



Merry Monks

Wine Club of Cantiga Wineworks



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Spring wines to brighten our days

Dear Club Members,

Last year, we wrote to you about the value of the Slow Food Movement as an antidote to the frenzy of modern life. Little did we know that less than a year later, we would be witnessing a mass return to cooking at home and shifting to local food supplies. The COVID-19 outbreak has caused disruption and hardship on so many levels, but at the same time it has forced many of us to slow down, re-center, and examine our priorities. With shelter in place orders, this has been a time for many to reconnect with our families—either in our household or by phone or Zoom. With the disruptions in our food supply chain, many are taking charge of their own subsistence by way of raising poultry or planting gardens. We have also seen an outpouring of support toward local farmers and small businesses. We are proving our resiliency, adaptability, resourcefulness, and dedication to our communities.

In spite of the strangeness and challenges of this time, it is impossible to ignore the arrival of spring that awakens us to activity and invigorates us with the increasing daylight, warmth and energy. Nature and seasonal change remind us that we are just small threads in a very large and intricate web, and that we are all affected by the movements of the whole. In response to the season, we are offering, in this shipment, a series of wines that lend themselves to spring menus—including an amazing Estate white and two favorite medium-bodied reds.

We have always encouraged our customers and club members to enjoy our wines with lovingly prepared food and good company. Though company may not be possible these days (aside from our households and Zoom links), we can still put our culinary skills to good use. We love hearing about the wines you open and the food you enjoy them with, and this is happening more frequently these days. If you have been following our “Wine World” video series, we will be running a 3-episode series on pairing these club wines with food to aid you in your Slow Food endeavors.

In the Slow Food Movement’s *Manifesto*, it states: “A firm defense of quiet material pleasure is the only way to oppose the universal folly of Fast Life. May suitable doses of guaranteed sensual pleasure and slow, long-lasting enjoyment preserve us from the contagion of the multitude who mistake frenzy for efficiency.”

May good food and wine lend you strength for the journey through these uncharted waters. We send you our very best wishes and look forward to the day when we can meet again face to face. Stay well!

Rich & Christine Rorden

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Included in your spring shipment:

2016 Semillon, Estate

Harvest Brix: 23.8 pH: 3.68 TA: 5.39 Alc: 14.3% RS: 0% ML: 0%
Cases produced: 139 Barrel age: 2 years in neutral French oak & stainless steel

It has been several years since we included our Estate white in a club shipment, due to the limited availability of this wine. We are excited to share it with you, now! This Bordeaux variety grows exceedingly well in our region, although it is not widely planted in the Foothills. 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. If you don't think you are a fan of white wine, we encourage you to try this in the context of a well-paired meal. You might just be pleasantly surprised—it is not your typical California white!

2016 Barbera, Sierra Foothills (New release)

Harvest Brix: 25.6 pH: 3.25 TA: 6.78 Alc: 15.2% RS: 0% ML: 0%
Cases produced: 152 Barrel age: 3 years in mostly neutral European oak

We release a Barbera only periodically, so this one has been much anticipated. It took a year longer in barrel than most vintages of Barbera, but our patience has paid off. The grapes for this much-loved Italian variety come from Wilderotter Vineyard in the Shenandoah Valley, Amador County. (This is our first Barbera from this vineyard.) It is a bright, medium bodied red with pomegranate fruit characteristics and a rose floral component. It is fantastic with Italian cuisine—the acidity of the wine balances well with tomato-based sauces. Salty olives and cured meats provide a wonderful complement.

2017 Grenache, Estate (Club pre-release)

Harvest Brix: 25.7 pH: 3.80 TA: 5.61 Alc: 15.0% RS: 0% ML: 0%
Cases produced: 129 Barrel age: 2 years in mostly neutral European oak

We are pleased to offer a sneak preview of our new vintage of Estate Grenache to our club members. The 2017 vintage is showing very nicely this early in its life. Our Grenache is a dry, Spanish-varietal red wine with abundant strawberry characteristics. Its relatively light body and fresh fruit quality makes it a perfect warm weather wine. It goes really nicely with many Spanish, Mexican and even French dishes, and can stand up to some heat. One of our favorite dishes to pair with this wine is Spanish paella. However, it is also our “go to” wine when we make carnitas or fajitas!

Cheers, and enjoy!