



c.a.v.e.

courtship and vigilant enology

fall 2016

2016 Harvest

It is hard for me to believe another harvest is here. It seems like the last one just ended not that long ago. Similar to last year the grapevines seem to be on an early track of development. Vines leafed out in early March and bloom was finished before June 1. Fruit set was quite good with



consistent berry counts and solid clusters. The one variable was the number of clusters per shoot which seemed to be on the low side at an average of 1.5 per shoot (optimum is two). Viognier will be the first grapes we harvest again this year being finished by early September. All other varieties seem to be on a normal time frame for harvesting, coming in this order: Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel, Cab Franc, and finally the Cabernet Sauvignon which is always the last grape to be harvested in Sonoma County. We have had a very bright and sunny summer with only one nine-day heat wave; otherwise, there have been beautiful 90-degree days with little fog. All this bodes well for very good fruit and flavor development so let's keep our fingers crossed! Another great Pech Merle vintage is on the way.

Vertical Cabernet Franc Tasting

On Saturday, June 25th, we held our first Wine Club only vertical tasting and dinner event with a full table of guests at 46 people. It was great fun and we all learned something about ourselves and Cab Franc that we did not know before. Each wine presented in a different way depending on vintage characteristics and age of the wine. To my surprise many folks preferred the 2011 which was showing extremely well and continued to evolve in the glass. 2011 was a rainy vintage and I had cautious expectations but it was really lovely and fully evolved. If you have some in your cellar, whip that one out and open 'er up. Pair it with a red meat dish of some kind or lighter pasta dish and you'll be glad you did. For those who preferred wines on the younger and fruitier side like I do, the 2013 is the one to watch. Being released for the first time with this shipment you will find it to be rich, full bodied and youthful with luscious fruit, soft texture and very good length and balance. And of course the wine will age very well for at least five more years if that is your preference. Salute'



A Word About The 2015 Pech Merle Ivy Rosé de Syrah

As you may know we nearly doubled our production of this wine in 2015 due its incredible popularity and demand. In a year of short grape supply I feel blessed to have found enough good Syrah to do the job. So far in 2016 this wine has won three Gold medals and a Sweepstakes Award, the highest level of recognition a wine can achieve. Agreed it is a tiny bit darker than the European Rose's and some others in Sonoma County, but that is the basis of its irresistible fruit and charm. Color and flavor come from the skins so it is hard to get one without the other. But when grapes are picked at just the right moment you can squeak by and end up with a Rose' that is light, flavorful and vibrant.

New Release - 2013 Laguna de Santa Rosa Pinot Noir



Newly released this month is our 2013 Laguna de Santa Rosa Pinot Noir and it has already been awarded a 90 point rating from Wine Enthusiast and a Gold medal from the 2016 Sonoma County Harvest Fair. This wine has always been a favorite for Thanksgiving celebrations and pairs beautifully with food.



John Pepe
John Pepe, Winemaker



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