



WINE CLUB

HAWK WATCH

NOVEMBER 2018

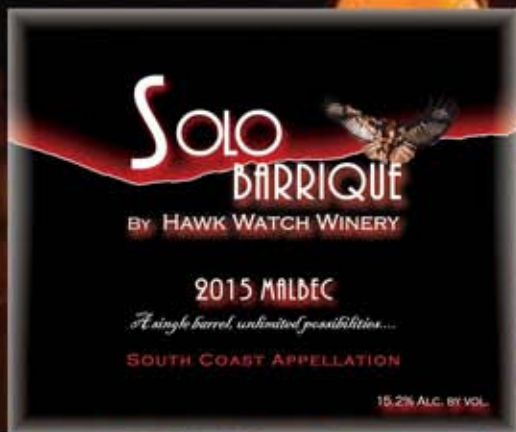
Harvest 2018 is finally complete! We picked our Tannat vineyard on November 4th; the latest pick ever for us! What a crazy growing season it has been. With early July temps of 118+ degrees there was catastrophic leaf scorch and fruit burn damage in vineyards throughout Southern California. Fortunately, anticipating the heat wave, we chose to leave more leaf canopy in the vineyard to offer a bit more shade for our young grape clusters. Even a 2-3 degree difference can have a dramatic impact on fruit loss. Our tactic worked! As many vineyards in the surrounding areas lost upwards of 50-70% of their fruit, our vineyard was spared for the most part with only minimal heat damage to our Petite Sirah. The upside is that the fruit quality this year has been spectacular with some of the most intense color I've ever seen across the board. When these wines are finally ready for release three years from now they should be gorgeous.

Back to the present! I thought it might be a good idea to explain to our wine club members why picking up your wine club shipment early is not possible. Each quarter we have a handful of club members ask if they can pick up their wine early for a variety of reasons, mostly related to vacation schedules and travel plans. If you've been to our winery of late you might have noticed that we're now stacking our barrels 5-high instead of 4-high. The reason is simple...room, or lack thereof. We've exhausted all of our floor space and are now having to use more vertical space to pack everything into our building. Can you imagine having to find room for a hundred cases of wine for our wine club shipment? No chance! So, we store our cased wine in a temperature-controlled warehouse in Temecula. So, when the time comes to bring the wine in house for a wine club pick up, we make the trek to Temecula and pick up the number of cases of wine we'll need. Prior to that, I completely reorganize the cellar moving barrels around (and sometimes taking empty barrels outside temporarily) to create enough space to store the wine until it's picked up. So, the bottom line is that we simply don't have the wine on site until the pick-up date. I hope this clarifies the issue and answers that question.

Oh boy! There are so many cool, exciting things happening at Hawk Watch over the next few months! From our 10-year barrel aged port, Scorpius "Decade" release last weekend to our new exclusive Solo Barrique barrel program, it's going to be a fun (albeit busy) holiday season! We hope to see you soon!

Mike & Lisa

Now introducing:



A wine club exclusive!

One barrel - 22 cases that represent the best of the best from Hawk Watch. First up, 2015 Malbec. Wine Enthusiast - 90 points. See the attached card for details!

Winery guest Valarie Morgan sent us this image of a beautiful swallowtail butterfly stopping to sip a little nectar, while guests inside our tasting room sip their own form of nectar!

PIC OF THE QUARTER!



Wine Club Selections

Mixed Club

(Original grandfathered members)

2017 Sauvignon Blanc
2015 Cab Franc / Merlot
2015 Mongrel

Reds Only

2015 Cab Franc / Merlot
2015 Mongrel
2011 Signature Reserve Syrah

2017 Sauvignon Blanc

From Chardonnay to Viognier, from Albarino to Chenin Blanc my go-to white wine is Sauvignon Blanc. Coming in many varieties and styles, from the steely, grassy versions from Marlborough, New Zealand to the citrusy, fruit forward versions from Monterey County, Sauvignon Blanc is one of those grapes that truly tells a story of how it was grown, where it was grown and how it was made. Shady vines with lots of canopy tend to produce more herbaceous, earthy wines while cutting the canopy back and exposing the fruit to more sunlight moves the resulting wines more toward a fruity, citrusy, profile. Our 2017 Sauvignon Blanc lands somewhere in the middle. Sourced from a relatively heavily canopied vineyard in the Temecula Valley, our Sauvignon Blanc has notes of lemon, lime and melon on the palate with just a hint of minerality. A perfect summer sipper, but a wine that can pair year-round with a variety of light dishes and salads. - 96 cases produced!

2015 Cabernet Franc / Merlot

One of the most enjoyable things about being a winemaker is blending. Experimenting with different proportions of wines from barrels you've been caring for, for months and assembling them in such a way that the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts is exhilarating, albeit daunting sometimes. Often you see wines that have 23%, 17%, 63%, etc. of a certain grape in the blend. Those numbers seem rather arbitrary, but they are indeed real. That's the fun part! Drilling down to the precise percentage of a particular wine that does exactly what you're hoping for in the finished blend. It can be very complicated and time consuming but certainly worth it in the end. However, sometimes simplicity is the rule. When I began the blending process to create this Cabernet Franc / Merlot blend I had no idea that in the end, the simplest blend of 50% / 50% would achieve everything I had hoped for. The resulting wine is rich and complex with notes of rose petals, cedar, herbs and earth in the nose with ripe black cherry, cinnamon and vanilla on the palate. - 98 cases produced

2015 Mongrel

Ah, Mourvedre... AKA, the angry grape. At least that's how I view Mourvedre. It puts out a huge crop of fruit, grows an aggressive, leafy canopy, and the resulting wines are often gamey, earthy, and grungy, with a vein of wood smoke woven into the mix. If you're like me, that's a perfect base to build upon! Enter Syrah: Rich, fruit forward and spicy, it's the perfect compliment to its angry cousin. Together they combine to create a wine with an earthy complexity that shows ripe, dark fruit notes in the nose with a smoky, spicy backbone. What do we call this "mixed breed" of a wine? Well, Mongrel of course! 64% Syrah / 36% Mourvedre. - 65 cases produced

Safety First!

When removing a cork from a wax-topped bottle, follow these easy steps. First, don't attempt to cut the wax off. Use only a manual, leverage corkscrew (no electric or gas) and screw the worm directly through the wax and into the cork. Then pull up on the cork as usual; the wax should crack in a ring. Then just remove the cork!

2011 Signature Reserve Syrah

As many of you know, we're very careful about designating a wine as a "Reserve". To me, the word "Reserve" is far too often used in the wine industry, and can be more of a marketing ploy than a true representation of the quality of the what's in the bottle. You often see titles like "Vintner's Reserve", "Winemaker's Reserve", "Cellar Select", or "Winemaker's Select", but the wine inside the bottle doesn't match the quality you'd expect with a title like that. Unfortunately, there is really no true definition of the word "Reserve" as it relates to wine, so wineries are free to interpret and use the word as they see fit. At Hawk Watch, we've produced nearly 150 wines since we opened, and we've labeled only 6 as "Reserve". These 6 wines represent what we believe is the pinnacle of quality. Our 2011 Signature Reserve Syrah is one of these elite 6 and has aged beautifully since it went to bottle in the Spring of 2014. The wine really opens up and shows its lush fruit and spice elements, especially after a little decanting (20-30 mins). We're nearly sold out of this luscious, reserve bottle and we wanted to make sure our club members had a chance to enjoy it before it was gone. The wine is peaking now and will continue to evolve over the next year. In an effort to ensure our wine club charge this quarter remains at a reasonable level, we decreased the price for this reserve so we could make certain that each member received a bottle without breaking the bank. Enjoy! - 74 cases produced

Zena and Zoro's Mouser Blog



Now we know what the letters "SB" written on the barrels means! Solo Barrique!