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FIRESTONE
VINEYARD

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JUNE
2011

Wine Club Newsletter

ANOTHER WAY TO CHART THE SEASONS

I use a number of almanac tricks to track the seasons here at Firestone. I keep an eye of the length of day, the sun's path in the sky, the temperatures, the progress of the vines, the indigenous plant life, and the bird and animal activity in the vineyard.

But for the rest of Santa Barbara County, I've found a better way to track the seasons: Farmer's Markets. A quick perusal of the fruits, vegetables and seafood being sold gives me a rough idea of the date on the calendar.

My favorite market is located in the Santa Barbara Harbor. There, Sam Shroud and other local fishermen open at dawn on Saturdays with their catch from the night before. From fall to early spring spiny lobster is in season—well worth the cost, if only as a rare and special treat to the family. Then as lobster season ends, Spot Prawn season begins. Though really a shrimp, the Spot Prawn is in a class of its own. The meat is very sweet and the texture is firm like lobster.

I prefer to cook both lobster and prawns on the grill. The lobster is always naked, while the prawns get dressed in oil, salt, herbs and citrus zest. These special treats also complement the rock crab that's available here year round. They go in the pot since I haven't quite mastered a technique for doing them on the grill. By the way, nothing goes better with fresh shellfish than Firestone Sauvignon Blanc or Gewürztraminer. (How's that for a shameless plug!)

From the harbor, we'll have breakfast, followed by a short drive to the Santa Barbara Certified Farmers Market. Thanks to our amazing climate, I can always find fruits, vegetables, oils, honey, and small-production, hand-raised beef and pork products that are available year round! Most, if not all, of our farmers are organic, which in addition to the environmental benefits, makes for better tasting foods.

And, depending on the time of year, we just might stop on the way home for some beachcombing or bouncing in the surf.

FROM OUR WINEMAKER

Greetings from sunny Santa Ynez!

Well, actually, things aren't so sunny right now. We're in the midst of June gloom – a meteorological condition particular to the west coast that translates to cold, damp, overcast mornings. We hate it, but the grapes love it. There are days with so much fog that the sky actually drips water. It usually burns off between 10am and 1pm depending on the winds. Most days the temperatures will range from the 50s in the mornings to the high 80s in the afternoons. My advice to all employees: dress in layers.

As a kid growing up in southern California I remember going to the beach in June with my family. It was a thrill to start summer vacation on the sands of Malibu, Venice, Redondo and Huntington. When we'd show up in the morning to get our spot by the ocean, it was usually cold and foggy. By midafternoon it was always beautiful. My mom's advice to all kids: dress in layers.

This current shipment contains a Gewürztraminer, a Malbec and a Cabernet. I know what you're thinking: how can one single vineyard produce great wines from so many disparate varieties? Let me see if I can make a long story short.

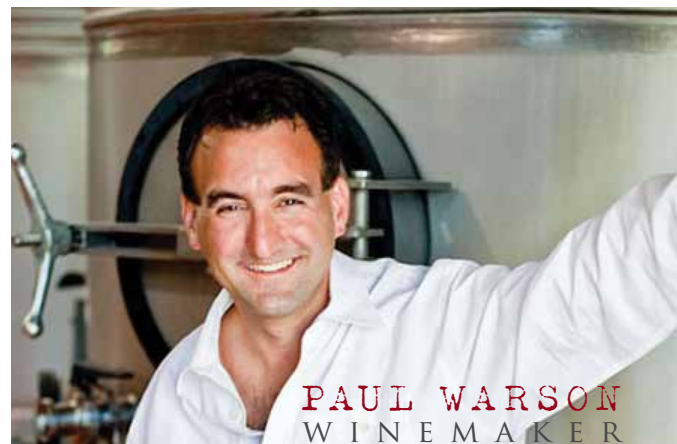
We'll start with Gewürztraminer. You wouldn't expect this Alsatian native to thrive in our "cusp" climate, but we happen to have a spot in our vineyard that is perfect for this aromatic grape. It's a little, west-facing knoll that is exposed to the elements, especially the winds from the Pacific Ocean. Our 2010 is sensational with a résumé of pink grapefruit, gardenia, citrus blossoms, roses, spice, ginger and lychee nuts. A touch of RS helps balance the firm acidity and adds breadth to the palate.

Now, what about Malbec? How does it do in our arid landscape, cool winds and low-vigor soils? Very well, thank you. Malbec typically reaches physiological maturity two to three weeks ahead of Cabernet Sauvignon. During every stage of development from bud break to veraison to harvest it's in front of its Bordelaise cousin. And it ripens beautifully every year. This 2008 is big, dark, rich, juicy, earthy, silky, lush and spicy. But it's not huge! It's just beautifully balanced with smooth tannins and tons of berry-like flavors. Used as a blender, it neatly rounds the edges of Cabernet. On its own, it is a fruit bonanza. Try it with the recipe in this month's newsletter—it won't disappoint!

Finishing up, we've got Cabernet Sauvignon. Fortunately, Cabernet does well in both warm and cold climate locations. When grown in cooler regions, where the grapes are challenged to fully ripen, Cabernet Sauvignon assumes a more primal character. Our 2007 Chairman's is a great example of this phenomenon. It displays all the dark fruit, cassis, anise, cherry and leather attributes normally associated with Santa Ynez Cabernet. There are also the underlying flavors of vanilla, toast and cloves from time spent in new French oak. The finish is long and moderately tannic making it a great choice for steaks, roasts and lamb.

That's it for this month. Thanks so much for your support and I hope you enjoy our latest releases.

Paul Warson, Winemaker



PAUL WARSON
WINEMAKER

Summons

Wisteria woke me this morning,
And there was all June in the garden;
I felt them, early, warning
Lest I miss any part of the day.

Straight I walked to the trellis vine.
Wisteria touched a lifted nostril:
Feelings of beauty diffused, to entwine
My spirit with June's own aura.

Ann McGough

REORDER OFFERS

Receive a 30% discount plus complimentary ground shipping on 12 bottles of more of club wines:

2010 Firestone Estate Gewürztraminer, Santa Ynez Valley
Retail \$14 • Club \$11.20 • Reorder \$9.80

2007 Firestone Cabernet Sauvignon, The Chairman Series
Retail \$38 • Club \$30.40 • Reorder \$26.60

2008 Firestone Estate Malbec, Santa Ynez Valley
Retail \$22 • Club \$17.60 • Reorder \$15.40

Orders can be a full or mixed case and offer applies to any of the above wines. Offer expires July 8, 2011. To order, please contact Wine Club at 866-331-4938, or wineclub@firestonewine.com



FEATURED WINE SECTION - Your wine selection will vary based upon your club membership

2010 FIRESTONE ESTATE GEWÜRZTRAMINER, SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

Bright aromatic notes of pink grapefruit, lychee and candied ginger with orange blossoms and rose on the nose. Firm, bright, and full palate with flavors of red grapefruit, lemon and lime zest.

Appellation: Santa Ynez Valley
Composition: 100% Gewürztraminer
Barrel Fermentation: None (100% Stainless Steel)
Alcohol: 13.7%
TA: 8.2 g/L
pH: 3.28
Bottling Date: May 1, 2011
Release Date: June 6, 2011
Case Production: 3,800

Retail Price: \$14 - Club Price: \$11.20

2007 FIRESTONE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, THE CHAIRMAN SERIES

Big dark fruit, cassis, anise, cherry and leather flavors and aromas. Underlying flavors of vanilla, toast and cloves from time spent in new French oak. The finish is long and moderately tannic with good aging potential.

Appellation: Santa Ynez Valley
Composition: 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Merlot
Cooperage: 23 months in 100% French oak, 100% new French Oak
Alcohol: 14.1%
TA: 8.4 g/L
pH: 3.68
Bottling Date: September 10, 2009
Release Date: November 1, 2010
Case Production: 490

Retail Price: \$38 - Club Price: \$30.40

2008 FIRESTONE ESTATE MALBEC, SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

Blueberry and blackberry fruits dominate the nose, with hints of vanilla, clove, and cola. Very soft tannins fill the mouth and allow for a full long rich palate.

Appellation: Santa Ynez Valley
Vineyards: Firestone Vineyards, Block 9-2
Composition: 94% Malbec, 4% Petit Verdot, 2% Merlot
Cooperage: 20% new French oak, 80% 1-year-old American and European oak
Alcohol: 13.5%
TA: 6.0 g/L
pH: 3.47
Bottling Date: July 27, 2010
Release Date: June 6, 2011
Case Production: 300

Retail Price: \$22 - Club Price: \$17.60

UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the Date for the following Firestone Estate Winery events!

JUNE 3 - SEPTEMBER 2, 2011

First Fridays at Firestone, our free concert series the first Friday of every month from 6 - 9pm

JULY 30, 2011

Firestone Wine Club BBQ

SEPTEMBER 17, 2011

Fall Release Party

More details to come via email, or you can always check out our event calendar at www.firestonewine.com



RECIPES AND WINE PAIRINGS

RISOTTO WITH ROASTED SHALLOTS, PORTOBELLO MUSHROOMS, RADICCHIO, AND PARMESAN

Serves 6 as an appetizer or 4 as an entrée

The earthy, slightly bitter flavors of this risotto are heightened by the forward fruit and similarly earthy notes of the Malbec.

INGREDIENTS:

8 ounces whole shallots

3 tablespoons olive oil

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

½ pound Portobello mushrooms, diced (about 2 cups)

½ cup chopped yellow onions

1 ½ cups Arborio rice

1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme (½ tablespoon dried)

½ cup white wine

4-5 cups hot chicken stock

1 ¾ cups loosely packed chopped radicchio

1 cup seeded, chopped tomatoes

¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Minced chives for garnish

Pair with 2008 Firestone Estate Malbec

Preheat oven to 350°F. Trim the ends of the shallots. Peel off the outer brown layer and discard. Halve shallots, then coat with 1 tablespoon olive oil and sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Wrap the seasoned shallots loosely in foil and roast for about an hour. Keep wrapped in foil until ready to serve.

In a large sauté pan over medium heat, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil and 1 tablespoon of butter. Add the mushrooms and onions and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the rice and fresh thyme and continue cooking for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Carefully add wine (it may steam up when poured into the hot pan) and simmer over medium low heat. Start adding stock in ½-cup increments and slowly stir until mostly absorbed. Cook until al dente.

Stir in chopped radicchio and tomatoes. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes more to wilt radicchio slightly. Stir in Parmesan.

Serve very hot in heated, shallow soup bowls. Garnish each bowl with the roasted shallots and minced chives.