

KITCHAK CELLARS - THE WINE MAKER'S WATCH

Kitchak Cellars Blog about the wine-making process, start to finish. With thoughts about wine, food and the Napa Valley Lifestyle.

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SUNDAY, APRIL 10, 2011

A Great Dinner and fighting the European Grape Vine Moth

A TRULY SPECTACULAR DINNER - Rabbit Risotto

Once in a great while you have a truly great dinner that merits talking about. Usually it takes place in a Michelin starred restaurant or someplace similar. Well we had one of those last week and it was not at the French Laundry. It was, in fact, at the home of friends, **Ralph (or Cellar Master) and Lindsay Bashioum** who, incidentally, are both great cooks. The highlight of the evening was an Organic Rabbit Risotto, seasoned with herbs de Provence, rosemary, salt and pepper, carrots and fennel bulbs with copious quantities of Parmesan cheese melted in. The idea and the recipe was created by Lindsay. The Rabbit Risotto was served with a **1997 Piero Antinori Tiganello** which is a blend of 80% Sangiovese, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 5% Cabernet Franc, aged in French oak barrels for 12 months and filtered without filtering.

We are going to be putting the recipe on our website, but if anyone wants it, send me an e-mail and I will make sure that you get it, compliments of Lindsay.

THE EUROPEAN GRAPE VINE MOTH. A huge and important battle in the Napa Valley

The European Grapevine Moth (EGVM) was first reported in the United States and in Napa County vineyards in October 2009. Native to Southern Italy, it was first described from Austria and is now found throughout Europe. Feeding by larvae of European grapevine moth results in contamination of grape bunches with webbing, frass, and fungal infections. Grapevine moth larvae hollow out berries, leaving behind just the skin and seeds. And, they can destroy an entire vineyard in one generation, as happened to a few vineyards around Oakville, in the Napa Valley in 2009.

Moth Damage

In May and June, first-generation larvae web and feed on the flower clusters. Second-generation larvae (July-August) feed on green berries. Young larvae penetrate the berry and hollow them out, leaving the skin and seeds. Third-generation larvae (August-September) cause the greatest damage by webbing and feeding inside berries and within bunches, which become contaminated with frass. Additionally, feeding damage to berries after veraison exposes them to infection by *Botrytis* and other secondary fungi. Secondary pests such as raisin moth (*Cadra figulilella*), fruit flies, and ants may also be attracted to damaged berries.

The Fight.

We are battling the EGVM with an interesting combination of approaches. We just completed placing mating disruptors in the vineyard. We place 200 of these ties per acre. One on every 5th vine. They are small ties which contain sex pheromones which attract males. The males are then confused about where and who to mate with and the mating is disrupted resulting in far less moths. As the season progresses we spray the vineyard every two to three weeks with an insecticide that is aimed specifically at the EGVM; an insecticide that is not harmful to the grapes or ultimately the wine.

Budbreak - April 1 - On to a new season

► [March \(1\)](#)

ABOUT THE OWNERS

Peter Kitchak

Hi. I am Peter Kitchak, the owner and winemaker of Kitchak Cellars in Napa, California. I am old enough to collect Social Security (but I don't) and young enough to drive race cars (which I do). I have a law degree from the University of Minnesota and a Certificate in Wine making and Viticulture from the University of California at Davis. In addition to making wine I am a real estate guy who helps companies put large real estate deals together. see www.keewaydin.com. My wife (and best friend) Patricia and I have been married for more than 35 years and we have owned our vineyard in Napa since 2006. Come visit our winery. We are open for tastings and tours by appointment only. email us at tours@kitchakcellars.com or call us at 707-225-2276 for an appointment.

[View my complete profile](#)

We are Winning.

Due to the efforts of the Napa Valley Vintners and growers in 2010, trapping finds of the EGVM were dramatically reduced from more than 100,000 in the first generation to only 275 moths during the third generation. The entire Napa Valley was under quarantine last season and because we ship grapes out of state we had to have a special inspection. Fortunately we had no moths and we could then ship. But, we continue to be vigilant and to fight the little critters.

Posted by Peter Kitchak at 7:13 AM 

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