



c.a.v.e.

courtship and vigilant enology

Spring 2013

Even though we still need some rain to meet our average annual rainfall it is nice to see the springtime bloom of wild flowers, fruit trees, all things ornamental, and yes, warmth. And though we did get some small amounts of rain earlier this month it was just enough to keep those darn weeds growing. But, you ask, what about the grapevines? Very predictably the vines are leafing out as they do every year about now thanks to good ol' Mother Nature. The term in viticulture circles is "bud break" when the dormant buds first swell, then expand and open to reveal the new green tissue that will eventually be what grows into the 2013 vintage. But I gotta say it is somewhat later this year than in the past. Bud break almost always occurs before April 1 yet there are many local vineyards where it is just happening right now (April 9 at this writing). Let's hope the 7-10 days late start now doesn't turn into a later-than-usual fall ripening and its related problems (think rain!).

If you have read my previous Spring newsletters you know that spring brings great anticipation of the coming new vintage and this year is no different. As the new growth slowly pushes out of its winter dormancy I start to look right away at how many small clusters the tiny shoots have. Will there be two clusters per cane as there should be; will the clusters be small or large; and what about berry size? So many questions, so much anticipation, it's hard to be patient and wait to find all this stuff out. By now we all know that 2012 yielded the largest wine grape crop in California history and what typically happens after a large crop is one that is smaller than average. Why? Fruit trees tend to bear in cycles so it is fair to expect we will see a dip this year on the heels of the bumper crop of last year.

But the anticipation of 2013 is not just in the vineyard. Pech Merle is meeting some benchmark goals this year: We have a new broker representing us in both Southern California and the Bay Area; Our new web site will launch very soon; And significantly, we will be opening our tasting room at our Dry Creek Valley location for special events starting with the weekend of April 27 and 28, which coincides with Dry Creek Passport Weekend. Indeed, this is a lot to be excited about and represents many hours, days and weeks of long and hard work to get to this point. So I'm just gonna come right out and say it: It's all good in 2013!

Also new in 2013: Please notice for the first time we have included a drinkability statement (on the back of this newsletter) regarding our previous and current release wines (including futures wines) to help give some guidance on when these wines will drink best. It is our basic philosophy our wines be approachable at the time of release but as with any fine wine a little time in the bottle can make a big difference. Our stylistic preference is to make wines that showoff the unique ripe-fruit character of each varietal while maintaining balance with acidity, oak and tannin, and have a great mouthfeel. Please look it over and use it as a guide if you have some of these wines in your cellar. And always feel free to message me if you have any questions regarding our wines, I am always happy to talk about them and give information to enhance your experience with PM.

Here's to another bumper crop in 2013!



Cheers!

John Pepe

John Pepe, Winemaker



drinkability

past, current & future vintages

Spring 2013

Wine	Drink / Hold	Optimum Years
2009 Dry Creek Sauvignon Blanc	Drink	
2012 Dry Creek Sauvignon Blanc	Drink	Present - 2014
2011 Dry Creek Ivy Rose' de Syrah	Drink	
2012 Dry Creek Ivy Rose' de Syrah	Drink	2013
2009 Russian River Chardonnay	Drink	
2010 Russian River Chardonnay	Drink / Hold	Present - 2014
2009 Mendocino County Pinot Noir	Drink / Hold	Present - 2015
2010 RRV Laguna de Santa Rosa Pinot Noir	Drink / Hold	Peak 2014 - 2015
2011 RRV Laguna de Santa Rosa Pinot Noir	Hold	2014 - 2016
2009 Alexander Valley Merlot	Drink	2013
2010 Alexander Valley Merlot	Drink / Hold	Present - 2014
2008 Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon	Present - 2014	Excellent right now
2009 Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon	Present - 2014	Peak 2014 - 2017
2010 Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon	Hold	Peak 2014 - 2016
2007 Alexander Valley Cabernet Franc	Drink	Excellent right now
2009 Alexander Valley Cabernet Franc	Drink	Excellent right now
2010 Alexander Valley Cabernet Franc	Drink / Hold	Peak 2014 - 2015
2008 Dry Creek Zinfandel	Drink	
2008 Le Entrée' Zinfandel	Drink	
2009 Dry Creek Zinfandel	Drink / Hold	Excellent right now
2010 Cuccio Dry Creek Zinfandel	Drink / Hold	Peak late 2013-2014
2010 Treborce Dry Creek Zinfandel	Drink / Hold	Peak late 2013-2014