), Guyere (Swiss)*

Zinfandel

*Aged Parmigiano-Reggiano (Italy), Vella Dry
Jack (Sonoma), Asiago (Italy), Zamarano
(Spain).*

Malbec

*Cashel Blue (Ireland), Iberico (Spain),
Taleggio (Italy), Piave Vecchio (Italy)*

February 2012 Wine Selections

Mixed Club

*2011 Orange Muscat
2009 Merlot
2009 Zinfandel*

Reds-Only Club

*2009 Merlot
2009 Zinfandel
2009 Malbec*

2009 Zinfandel

What a crazy and challenging variety to work with! The crop load for Zinfandel is often huge (that's a bad thing for quality wine), the grapes don't ripen evenly in some years, fermentation is always a challenge in the cellar, and the wine can be easily over oaked if you're not careful. So, let the fun begin! Making a good bottle of Zin takes a lot of patience and diligence, but the rewards can be awesome! Our 2009 Zin is packed with fruit. Raspberry, blackberry and dark cherry load the palate while exotic spicy notes of pepper, fresh cut tobacco and a hint of cedar and sweet oak round out the nose. It's tasting fantastic now, but will continue to improve for 3-4 years.

2009 Malbec (pre-release)

Word on the street is that all the good Malbecs come from Argentina. Um, right... I have had my share of great Malbecs from Argentina for sure, but I have also had some magnificent Malbecs from California as well. So, why don't more wineries make a varietal Malbec? Simply put, it's a tough sell. You either love Malbec, or you don't. Well, I love it and I'm the winemaker so I'm making it. So there! Malbec is sort of a "wild and crazy" grape. The nose offers toasted aromas of nutmeg, vanilla and white chocolate, with warm, spicy elements of cinnamon, ground coffee and black raspberry on the palate. I love this wine for many reasons, mostly because it's outside the box and that's what we're all about at Hawk Watch! The wine is pretty tight right now and needs decanting. Hold (if you can) for 2-3 months before opening. Will age nicely over the next 4-6 years.

A warm welcome to all our new Wine Club members!!!