

HAWK WATCH

AUGUST 2015

From the Vine to the Cellar...

Harvest 2015 is officially upon us! And what an unusual harvest it has been so far. Vineyard yields are significantly lower across the state; in some cases by as much as 50%. Recently I was told of a huge, 500-acre vineyard in Paso Robles that had such low yield that the vineyard owners decided not to pick it at all! I suppose they thought it would cost more to pick the meager amount of grapes than they could recover from the sale of the fruit. That's a first! Here at Hawk Watch we're experiencing low yields on a couple of varieties, but for the most part we have good fruit set and are excited about the fruit quality! At the time of this writing we've harvest about 6 tons of grapes with at least 16-17 tons left to go. Sauvignon Blanc, Mourvedre, Sangiovese (yes, Sangiovese!), some Syrah and some Merlot have been picked thus far. Hopefully with a little luck the weather will cool off a bit to make picking, crushing and pressing a bit more tolerable!

This quarter in your wine club shipment we are offering three new wines for the first time. Our 2012 Petite Sirah is a classic "PS" that begs for a big, juicy steak or something, rather anything off the barbeque. Our newest edition of our Numbers Series wines is "Eleven-Twelve-Thirteen". Focusing on Petit Verdot (why this version of the word "petite" has no "e" at the end is beyond me, but accurate nonetheless...) is a very complex wine which will age very well and has the potential to display some intriguing characteristics as it time progresses. This is one to enjoy now for sure, but plan on laying a second bottle down for a couple years to let the magic happen. Personally I am very intrigued. Finally we have a very small lot wine (only 2 barrels or 48 cases) that we call "Vex". This wine is actually a 2012, but I thought the label looked better without the vintage date so I left it off. I can do that 'cause I own the place... Vex is a very interesting wine as most Malbec blends are to me. You either love the gamey, grungy, earthiness of Malbec or you don't. I hope you enjoy those elements are much as I do, but if not try pairing the wine with savory dishes with plenty of beef-stock-based sauces. That works for me!



Happy Harvest!

- Mike & Lisa -

PIC OF THE QUARTER!



Zena & Zoro's Mouser Blog

Well, it certainly took long enough, but our outdoor cat enclosure is complete! Oh, the smells, the sounds, the lizards and birds! Thanks Dad!!!



No, your eyes are not deceiving you! Hawk Watch has visited Stonehenge! Thanks to wine club members Forrest and Mindi Baker!

Wine Club Selections

Mixed Club

2014 Viognier
2012 Petite Sirah
11.12.13

Reds Only

2012 Petite Sirah
11.12.13
VEX

2012 Petite Sirah

The first red wine Lisa and I fell head over heels in love with was Petite Sirah. Thank you Vince and Audrey Cilurzo! Talk about going from A to Z and skipping the rest of the alphabet! To this day we have a fondness for Petite Sirah. Big, rich, inky in color and loaded with dark fruit, smoke, tobacco and black licorice, Petite Sirah is not for the faint of heart. But to me it's one of the most food friendly wines out there especially if you like barbeque. Our 2012 is no exception with loads of black cherry, dried fig and boysenberry with notes of wood smoke, leather and anise in the nose. The wine is round and juicy on the palate with hints of vanilla and coconut on the finish. Bring on the barbeque!!c - 120 cases produced

VEX

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the word Vex as "...to bring trouble, distress, or agitation to..." Ever had a problem that just frustrated and baffled you so much you thought you would never figure it out? Well, this wine definitely "vexed" me! I recently tasted a blend of Malbec and Merlot that was absolutely wonderful and decided to take a stab at making my own with the 2012 vintage. After literally dozens of potential blends I was so frustrated that I decided just to go back to the basics with a 50/50 blend. After tasting the wine, I realized that often the answer to a vexing problem is the simplest solution. Rich and warm in the palate the Malbec brings a smoky, savory spice element to the wine while the black cherry of the Merlot adds a nice touch of fruit, finishing with notes of rich earth and brown sugar. - 48 cases produced

2014 Viognier

When it comes to white wine, which I admittedly rarely drink except in the heat of the summer, my favorite has got to be Viognier. Viognier grapes often reach their peak of ripeness a little later than other white grapes like Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio and Chardonnay, and by allowing the grapes to ripen longer on the vine you get slightly higher sugar. Higher sugar translates into higher alcohol and high alcohol translates into a richer, silkier wine with a luscious mouthfeel and a round, full palate. Keeping acid lower in Viognier (than say, Sauvignon Blanc which is meant to be more crisp and sharp) is critical to allow the beautiful guava, melon, honeysuckle and white flower aromas to come forward. The palate of our 2014 Viognier is rich and full with a hint of lemongrass and citrus. A nice summer sipper. - 86 cases produced

11.12.13

Ah Petit Verdot... The grape with the love / hate relationship with winemakers. We love rich, dark, inky Petit Verdot for its ability to add intense tannin to a wine. Of course we also shy away from Petit Verdot, because of its ability to add intense tannins to a wine. Hence the reason you often see less than 10% Petit Verdot added to red blends. With this grape a winemaker needs to be careful because it can overpower a wine with those often course, aggressive tannins. But in certain years the tannins are more subtle and soft which opens the door for the winemaker to explore Petit Verdot's other virtues. 2012 and 2011 were vintages that produced a softer more user friendly Petit Verdot and that is why the latest edition of our Numbers Series wines, 11.12.13 is nearly 50% Petit Verdot. Blending small amounts of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc into this wine, with just a splash of Grenache to pump up the fruit results in a wine of depth, complexity and (thanks to the Petit Verdot tannins) longevity. - 100 cases produced

WINE ENTHUSIAST
THE WORLD IN YOUR GLASS

Hawk Watch Winery
2011 "The Deep Six"

88 Points

Check out the complete review at <http://buyingguide.winemag.com/catalog/hawk-watch-winery>