



PLUMPJACK
WINES

PlumpJack Wine Club

April 2007

Sometimes I feel like a pilgrim traveling an enological path in search of organoleptic bliss. The path goes in many directions and I find myself trekking the globe seeking out the many different wines the world has to offer. Most times the search leads me to areas far from home. Our wine club has featured wines from Italy, South Africa, Germany, and Austria, to name just a few, and I am astounded by how many great wines are available from so many different places. It is amazing to think you could spend a lifetime tasting only the wines of France, and just scratch the surface of the variety the country has to offer. But, my fellow and uniqueness in wine. Our wines this month both come from California and they are far from being ordinary or mundane. When you taste these wines, I think you will agree that they have the complexity and quality that can rival wines from anywhere in the world.

pilgrims, you don't have to travel far to find diversity

***2005 Chesebro/CMR Winery
Roussanne
Carmel Valley, California***

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***2004 Bokisch
Graciano
Lodi, California***



Located in the northern Central Coast region of California, and bordering the Pacific Ocean, Monterey County begins 100 miles south of San Francisco and extends to 30 miles north of Paso Robles. The Monterey County wine region is bound by the Monterey Bay, as well as the Coastal mountain range, and extends into the Carmel and Salinas Valleys. Monterey Wine Country encompasses eight certified growing regions or American Viticultural Areas (AVA). The potential of Monterey County as a wine-producing area was not realized until the early 1960's, when a study conducted by the University of California at Davis ranked Monterey County among the top areas in the world for growing premium varietal wine grapes. With over 45,000 planted acres of vineyards, and over 40 different grape varieties, Monterey County is one of the largest premium grape growing regions in North America. The Carmel Valley AVA, which lies within Monterey County, was approved in 1983, and consists of 19,200 acres of land (of which about 300 acres are in vines) along the Carmel River watershed between the village of Carmel Valley and the town of Jamesburg. The average annual precipitation ranges from about 16.5 to 22.5 inches, which is considerably above Monterey County's overall average of 10 inches. Elevation in the Carmel Valley ranges from just above sea level to 2,000 feet at the ridge lines. The topography has a major influence on the weather. The ridges create a climate quite different from that of the outlying Coastal Range, Pacific Coast and Salinas Valley. There are generally more sunny days in Carmel Valley because much of the terrain is above the fog line. The soils of Carmel Valley are generally well-drained sandy loam, although a large portion has deep clay under a six-inch loamy surface. The temperature swing between day and night can be as much as 50 degrees Fahrenheit or more, which allows for a longer growing season or hang time. Wine grapes were first planted in Carmel Valley in the late 18th century, in association with the Carmel Mission, founded by Father Junipero Serra in 1781. There were plantings reported as late as 1879 on what is now Durney property and around the turn of the century on property now owned by Galante Vineyards. Vineyards seem to have

disappeared before prohibition and were revived with the plantings at Durney in the 1960s. Carmel Valley's commercial grape growing began in 1968 with 40 acres of Cabernet Sauvignon planted in the Cachagua (an Indian word meaning Hidden Springs) region of Carmel Valley. Mark Chesebro is the former winemaker for Bernardus Winery of Carmel Valley, and left in 2005 to produce wines under the Chesebro/CMR Winery label. He is a graduate of UC Davis with a degree in enology and continues to consult for Bernardus and a few other local wineries. The Chesebro Home Ranch Vineyard is located only 5 miles from the Pacific Ocean, yet 25 miles up the Carmel Valley. The vineyard is a gentle bowl-shaped bench situated at 1500 feet elevation. Mark chose to plant Rhone varietals because he felt the attributes of the vineyard were best suited to those grapes. The vineyard is managed without pesticides or herbicides, and the grapes are hand-harvested. The 2005 Roussanne is a blend of 90% Roussanne, 5% Vermentino, and 5% Sauvignon Blanc Musque. Mark includes Vermentino for its bright citrus flavor, while the Sauvignon Blanc adds an exotic melon component to the blend. The grapes were harvested with low 3 tons/acre yields and were then fermented in neutral oak and stainless steel barrels. The wine did not undergo malolactic fermentation to retain its crisp acidity. Only 155 cases were produced. The 2005 Roussanne has complex aromas with hints of melons and citrus, and an underlying minerality. In the mouth, it has wonderful balance, intense fruit complemented by bright acidity, and a long finish. The wine pairs beautifully with many seafood dishes such as PlumpJack Café's steamed Pacific halibut with Manila clams, salted Meyer lemon Mascarpone and citric gel.

The 2005 Chesebro Roussanne is \$17.99/bottle, \$194.30/case.



The Lodi AVA is rapidly becoming recognized as one of the most prolific grape-growing regions in the world. Of the 552,000 acres that comprise the Lodi appellation, nearly 100,000 are planted with wine grapes, producing more Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc and Zinfandel than any other wine district in the state, and more Zinfandel than any other district in the world. Because of its sheer vastness, the simple 'Lodi' designation fails to articulate the wide diversity of terroir that exists within the half million acres of the appellation. This issue of ambiguity motivated a small group of local growers and vintners to initiate the process for the creation of sub-appellations within the existing Lodi appellation. The movement began when local grower and winery-owner Markus Bokisch wanted to create a sub-appellation in the eastern portion of Lodi in the Clements Hills, where his winery, Bokisch Vineyards, and the majority of his vineyards are located. The Clements Hills, located in southeastern Lodi, has 85,400 acres of which 21,700 are under vine. The Clements Hills AVA is the second largest appellation in Lodi and is characterized by the rolling hills and cliffs, anywhere from 90 feet to 400 feet, emerging out of the flat San Joaquin Valley to form the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Varied microclimates result from the hilly terrain, but the Clements Hills Appellation is generally warmer and wetter than western Lodi. Markus Bokisch obtained a degree in plant pathology and from there began specializing in viticulture. After spending several years at Joseph Phelps Vineyards specializing in Rhone Varieties, he and his wife, Liz, moved to Spain where he worked in the Spanish wine industry. Upon their return in 1995, they purchased their property in the Lodi area and planted their first vineyard. Markus and his wife Liz are dedicated to producing hand-crafted Spanish varietal wines. They farm all of their vineyards sustainably, utilizing low chemical inputs, and high biological diversity. Graciano is thought to be the oldest variety commercially grown in Spain today. Its origins predate the arrival of the Romans, when Iberians tribes pressed and fermented their Graciano in the old terraced hillside vineyards of the Rioja Alavesa. The grapes for the 2004 Bokisch Graciano come from the Las Cerezas Vineyard in the Mokelumne River Appellation of Lodi. This appellation, located in central Lodi, south of Jahant, has 85,700 acres total, of which 42,000 are currently under vine. The elevation here is relatively low, ranging from a low of 10 feet to a high of 100 feet. This area was the first to be planted in Lodi. The 2004 Bokisch Graciano is composed of 95% Graciano and 5% Tempranillo. After fermentation was complete, the wine was aged for 16 months in French oak barrels (40% new oak.) Only 242 cases were produced. The 2004 Graciano explodes with full-bodied aromas of black cherry, spice and a hint of anise. In the mouth the flavors of ripe berries and vanilla, with an underlying earthy richness, give way to smooth tannins and a lingering finish. Enjoy this wine with grilled pork tenderloin or spicy sausages, or take a bottle to the Balboa Café and have it with the famous Balboa Burger.

The 2004 Bokisch Vineyards Graciano is \$23.99/bottle, \$259.10/case.