

June 2005

Arthur Earl Winery
Society Pages

New Wines for You

June is a great month for us. We seem to always start the month sold out of several of our most popular wines, and short of some others. Then we end the month with new releases for everyone to enjoy. We started this month sold out of Nebbiolo, Barbera and Mourvedre, and short of Pinot Grigio. But on June 17th we remedied most of that problem. That day marked the release of the 2003 vintages of Barbera, Nebbiolo and Mourvedre. In addition, because there is so little 2003 Pinot Grigio left, we are sending the new 2004 vintage in this shipment. I have had the good fortune of trying these wines already. I have high hopes for all of them, but my favorite at this point is the new Nebbiolo. This is our seventh vintage from this vineyard and it has been interesting to watch the fruit change as the vines have matured. The early vintages were marked with lots of ripe fruit flavors, reminiscent of wild cherries. Now, the fruit is still there but it is much more refined. Overall the wine is more complex, soft and rich on the palate and trending more toward Italian style Nebbiolos. The Barbera is also excellent again. The bright fruitiness is back along with bright acidity and a kind of extra spicy kick to it at the end. This wine is so dark in color it stains the glass when you swirl it. Over the first five months of this year, Mourvedre was one of our two best selling varieties, at least until we ran out. It has the same deep rich flavors of dark spices and fruit, combined with some lively acidity that will make this wine live a long time. This vintage is also enhanced by the addition of a small amount of Grenache, as we have done in the past.

This Month's Wines

June is one of two months in the year (December is the other) when all club members receive wine at the same time. Those are the two months when we send a white wine. This white wine is the 2004 Pinot Grigio, not quite released yet as there is still a small amount of the 2003 vintage left, but nowhere near enough for a wine club shipment, so once again you are receiving a wine before its official release. The red wine is our best selling Grenache. This has been a very popular wine since its release last December. Although not a light wine, its fruitiness makes it enjoyable with lighter food and combined with the Pinot Grigio makes this shipment a great pair of summer wines.

2004 ~ Carrari Vineyard ~ Santa Barbara County ~ Pinot Grigio

This tank fermented and barrel aged version of our Pinot Grigio is the style we have come to prefer over the crisper stainless steel only version. It is intriguing to experience the effect the oak has on this variety. While barrel aging creates more creaminess and smoothness, including a really great rich finish, the exceptional fruit of these grapes still shines through. Pinot Grigio is meant to drink cold, which makes it refreshing, but try this version a little warmer to bring out more of the rich and creamy aspects and the spicy finish. This is a thoroughly enjoyable wine we are happy to offer our customers. About 240 cases made.

2001 ~ Vogelzang Vineyard ~ Santa Ynez Valley ~ Santa Barbara County ~ Grenache

This Grenache is our first vintage from the Vogelzang Vineyard from a clone called Grenache Noir, which is intended to be a bit darker and more full bodied than the original Grenache clones. This wine shows how good Grenache can be under the right circumstances. The most planted grape in Spain, widely planted in the south of France and even in Italy, Grenache makes a lot "everyday" wine for people in those countries. There are some very nice "Granachas" from Spain, and, of course, it is the primary grape in most southern Rhone blends. This particular wine is nicely structured with mature, not raw, fruit that is tasty by itself, or great as a companion to many foods. 240 cases made.