



2008 HARVEST NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our first Harvest Newsletter. We hope you find it interesting and informative and we welcome your feedback.



Fall comes to the Napa Valley as the new vines in our Lake Cynthia Vineyard get ready for the winter

2005 Adagio Sold Out. We released our award winning 2005 *Adagio* at our release party in the Napa Valley on October 11. The first orders were shipped October 27 and we were SOLD OUT by the first week in November. But the good news is that we made approximately 100 cases more of Adagio in 2006 than we did in 2005 so there will be more available next year. Wine club members will receive preference on orders so if you have not yet joined one of our wine clubs, consider doing so. A separate insert about our Wine Clubs is included with this mailing.

2008 - IN THE VINEYARD

A More Aggressive Irrigation Plan. This year we instituted a much more aggressive irrigation plan in our vineyards. The State of California has an extraordinary array of weather stations that monitor everything about the weather that could be useful to agriculture. There are two of those stations in the Napa Valley. By 10AM each morning, they post detailed information on their web-site about the previous day's conditions. They monitor temperature, humidity, solar radiation, wind direction, average wind speed and a host of other things. They then calculate the exact amount of *Evapotranspiration* (the amount of water plants use) for that day. We monitor that daily and adjust our irrigation plan weekly to use the exact amount of water necessary to create balanced vines with small berries and intense flavors. It is not unusual to change the amount of irrigation significantly week to week. That way, we conserve water AND get the perfect amount of water to produce great fruit. In calculating the amount of water to use, we use a program called "regulated deficit irrigation" to "stress" the grapes in order to achieve maximum flavors.

2005 Concerto - Release March 09

Our 2005 *Concerto, ToKalon Vineyard Napa Valley Cabernet* will be released March 23, 2009. It is a stunning wine from America's most famous Cabernet vineyard. Aged in 100% new French oak, it has a dense purple color and a nose of blackberries, cherries, espresso, cedar and chocolate. It is a medium to full bodied wine with an extraordinarily long finish that will evolve well for 10 -15+ years. All wine club members will get their "regular" wine club allotment and we will begin taking orders from our mailing list members on January 2, 2009. The wine bottles will be individually wrapped in tissue and sold in beautiful wooden collector boxes (3 or more bottles).

HARVEST REPORT

Two hot dry spells in late August and early September hastened the grape ripening and the sugar developed more quickly than the flavors. So, we waited to pick the grapes until the flavors caught up. Overall, quantities were down but quality was really excellent.

Our **Lake Cynthia Merlot** was picked on September 11. These grapes, from the gravelly, well drained, south facing slopes of our Silverado bench vineyard will form the backbone of our 2008 *Adagio* proprietary “Bordeaux Blend.”



Cabernet grapes headed to the winery – Antique Porsche Tractor in the background

Lake Cynthia Cabernet Sauvignon grapes for our *Scherzo Rosé of Cabernet* were picked from our own Lake Cynthia vineyard on September 30, almost three weeks after the Merlot - quite typical.

Adagio Lake Cynthia Cabernet Sauvignon grapes were picked on October 4. While the *Adagio* Cab grapes had a bit more sugar (Brix) than when we normally pick we waited so the flavors would fully develop. And, develop they did. It was truly amazing how the flavor of the grapes changed in just the five days. Our patience was well rewarded.

Gibson Vineyard Cabernet Franc. Our 2008 Adagio will be about 50-60 percent Merlot, 15 - 25% Cab Franc and 15 -25%

Cabernet Sauvignon, a typical blend for the great “right bank” wines like Pavie and Le Pin. Our Cab Franc comes from a very small vineyard just north of us on the Silverado Trail. We picked this outstanding Cab Franc on October 8 this year and were extremely impressed with its color, its fruit and the structure of its tannins.

Concerto ToKalon Cabernet Sauvignon. Located almost in the geographic center of the Napa Valley, the ToKalon is home vineyard to many of Napa’s most expensive “cult cabs.” One section of the vineyard was picked on September 27 and the other was not picked until October 8. We were in the vineyard daily, tasting the fruit, waiting for it to have that magical balance between complete ripeness and enough acidity for a long life and good balance. Although the sections we picked are only a few hundred yards apart and the soil seems to be very similar, the grapes are two different clones of Cabernet (337 and 4) and, for some reason, Clone 337 often ripens much earlier than the Clone 4.

Vivacé Ermitage Blanc – Marsanne Roussanne. The cool climate weather of the Russian River valley lends itself well to the depth of flavor and fruitiness we search for in our signature white wine *Vivacé Ermitage Blanc*. So, we were not surprised this year when the grapes for *Vivacé* were the last picked grapes and the last grapes we processed in the winery. The grapes were picked on October 23, and as I write this newsletter, they are still fermenting in small French oak barrels.

FERMENTATION TEMPERATURE

It’s a matter of Style. As we have said before, we want our wines to express their *terroir*, and not just be typical “over extracted” Napa Valley Cabernets. As a result, we work very hard to control the temperature during fermentation to achieve a more complex and delicate style of wine. The grapes for our *Adagio* and *Concerto* wines are both fermented cooler than is

typical for many red wines in California. We ferment at 85 degrees F while many wineries are fermenting between 90 and 95 degrees. We also use a period of extended maceration (leaving the wine on the skins following completion of fermentation). Without getting too technical, the wine scientists have determined that the chains of polymers that create the flavor and taste in wines link up to form longer chains during extended maceration and those longer chains make the wine “softer,” more elegant and more complex. The wines will also retain their color longer as a result.

Our *Scherzo Rosé* and *Vivacé Ermitage Blanc* are both fermented very cool over a long period of time to insure that they maintain their freshness and fruitiness. Typical fermentation temperature is very close to 60 degrees F. While it may take only a week or so to completely ferment a red wine like a cabernet or a merlot, our *Scherzo Rosé* and *Vivacé Ermitage Blanc* are fermented over a period of three or four weeks or more.

HARVEST AND RELEASE PARTY

Our first annual Harvest and Release Party in Napa on October 11 was a great success. We poured *Scherzo*, *Vivacé* and our first release of *Adagio*. Everyone loved the wines and had a lot of fun. All wine club members were invited and many showed up. Cody Bryant and the Riders of the Purple Sage, from LA provided the entertainment and they were absolutely great.



Cody Bryant and The Riders of the Purple Sage

We even did an old fashioned grape Stomp



Ladies ready to stomp

No, you don't have to worry about the wines you buy being stomped by dirty feet. The juice we stomped went into our “house wine” that we make at home and don't sell. But, if you stop by sometime, you just might be able to try some.



Patricia Kitchak takes her turn stomping

Patricia Kitchak

P. S. “Wine to me is passion. It's family and friends. It's warmth of heart and generosity of spirit. Wine is art. It's culture. It's the essence of civilization and the art of living.” Robert Mondavi in his autobiography, *Harvests of Joy*.



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