



Locals Choice Wine Club

September 2007 Tasting Notes

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Hello again Locals Choice Club members,

The sites, sounds and smells of the grape harvest are all around us here in Geyserville. This time of year is my favorite. It is a great reminder of just how much work goes in to putting a wonderful bottle of wine in your cellar or a luscious taste in your glass. Grape picking starts at dawn around here. The vineyards are full of activity as the rush to get the grapes picked while it is still cool means the empty trucks are rumbling past our house in the wee hours of the morning.

This year's harvest in Sonoma County started pretty abruptly because of several weeks of intense heat, which seemed to catch a few winery owners by surprise. Mostly it has meant that everyone had to kick into high gear a bit faster than they might have liked, but early reports on the 2007 harvest seem to be full of excitement. For those of you a bit further away, here is a snippet from our local paper. It sounds like we can be assured of a great 2007 vintage!

Harvest 2007

Pretty fantastic grape harvest underway

By GUY KOVNER - THE PRESS DEMOCRAT August 21, 2007

"Warm, sunny days and cool nights are creating a perfect non-storm as the North Coast's \$1 billion grape harvest gets rolling this week with growers and vintners extolling the small, clean and dry grape clusters that characterize the 2007 crop.

"Pretty fantastic," said Keith Horn, a vineyard manager in Geyserville, where truckloads of sauvignon blanc grapes were harvested on Monday.

Typically the first of the still wine varietals to be picked, sauvignon blanc started coming in last week and heralds a crush expected to get hectic by the middle of September and wrap up in October, ideally before the rain begins.

Acknowledging that the harvest overall was only 1 percent complete, a Geyserville winemaker said the incoming sauvignon blanc "has everything I think we need."

Fog-free days in the 80s ripen wine grapes, cool nights in the 40s to 50s enhance their flavor — exactly what the National Weather Service forecasts for the next 10 days.

"We're in a climate sweet spot," said wine broker Brian Clements, a former grape buyer for Gallo. "I'm excited about it."

When grape growers, a taciturn lot, find nothing to grumble about it's an unusual season, said Nick Frey, president of the Sonoma County Wine Grape Commission. The current conditions, he said, are "fairly close to ideal."

Experts are predicting a smaller than average harvest, which is also good news because it typically means well-developed grapes and good prices."



So that is a look at the future, but right now let's talk about the wines from the 2004 and 2005 vintages that you will be enjoying very soon. First up is the 2005 Hawley Zinfandel from the Ponzo vineyard. This wine is currently a big time Locals star. With 6 Gold Medals under its belt, I have often found myself reaching for this wine to accompany my dinner recently. The wine has just a touch of Petite Sirah and was aged for nine months in a mixture of French and American oak barrels leaving it soft and juicy.

Those of you who visit us in person have probably already met Sharon, our new Assistant Manager, or talked to her on the telephone. Sharon hails from South Africa and when she tasted this wine she decided it spoke to her of Oxtail Stew, so we have posted her interesting South African version of this recipe on our website for you to enjoy. I think you will find it a wonderful pairing to the Hawley Zinfandel whose white pepper and raspberry notes seem to jump from the glass.

The second wine you will be receiving is the hugely popular 2004 Ramazzotti Raffinto, a yummy Sangiovese blend. The word Raffinto means refined in Italian and suits this wine perfectly. The wine is made in a Super Tuscan style and combines Sangiovese with small amounts of Cabernet, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Syrah. Our resident food pairing expert Diane volunteered the food pairing for this one. Her recipe selection for Pasta with Sun-Dried Tomatoes, Olives, Goat Cheese and a bottle or three of Ramazzotti Raffinto can be found on our website by clicking the recipes link on our website.

Once you try these wines for yourself, tell us what you think would make a perfect pairing for each. Send an email to us at yummy@tastelocalwines.com and let us know.

Tasting notes for both of this month's wine selections can be found on our website, www.tastelocalwines.com.

We are pleased to once again offer you FREE SHIPPING on any CASE order of Locals wines placed either online using the coupon code FRSHIP8 or by telephone when you reference the same code. This offer is valid for orders placed between October 3rd and October 8th so be sure to stock up for the holiday season. Wine club follow up discounts apply until November 3rd.

2004 Ramazzotti Raffinto

\$25 Retail, Club Price \$21.25

45-day follow up price \$20

2005 Hawley Zinfandel

\$25 Retail, Club Price \$21.25

45-day follow up price \$20

Enjoy the rest of your Indian Summer. We look forward to seeing you at Locals soon if your travels bring you in our direction, or to chatting by phone and email if not.

Cheers,

Carolyn, Tim, Diane and Sharon.

Locals is open Wednesday through Monday from 11AM to 6PM.

We always enjoy hearing from you .

Drop us a line at:

Box 124, Geyserville, CA 95441.

Or email us at:

yummy@tastelocalwines.com.