

December 2005

Arthur Earl Winery

Society Pages

Happy Holidays

Our harvest season is over and we are already planning for our bottling in January and February. We do have the luxury of turning our attention somewhat to the holiday season. The just finished Thanksgiving weekend was very busy for us and we got to see many of you in the tasting room. Most of December is a little slower for us, but the week between Christmas and New Year's Day becomes really busy again, and we will see many of you then. The holidays in December, no matter how you celebrate them are a time for friends and family. It is also an appropriate time for me to tell you how much we appreciate your business. Our shipments to our wine club members are a major portion of our business and we are greatly appreciative of you, our loyal customers. So no matter how you celebrate we hope that your season is happy and safe. Art

Holiday Gift Selection

Many of you are familiar with Barbera who has been a stalwart in our tasting rooms for many years (she won't let me tell you how many). Barbera has put together a terrific selection of new merchandise in the tasting room that is available just in time for the holidays, and it is all wine and food related. We have an excellent selection of decanters, including some from Riedel. They are lovely and range in price from \$120 to \$310. We also have an assortment of books on wine and food. We still have a selection of reproductions of old French wine posters, some of which are available on canvas, and a great selection of high quality placemats and coasters. They have wine themes and scenes of Italy and are available separately or as matched sets. All in all it is a wonderful selection of perfect gifts for the food or wine person on your list.

This Month's Wines

The December wine shipment has become a tradition for us. For several years now it has been Viognier and Syrah. The Viognier is a great white wine for many holiday meals. Its great fruitiness is wonderful with poultry and any thing else that has a fruit component. The Syrah is our newest release and may be the most popular we have ever had. Syrahs are great with roasted meats and game if you happen to be having some. We hope you enjoy these wines in health and happiness.

Viognier ~ Vogelzang Vineyard ~ Santa Ynez Valley ~ Santa Barbara County

Viognier is one of the three northern Rhone white varieties found in common usage, and probably, the most common and popular of the three. This version has great flavors of peaches and apricots, with the peach definitely dominating in this wine. Because of the forty percent new oak barrels used for fermentation and aging, it has a wonderful richness, almost sweetness that compliments the peach flavor, although there is no significant residual sugar in the wine

2001 Syrah ~ Valley View Vineyard ~ Santa Ynez Valley ~ Santa Barbara County

This wine is the main portion of the lot that our first Reserve Syrah came from. It was aged in a smaller percentage of new oak, but has the same great flavors. Start with the dark red color to get a hint of the structure and body of this wine. Much of the complexity comes through on the nose and the palate with hints of coffee and chocolate that are joined by the scents and flavors of dark red fruit and lavender. This is a very big, chewy wine not for the faint of heart. Enjoy with roasted meats and dark sauces. About 250 cases produced.