

October 2005

Arthur Earl Winery

Society Pages

Big Harvest! Late Harvest!

Well, the headline says it all. The 2005 harvest has been a big one, in terms of the yield in tons of grapes per acre. The yields have been higher than anticipated and higher than normal. This is probably caused, in part, by the large amount of rain we received last year, but the size of vintages also goes in cycles, after two lower than average years, we were due for a big one. This does not really affect us in regard to our own wines too much because, in most cases, we buy only the amounts that we want. It does affect us, however, in the amount of grapes we process for other people, and we have increased that production for this year by about fifty percent. The other battle we are fighting is the weather. It has been generally very cool with only a couple of bursts of warmer weather. The result is a much later harvest than normal. Some varieties are more than a month later than normal. At this point we are usually almost finished, but this year we still have nine varieties that we have not picked. From the consumer point of view, the issues are quantity and quality. Quality is an issue because more grapes usually mean lower prices, and this year that should be true. Quality, on the other hand, is usually related to lower quantities, so we must be cautious in years of high yields. Fortunately, we work with the best growers who are committed to maintaining high quality and we anticipate this vintage will meet our own high quality standards. Hope to see you soon. Art

This Month's Wines

After two great Italian varieties in your last shipment, we are sending two wines from our other primary area of interest, the Rhone Valley of France. Of course, these grapes are grown right here on California's Central Coast not a few thousand miles away. The Mourvedre is always one of our most popular wines, and this vintage, released in June, is no exception. The second wine is the 2002 A Genoux, our southern Rhone style blend. Typically this blend consists of three or more varieties and is usually dominated by Grenache. We now have five different varieties that are native to this region and expect to use them all in future vintages, but we were so intrigued by the flavors of the varieties that we usually blend with the Grenache, that we decided to leave out the Grenache to highlight these other flavors. It has become one of my personal favorites.

2002 ~ Central Coast ~ A Genoux

The 2002 A Genoux manages to integrate a ripe rich style of wine with just the right amount of wood, to make a superb very well defined red. Its multidimensional nose is exciting, with aromas of roasted coffee, toasted cocoanut, black pepper and sweet leather, intertwined with a dense floral ripeness of violets, a fruity purity akin to black cherries, and ripe raspberries. In the mouth its bright fruit forward style is evident with a sweet jaminess that coats the palate, reminiscent of raspberry liqueur. 240 Cases Made.

2003 ~ Paso Robles ~ Mourvedre

The early vintages of this wine, from the young vines were dominated by the fruitiness of the grapes, but as the vines are maturing the fruit flavors are becoming less dominant. The stone fruit flavors of apricots and peaches that I find a bit unusual in a red wine are still there, just more subtle, and the result is a thoroughly enjoyable wine. This wine is typical of our "style", with great color, full mouth feel and forward fruit. About 240 cases made.