



Total Locals Wine Club

October 2008 Tasting Notes

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Hello Total Locals Club Members,

How do you decide what something is worth? Whose word do you take for the value of something you have created? Carolyn mentioned to me that several of the wines in this month's shipment are recent medal winners. Does that mean they will be better than the ones in the shipment that have won no medals? It's a question that got me thinking, because, after all, tastes change – not to mention the problem of the subjectivity of taste. A novel that was panned by the critics at the time when it was written becomes a beloved classic for our generation. One food critic calls a meal sublime, while another eats the same dish and deems it mediocre. I'll love a movie, recommend it to a friend, and two days later she's telling me she can't figure out why I told her to go see something so bad! How we decide what we like, and why? And what do those medals mean?

I wonder how the wine makers feel when their wines win or lose. Do they think less of their own creation if it does not win? I'm guessing not. After all, if your daughter's soccer team has lost regularly all season, you're still just as fond of her. Okay, it's not quite the same thing. If someone reads something I wrote and tells me they think it's badly written, it definitely worries me. Depending on who is telling me, I can get me pretty darn upset. If a critic I don't respect at all reviews my work and says it's great, do I suddenly think he's brilliant? And what exactly is the value of those wine medals? I guess it makes the wine sell. But do the best wines win the medals? I think that the best wine for you is the one you think tastes best, medal or not.

How do you choose your wines? Are you more likely to choose an award winning wine? Do you look for the ones with good reviews (sort of like deciding which movie to go see) or do you trust your instincts? Do you take chances and look for new things, or stick with the tried and true? If you are lucky, you come to a place like Sonoma and visit tasting rooms and taste for yourself. You sample and talk and sip and think and you come to your own conclusions based on your personal taste. And even if you can't always come here yourself, you get wines sent to you – like the ones you are about to receive, a selection of wines that includes some of those medal winners, a bottle or two to save as the perfect accompaniment to your Thanksgiving feast, and a few surprises based on the - very personal, and highly subjective – taste of my sister, Carolyn. I hope that you find some wines here that are medal winners for you.....

Hi all. Carolyn here. I always find it really interesting to observe customers in the tasting room just to watch how they make their wine selections. Clearly some are really taken with the concept of awards while others look only at price. But what I really like to see is when someone just trusts their own palate and let their taste buds be their guide. I listen to our customers describe flavor nuances that go way beyond berry or stone fruit and then seem somewhat embarrassed by the fact they have picked up a flavor that may not be regularly used in the standard descriptors for wine. I try to reas-

sure them that there are absolutely no hard and fast rules around wine tasting and the preferences of ones own palate is always the best guide. When I choose the wines for the clubs, I have to admit that I just plain go with what I like at decision time, a not too terribly scientific approach I will admit, but so far it has served me well.

This collection of wines brings you a small production special treat I was able to procure from winemaker Kathleen Inman of Inman Family Wines. A wonderful Pinot Noir that I suggest you may want to hang on to as a super pairing for your Thanksgiving feast. Kathleen is about as hands on a winemaker as it gets and the fruits of her labor shine through. She is committed to sustainable farming and her Olivet Grange Vineyard is located amongst some of the Russian River Valleys most respected vineyards. Big holiday meals tend to involve all kinds of side dishes, so a great well-balanced Pinot Noir is a great versatile choice when it comes to pairing. The second Pinot Noir in your mini flight is the 2006 Russian River Reds also from the Russian River appellation. This month also marks the official welcome to Locals Tasting Room of Mike Loykasek's wonderful Dark Horse Wines and we have included a bottle of his award winning Dry Creek Cabernet, which just took a Gold Medal at the Sonoma County Harvest Fair.

The Eric Ross Cabernet, which is another Gold Medal winner, is also a real treat. These grapes were hand harvested under the chill of an early morning fog from the Bonino Vineyard in Dry Creek Valley. Production is only 285 cases so try it soon. If you love it and want to order more you will need to act quickly. You can always place your order and ask that we hold your wine until the free shipping window is in effect so you don't miss the opportunity.

All you Ramazzotti fans out there will not be surprised to hear that not only did Joe receive a Gold Medal for his 2005 Raffinto but he also took the Best of Class award so how could we not include a bottle for you? And then there is that Silver Medal for the 2006 Syrah so you get one of those also. As always, full tasting notes on each wine can be found here tastelocalwines.com/tasting_notes with an easy and delicious chocolate tart to pair with your Cabernets and a great appetizer to make just in time for your family gatherings. (The recipes are at tastelocalwines.com/recipes.)

Don't forget to take advantage of your week of free shipping. Your free shipping code this month is FRSP11 and your order window is between November 7th and November 14th, 2008 (maximum order for free shipping is 3 cases with a maximum of one case to Alaska and Hawaii) Your 45 day follow up discount applies to all orders placed before December 5th, 2008.

Enjoy the upcoming holidays and don't let that crazy stock market get you down. Opportunity knocks and I find it is amazing what a nice glass of wine can do for ones overall mood.

Cheers,

Carolyn

**2005 Ramazzotti Raffinto
Sangiovese Super Tuscan Style**
\$30 retail, \$24 club price,
\$22.50 45-day follow-up price

**2006 Eric Ross
Cabernet Sauvignon, Bonino Vineyard**
\$45 retail, \$36 club price,
\$33 75-day follow-up price

**2005 Dark Horse
Cabernet Sauvignon, Dry Creek Valley**
\$36 retail, \$28.80 club price,
\$27 45-day follow-up price

**2006 Ramazzotti
Syrah, Alexander Valley**
\$28 retail, \$22.40 club price,
\$21.45 45-day follow-up price

**2006 RH Wines
Pinot Noir, Russian River Reds**
\$22 retail, \$17.60 club price,
\$16.50 45-day follow-up price

**2005 Inman Family Wines
Estate Pinot Noir, Olivet Grange Vineyard**
\$50 retail, \$40 club price,
\$37.50 45-day follow-up price

Locals is open
Everyday from 11AM to 6PM.

We always enjoy hearing from you .
Drop us a line at:
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