



Total Locals Club

April 2006 Tasting Notes

Three Medal Winners,
Two New Releases,
and an Unusual old friend!

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Hello Total Locals Club Members,

It is time to pick up your April 2006 Total Locals Wine Club (or keep an eye out for your neighborhood delivery service if you have previously selected our shipping option).

Here in rainy Northern California, 22 days straight and counting, I have decided that perhaps it is time to build an ark. Of course I will take the animals along, but if I am going to be stuck in an ark with a bunch of animals, I am certainly also going to need some great wine! Just in case I were to never see dry land again, I chose 6 wines that I would not want to be without. I hope that you all feel the same way, once you have had a chance to try them.

This time around, you will be receiving **three recent medal winners, two wonderful new releases and an unusual old friend**. Because it is also tax time, I have tried to keep your cost down in the hopes of giving you a bit of tax relief...so drink up and let us know if you enjoyed the selection.



Remember that the 5% follow up discount applies for 45 days so call us if you need more wine to get you through the April 15th doldrums. As always, your tasting notes are included with your wines or available online at www.tastelocalwines.com/tasting_notes/ if you would like to take a sneak peak. There are also some recipes and food pairing ideas to go with my selections at www.tastelocalwines.com/and_more.html, coupons to download and use when you visit at www.tastelocalwines.com/coupons/, and as always, a small token of my appreciation, in my very favorite color, to thank you for your loyal membership and support of Locals.

You can visit Locals online at www.tastelocalwines.com.

Cheers and Happy Spring from all of us,

Carolyn, Tim and Diane

**Eric Ross 2001 Russian River Valley Old Vine Zinfandel,
Occidental Vineyard**
(\$27.00 retail / \$21.60 club price)
Eric Ross & John Storey – Winemakers

Appellation Russian River Valley, Occidental
Vineyard
Date of Harvest September 26, 2001
Varietal Composition 100% Zinfandel
Alcohol 14.5 %
pH 3.40pH
Residual Sugar Dry
Bottling Date June 2004
Production 250 Cases

The Wine

Our 2001 Old Vine Zinfandel Occidental Vineyard fills the nose with spicy black pepper and blackberry as dense chewy fruit carries through the mouth. The soft and balanced flavors in the mouth finish with crisp acidity, a perfect wine to be matched with food.

Silver Medal Winner at the California State Fair

The Grapes

Grapes for this wine come from the Occidental Vineyard which sits at 900 feet in the Russian River Valley. The vineyard is dry farmed and the vines were planted in the 1930's.

Winemaking

The grapes were hand picked in the early morning, then crushed into small fermenters. Caps were punched by hand twice daily, during a cool 10-day fermentation. The wine was pressed into Demptos and Sequin Moreau American oak barrels for aging 22 months before bottling.

Ramazzotti 2003 Raffinto
(\$25.00 retail / \$20.00 club price)

Joe Ramazzotti & Bob Keeble – Winemakers

Joe's Vintage View:

Raffinto, which means "refined" in Italian, is a blend of 60% Sangiovese grapes, and the remaining 40% is a mixture of Cabernet, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Syrah grapes. The Sangiovese grapes come from Dry Creek, on a steep hillside on Walling Road. The Cabernet, Cabernet Franc, and Syrah grapes come from the Pignoni Ranch in Alexander Valley in

Geyserville. The Merlot grapes come from the Ramazzotti Vineyards in Geyserville. This wonderful blend all came together to make a very flavorful Super Tuscan style of wine. This wine won a gold medal at the 2006 San Francisco Chronicle Competition for Italian blends.

Tasting Notes:

This wine has a wonderful cherry smell, with the great complexity of the Cabernet and Merlot flavors. It has a wonderful full-mouth feel and a great lingering finish.

Technical Data:

Composition: 60% Sangiovese, Dry Creek Valley
40% Cabernet, Merlot, Syrah & Cabernet Franc
from Alexander Valley
Appellation: Dry Creek Valley & Alexander Valley,
Sonoma County
Harvest Date: . Sangiovese: September 12, 2003
Cabernet, Cabernet Franc, Syrah & Merlot: Sept.
18, 2003
Alcohol: 14.5%
pH: 3.45
TA:69
Barrel Aging: 20 months
Type of Oak: 10% on new Kentucky Oak
90% on used French & American Oak
Bottling Date: September 22, 2005
Production: 650 cases
Release Date: January 1, 2006

Martin Family Vineyards 2003 Petite Sirah
Dry Creek Valley
(\$33.00 retail / \$26.40 club price)

Mike Martin – Winemaker

Our 2003 Dry Creek Valley Petite Sirah is dark, rich and concentrated. With flavors of luscious ripe wild berry and cassis, compelling aromas of vanilla-scented oak, this wine is smooth textured, with hints of spice and dark chocolate. It is finished with depth, complexity, and a nice balance of suppleness. Like drinking a red velvet theater curtain.

Vineyard: Follett Ranch
Composition: 91% Petite Sirah, 6 %
Zinfandel, 3% Carignane
Harvest Date: October 24, 2003
Technical Notes: Brix: 26.1
Total Acid: 0.78
Ph: 3.69
Alc. 14.9%

Fermentation:
5 day cold soak, then 9 day fermentation in open
top half ton bins, punch down 5 times a day
Aging: 50% French Oak, 50 %
American Oak, 70%
New Oak
Bottling Date: May 2005
Release Date: November 2005
Production: 166 Cases

pH: 3.70
TA: 0.58 g/100ml
Barrel Aging: 20 months
Type of Oak: 50% new French oak
50% 1-3 year old French oak
Bottling Date: May 20, 2004
Production: 550 cases (750ml)
Release Date: March 2006

Tasting Notes:

Smooth, delicious and complex, our '02 Floodgate Vineyard Pinot Noir has components of black cherry, cranberry and subtle earth notes. The layers of aromas and flavors range from rose petals and black cherry to cranberry, mushroom and earthiness with hints of smoke, peppery toast and orange peel woven in. This well-balanced and integrated wine reminds us of why Pinot Noir is such an amazing treat.

Vineyard:

Floodgate Vineyard sits 500 feet above the Anderson Valley floor on the ridge top at the valley's far west end. A perfect southwest exposure causes the soil to warm quickly and brings a distinct and recognizable flavor to the grapes. The elevation and cooler climate means late ripening and harvesting. The vineyard was planted to six low-yield pinot noir clones to produce the most complex and intensely flavored Pinot Noir possible..

Hawley 2004 Pinot Noir Russian River Valley

(\$32.00 retail / \$25.60 club price)

John Hawley – Winemaker

Vineyards:

The grapes for this 2004 Hawley Pinot Noir came from two special vineyards in the Russian River Valley appellation. Seventy percent of this Pinot Noir came from Oehlman Vineyard. Located on Vine Hill, this steep south east facing slope is planted with the Martini and Pomard clones. Mullenhoff Vineyard, located in the Santa Rosa Plain, is planted to Dijon clone 115 and makes up thirty percent of this blend. In 2004 the Pinot Noir crop for both vineyards was less than two tons per acre, resulting in extremely concentrated flavors in the fruit. Both vineyards were harvested on September 16th at approximately 24.5 degrees Brix.

Winemaking:

The two vineyard lots were vinified separately. The ripe, deeply colored grapes were gently destemmed into small

Peterson Winery 2002 Pinot Noir Floodgate Vineyard, Anderson Valley

(\$29.00 retail / \$23.20 club price)

Fred Peterson – Winemaker

Fred's Vintaged View:

When I planted the Floodgate Vineyard, I used eight different Pinot Noir clones and planted to obtain maximum clonal diversity and complexity. After hand-harvesting, the grapes were destemmed and whole-berry fermented in our small, open-top fermenters, using the naturally occurring yeasts on the grapes. The lots were blended after pressing and immediately barreled down utilizing all Burgundy coopered French Oak of which 50% are new barrels, the balance being 1-3 year-old barrels. The wine is raked only once to remove the sediment out of barrels, utilizing nitrogen gas to preclude any oxidation of this delicate wine. After 20 months of barrel aging, the wine was bottled and is both unfiltered and unfiltered.

Like a wonderful French Burgundy, the aromatics of the wine are both rich and complex, with wonderful spice and floral aromas. On the palate the wine has a richness beyond its body. Though not as big in fruit mid-palate as some other California Pinots, the fruit dimensions grow as the wine travels through your mouth and has a quality that I call "sap", which is the viscosity of the finish and how it lingers on the palate. I'm obviously very impressed with this wine. Perhaps it's because really good Pinot Noirs are so ethereal and not to be taken for granted.

Technical Data:

Composition: 100% Pinot Noir, Floodgate
Vineyard
Appellation: Anderson Valley, Mendocino
County
Harvest Dates: Oct. 2, 2002
Alcohol: 13.9%

one-ton fermenters, where they were chilled and allowed to "cold soak". After one week the grapes warmed up and wild yeasts began the fermentation. The skins were punched down by hand three to eight times daily. The fermentation temperature was allowed to reach 95 degrees Fahrenheit during fermentation. The wine was pressed from the skins at dryness, using a 100-year-old manual basket press, into French Burgundy barrels (50% new), where it matured for 15 months. The gentle, traditional, Burgundian techniques and attention to details are reflected in the finished wine. After a light egg-white fining, the wine was carefully racked off the lees. No filtration was employed at any time.

This Pinot Noir was bottled on February 6, 2006. Only 373 cases were produced.

Tasting Notes:

This exceptionally fine Pinot Noir is unusually deep in color. It has complex aromas of coffee and vanilla to complement the deep cherry and raspberry flavors from the grapes. In the mouth the wine is rich and opulent, with generous, ripe, fruit flavors, and a long, silky-smooth finish. This wine will continue to improve for many years to come.

Serving Suggestions:

Pinot Noir is one of the most versatile of wines. Try it with seafood, rich stews, pasta, vegetarian cuisine, cheese dishes, fowl, or any red meat. For a special treat, pair it with roast duck.

Analysis

Alcohol 13.9% by volume
Titratable acidity 0.60 g/100ml
pH..... 3.68

**Crane Canyon 2000 Mourvedre
Knights Valley, Noble Vineyard
(\$18.00 retail / \$14.40 club price)
Patrick Imbimbo, Gardner Britt & Chuck Elsbree**

The Noble Vineyard is a pastoral setting in the foothills of Knights Valley, Sonoma County, California. Dr. Noble's passion for Rhône wines inspired him to plant this vineyard in Mourvèdre, Syrah and Viognier. Crane Canyon made its debut from this vineyard with its 1994 Mourvèdre. We feel its microclimate is perfect for Mourvèdre and Syrah, with moderately steep hillside drainage and exposure, and cooler than adjacent Napa and Alexander Valleys, allowing for longer maturation and deep complexity of flavors. Our

2000 Mourvèdre is blended with 10% Syrah from the same vineyard.

Winemakers' Notes

Mourvèdre is a grape varietal from the southern Rhône region of France brought to California in the late 1800's. Its hallmark is a bouquet of aged leather and blueberry. Add a dash of white pepper, some earth and sage, and a subtle waft of pipe tobacco. On the palate there is a brawny richness with the resonance of a cello, all the way to the long, lingering finish. Left to debate is whether this wine is simply decadent or unabashedly hedonistic.

Data Summary

Blend: 90% Mourvedre, 10% Syrah
Appellation: Knights Valley
Vineyard: Noble Vineyard
Harvest: October 2, 2000
°Brix at Harvest: 24.5
Fermentation: 100% Open Top Fermenters
Release: June, 2002
Aging: French Oak Barrels, 25% New, 11 months
Bottled: September 20, 2001
Production: 994 cases

Locals is open everyday but Tuesday from 11AM to 6PM.

We always enjoy hearing what you think. Drop us a line at P.O. Box 124, Geyserville, CA 95441. Or just email us at yummy@tastelocalwines.com. If you cannot visit in person read more about the wines at www.tastelocalwines.com.

