



# Merry Monks

## Wine Club of Cantiga Wineworks



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WC 2024-Q3

## Spectacular Seasonal Pairings

As summer drifts toward fall, nature heaps its bounty upon us. Tomatoes ripen and vines grow heavy with excess squash. Stone fruits plump up with sweet juices. It is such a treat to enjoy these lavish gifts with friends and family, whether grilled or chilled but always accompanied by a fine bottle of wine.

This month's shipment wines are specially selected for the season, and we are happy to share some of our favorite food pairings and recipes with you. Let us savor the season and raise our glass to the good things in life.

Cheers and bon appétit!

### *Included in your spring shipment:*

#### 2018 GSM, Sierra Foothills

Harvest Brix: 25.8      pH: 3.75      TA: 5.23      Alc: 15.0%      RS: 0.0%      ML: 0%  
Cases produced: 269      Barrel age: 2 years in mostly neutral European oak

The current vintage of our popular Rhone-style blend has blossomed spectacularly. Its Grenache component (50%) lends lush strawberry notes, while its Syrah (25%) gives a hint of darker fruit and structure. The Mourvedre (25%) imparts delicate floral nuances. Slightly chilled, it is a perfect warm weather red that goes wonderfully with Spanish and Latin American cooking.

Quintessential Mexican seasonings align well with this wine, including cumin, coriander, paprika, garlic, various chilis, onions and tomatoes. A wide variety of taco fillings work great with this wine if you stick with authentic seasonings. For picnics, a Mexican 7-layer dip is always a hit. Or, put your excess garden-ripened tomatoes and peppers to good use in a refreshing gazpacho or pico de gallo.

#### 2016 Tempranillo, El Dorado

Harvest Brix: 23.5      pH: 4.00      TA: 6.15      Alc: 13.6%      RS: 0%      ML: 0%  
Cases produced: 79      Barrel age: 5 years in mostly neutral European oak

We are pleased to share a rare Cantiga offering in this shipment—Tempranillo! We've only made two vintages of this delicious Spanish varietal, and the 2016 has yet to go into a club shipment. This distinctive wine is medium-bodied, with generous plum fruit, tobacco smoke, and savory spice. As a lush, lighter red, it is an ideal hot weather wine.

Lighter fare, such as Spanish tapas, make excellent summer pairings for this wine. We particularly enjoy a platter of dry-cured chorizo and aged Manchego cheese, both thinly sliced, as well as roast or grilled potato wedges served with Romesco sauce. (Visit our website for our Spanish Romesco Sauce recipe.) Your bountiful summer squash can lend a seasonal flair to a pan-full of sumptuous paella. Feel in the mood for grilling? This wine is wonderful with smoky barbecued pork ribs!

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

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

\* 2017 Tempranillo, El Dorado (Professional Winos & Ambassadors Only)

Harvest Brix: 23.9      pH: 3.76      TA: 5.48      Alc: 13.9%      RS: 0%      ML: partial  
Cases produced: 144      Barrel age: 3 years in mostly neutral European oak

The 2017 vintage, picked from a local, organically farmed vineyard, is similar in flavor profile to the 2016 but with slightly more robust tannins. Our 6-bottle and 12-bottle members will receive both vintages of Tempranillo (a half-complement of each). The two wines make for a fun comparison!

2013 Syrah, El Dorado (Library Wine)

Avg. Harvest Brix: 25.2      pH: 3.90      TA: 5.5      Alc: 14.6%      RS: 0.0%      ML: 0%  
Cases produced: 205      Barrel age: 3 years, mostly neutral European oak

We are pleased to include a fun and somewhat whimsical library selection as part of this shipment. Rich always referred to our 2013 vintage of El Dorado Syrah as a “wine with an identity crisis.” The story behind this wine is that in 2013, we did an exploration of some new potential syrah sources. We purchased grapes from two different vineyards, one higher elevation vineyard in north Fair Play, and one slightly lower vineyard in south Fair Play. The higher elevation fruit had a little trouble ripening but had a lot of character. The lower elevation fruit was riper but lacked the intensity of the other fruit. Fortunately, when we put our mad scientist hats on and conducted trials, we found that the two lots complemented each other nicely in an 80:20 blend.

The most unique thing about this blend, though—and this is where the identity crisis comes in—is that we were never able to determine with certainty whether the two sources were French clone *Syrah*, or whether there was some Australian clone *Shiraz* in the mix. The owners had theories that seemed at odds with what we were tasting. Sure enough, as this blend has aged, an abundance of white pepper spice has emerged—a distinctive shiraz attribute. So, this blend might actually be a Syrah-Shiraz! (Shall we call it a “Shirah”?)

Fire up “the barbie” and pair this wine as you would with a shiraz—grilled lamb chops seasoned with rosemary and lemon, alongside grilled portobello mushrooms and summer squash, lightly basted with olive oil, salt and fresh-ground pepper. Kabobs are also fun this time of year. For veggie skewers, you can alternate oil-basted zucchini, sweet peppers, button mushrooms, red onion, parboiled mini potatoes, and cherry tomatoes. Your choice of cubed meat (beef, lamb, pork or chicken) can be pre-marinated in olive oil, garlic, freshly squeezed lemon, and herbs such as rosemary or oregano before feeding onto skewers.

\* 2014 Syrah, El Dorado (Library Wine—Professional Winos & Ambassadors only)

Harvest Brix: 25.4      pH: 3.68      TA: 5.18      Alc: 15.0%      RS: 0.0%      ML: 0%  
Cases produced: 159      Aging: 3 years in mostly neutral European oak

We have a bonus vintage of Syrah for our Professionals and Ambassadors, who will receive a half-complement of each vintage. Also grown in Fair Play, the 2014 is rich and bold yet elegant, with blackberry fruit and hints of cocoa. More of a classic Syrah, it is an interesting contrast with its 2013 counterpart. The two vintages are so different, but we love them both. Enjoy this bottle with steak or burgers, grilled portobellos, and thick slices of grilled eggplant basted with olive oil, salt and pepper. (Seriously, you will be blown away by the grilled eggplant pairing!)