



HAWK WATCH

AUGUST 2021

Harvest... The word conjures feelings of excitement, enthusiasm, anticipation, and trepidation. Trepidation? Why? Think of it this way: for 300 days we've done everything in our power to grow the best grapes possible while working with (and sometimes fending off) Mother Nature. Frost, wind, heat, rain, the occasional 116-degree day and 27-degree night. At this point we're spent, tapped out; it's now up to Mother Nature, and her alone to decide whether we have a good harvest or well, you know... The past four or five harvests have been solid with good fruit development, above average vineyard production, and fully ripe, quality grapes. And this year? The jury is still out. With the extreme heat we've experienced literally ALL summer has made the onset of ripening delay a little. When the heat rises above 90-95 degrees the vines shut down and go into survival mode. Any increase in grape berry sugar is most likely the result of berry dehydration, not true physiological ripening. So, the fruit begins to lose water and berry sugar spikes, but the chemistry of the grapes is still way off to be able to make a decent bottle of wine with. Irrigation water management becomes vital. Excessive watering of the vine draws too much water into the berries, swells them, and cracks them open ruining the fruit. Too little water and the berries continue to desiccate. Last week's cool down was critical. It allowed the vines to "catch up" a little, so once again we're expecting excellent fruit this year. Yield will be down somewhat, but I'll take quality over quantity any day!

This quarter for the first time ever we're including a bottle of our newly released 2017 Tinderbox (reds)! Also included is a bottle of the ever-evolving 2016 The Deep Six and a bottle of our new 2017 Syrah. Big, rich and bold with loads of earthy, smokiness our 2017 can stand up to anything roasted, barbequed or grilled. Finally, for our Solo Barrique members we're releasing our 2018 Tannat. This is only our second release of this estate varietal. The big, grippy tannins give the wine excellent ageing potential. Quite drinkable now (although young) it can hold on for at least a decade, possibly longer. So, as we cruise into our 15th harvest we're cautiously optimistic that Mother Nature will once again bestow upon us tons of beautiful fruit that will, with a little winemaker creativity and slight-of-hand, produce fabulous wines in the coming years!

Mike & Lisa

Although this picture is from several months ago, we figured a winter scene might cool us all down a bit! Garry and Annie Jordon enjoy a bottle of our Petite Sirah in this snowy picture from their home in Big Bear Lake

Pic of the Quarter!



Zena & Zoro's Mouser Blog



We're hot... really hot. The winery is so humid our mats have returned. Our fur was so nice and soft a few months ago and now, well not so much. We think it's time for a trip to the beauty shop...

Wine Club Selections

Mixed Club

(Grandfathered Original Club Members)

2017 Syrah
2018 Sequoia
2016 The Deep Six

Reds Club

2017 Syrah
2016 The Deep Six
2017 Tinderbox

2017 Syrah

As many of you know, Syrah is our flagship grape and wine. Although I think it's important to make wines that satisfy every palate, it's equally important to specialize in something specific; a wine or grape variety you strive to do better than anyone else. That grape (and wine) for us is, and always has been, Syrah. No matter how you spell it or what you call it, this grape variety produces some of the most distinctive flavors and aromas on the planet. It seems to pick up more of the terroir of the region where it's grown and produced than other varieties. Syrah can be beautifully fruit driven and subtle, or can be smoky, leathery, and reminiscent of barbecued or grilled meat. The sky is the limit for Syrah! Even individual vineyards or separate Syrah blocks within the same vineyard can produce wildly different fruit. The challenge of the winemaker is to not let any one element overwhelm and dominate the others. Syrah is all about balance. Proper oak selection is vital with Syrah is well. Our 2017 Syrah was oaked for 28 months with 85% French and 15% American oak. The American oak element was heavy toasted oak that, if used properly can coax out hints of coconut and caramel. Our 2017 is arguably one of the best Syrah's we've released. Enjoy now or hold for 6-8 years. - 67 cases produced



Please see the attached card describing our 2018 Solo Barrique Tannat and our Tannat estate vineyard!

2018 Sequoia

Well, this is it! The last "semi-dry" rose' that we'll produce. For 13 years we've been drying down our annual Sequoia; reducing the sugar content from 2.5% with our initial vintage to just under 1% on our most recent vintages. This year we'll be dipping far below 1% and will arrive at about 0.5% sugar; just enough residual sugar to elevate the beautiful Grenache fruit, but dry enough to appeal to the dry rose' lovers. I know there are a lot of wineries making rose' out of virtually every red grape out there and some are excellent. We recently had a Malbec rose' that was stunning. But I prefer Grenache. It has such happy, bright fruit in the nose with a palate of freshly picked strawberries, watermelon, vanilla and cream. Looking to have an amazing wine and cheese picnic under a shady oak tree on a warm summer day? Bring a bottle of Sequoia. And for the cheese? Does it really matter? All cheese is good! ;) Enjoy now or hold for 1-2 years. 83 cases produced.

2017 Tinderbox

For the first time ever, we're putting our newest Tinderbox release in your wine club! We strive to make this 100% Zinfandel wine as big, rich and juicy as possible and our 2017 is just that. We don't grow Zinfandel on property, but instead rely on a single exceptional Zinfandel grape grower in Temecula to source our fruit from. Zinfandel is a tough grape to get to ripen evenly, but this grower has the magic touch. The fruit arrives high in sugar and fully ripe each harvest. Using 100% American medium toasted oak we achieve a wine that is very fruit forward with blackberry, dark cherry and licorice in the nose and palate. The wine finishes firm yet elegant. We're very excited to finally be able to put a bottle into each wine club! Enjoy now or hold for 3-5 years.

2016 The Deep Six

This past February we put our 2016 The Deep Six in the wine club shipment because we had recently received a 90-point score from Wine Enthusiast magazine for our 2015 and we had high hopes for the 2016. Since then, the wine has evolved beautifully in bottle. It's incredible that in only 6 months a wine can change so dramatically. Tannins soften, fruit and spice notes integrate, the palate weight and mouthfeel improve, and the wine truly becomes what the winemaker was seeking to achieve. It's a painful waiting game, and patience is not one of my better virtues. The wine has been in bottle for nearly 2 1/2 years and is finally showing its true colors. The fruit and earthiness from our estate Syrah meld perfectly with the bright fruit and savory spice of the Cabernet Sauvignon. We'll be sending this wine to Wine Enthusiast magazine next month, so wish us luck! Enjoy now or hold for 5-7 years. 103 cases produced.