

May 2005

Arthur Earl Winery

Society Pages

Almost Summer

We are getting very close to Memorial Day, which for us is the beginning of summer. So far the year has been cool and wet. Grapes are behind schedule and the possibility of more wind and rain means the danger of damage to this year's crop is not over. We need a fairly hot summer to catch up and have a normal harvest. Only time will tell. In the tasting room this May we are doing a little better than last year. While we are once again out of Nebbiolo and Barbera, we still have a few cases of Mourvedre and a fair amount of Zinfandel. Last year at this time we were out of all four. I guess it pays to make more of these varieties. In June we will be releasing a new Nebbiolo and a new Barbera. The Barbera sold out in four months last year, so this time we made a lot more. We will also release a new Mourvedre and a new Pinot Grigio. In fact, the new Pinot Grigio will be included in your June shipment. Trying to produce just the right amount of each variety is a challenge. It requires predicting which wines our customers will buy the most. Because wines change with each vintage, we cannot just look at what sold well last year to decide. Each year different wines become our "best sellers", although Nebbiolo is always at or near the top of the list. Hope to see you soon. Art

This Month's Wines

This month we only send wine to our special members who receive wine twelve times per year, and I think these two wines will be a real treat. First, they are both red, which is what most members prefer. Second, we are sending two of our most popular wines. They are both from the Paso Robles appellation. Our Syrah is the oldest vintage in the tasting room, 2000, and the extended bottle age has improved this wine every year of its existence. It is well known for its coffee and chocolate flavors. The second wine is our Zinfandel with its great dark red fruit flavors. One of the reasons we make this wine is that our winemaker loves to drink it. We hope that you do too.

2000 Syrah

Syrah is the noble red wine from the northern Rhone Valley of France including the communes of Hermitage, Cote Rotie and St. Joseph and is also found in the red blends from the southern Rhone region, including Chateauneuf-du-Pape. It is also perhaps the best red wine produced in Australia, where it is known as Shiraz. Start with the dark red color to get a hint of the structure and body of this wine. Much of the complexity of the blend comes through on the nose and the palate with hints of coffee and chocolate from the Syrah, cinnamon from the Grenache and clove from the Mourvedre. This is a very big, chewy wine not for the faint of heart. Enjoy with roasted meats and dark sauces. About 350 cases made.

2002 Zinfandel

Zinfandel is considered the most American of grapes. Although its DNA has been matched to the Primitivo grape of southern Italy, its origins were more likely in the eastern European areas of Croatia. The nose of this wine is definitely Zinfandel. The great aromas of fresh fruit can not hide that unique aromatic nuance that one recent taster called "Zinfandel funk". The raspberry aromas highlighted on the nose explode into flavor on the palate. Although somewhat muted on the nose, the peppery quality of many good Zins shows up on the palate. Jammy fruit at the start gives way to a smooth finish, as the lower alcohol level of this vintage does not grab your palate the way the 2000 vintage did. As well as this wine is showing at its release in April 2004, it will continue to mature and age well for some time to come. About 265 cases made.