



# Merry Monks

## Wine Club of Cantiga Wineworks



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## Why does wine improve with age?

“No more of this OLD stuff. Give me something from *this year!*” – Steve Martin, “The Jerk”

Conventional wisdom holds that wine improves with age. We know, of course, that this isn't always the case—it depends very much on the winemaking style and characteristics. Does the wine have sufficient tannin and/or acidity to preserve it through the years? Has it been abused or manipulated in the winemaking process?

At Cantiga, we have chosen to make wines of classic style and structure that do lend themselves to long-term cellaring. Many of our club members, like us, patiently lay down each vintage to see how it unfolds and blossoms in the fullness of time. With good, stable cellaring, our patience is consistently rewarded!

*But what exactly happens in the bottle? What magic transforms a good wine into a great wine?*

Wine is dynamic—it is forever changing. Through its lifetime, myriad complex chemical reactions occur among its phenolic compounds, sugars (including alcohol) and acids. Compounds dissolve and new ones form. These reactions have an impact on the flavor, bouquet and texture of the wine.

As a wine ages, the primary flavors that come from the fruit (e.g. fresh cherry notes in cabernet) and secondary flavors that come from winemaking (e.g. vanilla notes from oak) start receding and make room for the tertiary flavors of the maturation process (e.g. earthy and herbal characteristics).

An aged wine also changes in mouthfeel. Tannins, the astringent compounds that come from grape skins and seeds, give a wine structure and protect it from oxidation. With time, these phenolic compounds lose their charge and start to combine, forming larger chains that give a smoother, gentler feel. Eventually, the chains get heavy enough to begin dropping out as sediment. Have you ever opened a well-aged bottle and discovered “crunchies” at the bottom? These are some of your tannins!

Thinking of trying your hand at aging some bottles? For optimal results, please see our article on aging wine online: <https://www.cantigawine.com/aging-wine>

## In this shipment:

For your spring shipment, we have selected three wines that have had the benefit of age. The first two were released about a year ago and have developed into phenomenal wines. The third is a nine-year-old Library Wine that we cellared exclusively for our wine club. We tasted it recently and it knocked our socks off! For details on these wines, read on...

ESTATE WINERY & TASTING ROOM: 5980 Meyers Lane, Somerset, CA 95684

[www.cantigawine.com](http://www.cantigawine.com)

### 2017 Semillon, Estate Vineyard

Harvest Brix: 24.0      pH: 3.48      TA: 5.93      Alc: 14.4%      RS: 0%      ML: 0%  
Cases produced: 156      Barrel age: 2 years in mixed neutral French oak and stainless

Although the 2017 vintage of our signature estate white has been available for nine months now, it has not yet found its way into a club shipment. We thought we'd better get it to you before it sells out! Our Semillon is known for its lush apricot and apple characteristics, and the fact that we ferment it to dry (0% residual sugar) makes it very versatile with food. We particularly enjoy it with Asian and Mexican food, any kind of fish or seafood, and it works great with spicy dishes. We are always amused when we hear that white wines can't age. At four years old, this one is still a youngster and continues to get better all the time! Whites are more susceptible to oxidation because they don't have as many tannins as reds, but they also garner some protection from their higher acidity. The key to allowing whites to unfold beautifully is to provide cool, stable storage.

### 2017 GSM, Sierra Foothills

Harvest Brix: 25.9      pH: 3.70      TA: 5.04      Alc: 15.1%      RS: 0.0%      ML: 0%  
Cases produced: 300      Aging: 2 years in mostly neutral European oak

The current vintage of our Rhone-style blend (50% Grenache / 25% Syrah / 25% Mourvedre) has become a favorite for many of our customers. This lush, elegant wine balances well with heavy, flavorful dishes—it pairs equally well with hearty stews such as French *cassoulet*, Spanish and Mexican dishes, and rich, fatty meats like duck. Bright and lush in its youth, this wine has acquired depth over the past year. Its tannins, spice and fruit components have settled into a stunning harmony that should continue to impress with additional age.

### 2012 Library Petite Sirah, Estate (Club only)\*

Harvest Brix: 25.7      pH: 3.5      TA: 6.83      Alc: 14.7%      ML: 0%      RS: 0%  
Cases produced: 220      Barrel age: 3 years in mostly neutral European oak

Our Estate Petite Sirah is one of our most consistent wines from year to year. With its big, hearty tannins, intense blackberry notes and excellent acidity, it is an ideal candidate for aging. We first offered this one to our wine club back in 2016, and released it to the public the following year. We intentionally set aside a pallet for an eventual re-release to our club so that you could share in the benefits of longer cellaring. We believe you will be pleased with the results!

*\*LIBRARY WINES FOR AMBASSADORS OF OENOS: Our upper tier members will receive three bottles of the 2012 vintage, plus a surprise bottle of our amazing 2010 Petite Sirah. Cheers!*