

Mediterranean Vineyards

NOVEMBER 2021 WINE CLUB



Dear Friends,

Fall 2021

Harvest has wrapped up and I'm thankful for having more time with my family again. Every harvest is hectic, as we can't control all aspects of what mother nature will throw our way, but this year did present an extra challenge with the Caldor fire. None of our vineyards burned, but the lingering smoke was a concern. So, we tested every suspect vineyard and opted not to produce wines from anywhere the grapes were smoke tainted. I'm sad for how much of our county burned, and how many people were affected; we had some somber days in the winery this year during harvest, but the team made it through, as we always do.

On another note, I'm excited to finally share the two new wines in this release with you, our 2018 Merlot and Petite Sirah, just over three years after I first got my hands on the grapes! We grow exceptional Merlot and Petite Sirah in Fair Play and El Dorado, and I took the opportunity to produce extracted, full-bodied wines that would stand the test of time.

I gave these two wines 22 months of aging in barrel to soften and develop before bottling in the summer of 2020. I knew they needed more time to let their complexity show through as the tannins developed more, so I set them aside to age in bottle until now.

Winemaking takes a lot of patience, and that is part of the old-world approach that I admire - taking the time to let wines develop naturally and show their age ability. While there is a lot of work that I put into each wine, one of the most important things I do is know when to leave a wine alone to age and resist the urge to tinker with it or release it before it has shown me it is ready.

In my mind these are just now ready to start enjoying, but they will continue to age for years, so I suggest forgetting a bottle or two in the back of your wine cellar or closet, wherever they will be safe! You will be rewarded later for your patience.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these wines next time I see you at one of our events at the estate. I invite you to share them with family and friends this holiday season and help spread the word about Mediterranean Vineyards as we look forward to a bountiful 2022.

Santé,

Taylor Gibson

2018 Merlot

China Creek Vineyards

EL DORADO

Tasting Notes

This is a complex wine with aromas of dark fruit, roses, light bramble, and a vibrant, deep, rich color. One taste reveals why merlot deserves more recognition. The 2018 vintage is a big, bold wine, with flavors of cocoa, stewed prunes, rose hips and big, chalky tannins that beg to be paired with rich foods. The long finish is filled with dark fruit punctuated by delicate herbal flavors. Enjoy now or age for at least another 10 years.

Winemaking Notes

These grapes were harvested from a young vineyard block with a low yield; we only harvested enough for this one small lot of wine! We destemmed the grapes but did not actively crush them, so some of the berries remained whole during fermentation, fermenting from the inside and providing greater complexity and diversity to the ferment. Overall, the fermentation took 14 days, during which we actively punched down the cap three times per day, keeping the skins submerged for maximum extraction.

Food Pairing

Try the 2018 Merlot this winter with herbed turkey confit over sausage and focaccia stuffing, topped with cranberry compote. We'd also love to pair it with meatloaf, spaghetti and meatballs, or braised short ribs. Or simply enjoy it with dark chocolate home-made brownies.

Aging

Aged for 22 months in on new French Oak barrel and one second use French Oak barrel.

Wine Specs

100% Merlot
13.9% alcohol
63 cases produced
\$32 per bottle



2018 Petite Sirah

Harry's Hill Vineyard, EL DORADO

Tasting Notes

This wine's deep, almost opaque, and inky color tells you right away that it is bold with big structure. You can tell this Petite Sirah is from older vines, as there is a complex story in every sip, with a dark fruit core and hints of curry and smoke. After 14 months in bottle this wine is now perfect to start drinking this winter, having softened up just enough to enjoy its dry tannins and flavors of cocoa, anise, and plum.

Winemaking Notes

After destemming and crushing these grapes, and prior to fermentation, we bled off 20% of the juice to make a rosé, therefore increasing the skin to juice ratio for an even more concentrated red wine. The wine fermented in 4 macro bins to keep the fermentation as cool and slow as possible, leading to a 16-day fermentation during which we punched down the bins three times per day to promote maceration.

Food Pairing

We highly recommend you enjoy this wine with a curry spice rubbed lamb loin or lamb chop. A rich chicken mole also pairs quite well. It should match well with a variety of wintery stews. It also would be great with a traditional figgy pudding.

Aging

Aged for 22 months in one new French Oak barrel, one second use American Oak barrel, and 2 neutral oak barrels.

Wine Specs

100% Petite Sirah
14.5% alcohol
104 cases produced
\$34 per bottle



BAKED HAM WITH BOYSENBERRY GLAZE

Start to finish: 2 hours (30 minutes active)

Servings: 12 people (will vary with size of ham)

Delight your family and friends with sweet and savory glazed ham.

Most families enjoy ham for at least one of their holiday traditions. The sweetness of the berries and savory characteristics of the herbs and shallots create the perfect glaze for your holiday ham. This easy yet delicious glaze can be changed from year to year by changing the jam or the herbs, or you can even add a little chipotle to give it a kick.

Ingredients:

4-8 lb – Ham

8 - whole cloves

2 tablespoons – butter

2 – shallots, diced

½ cup – boysenberry jam

1 orange – juiced and zest

¼ cup – brown sugar

½ teaspoon – ground sage

1/8 teaspoon – cayenne pepper

Directions:

Preheat oven to 325° F. Place ham in a roasting pan. Using a paring knife, score the surface of the ham about 1/3 inch deep; usually this is done in a diamond pattern of intersecting cuts.

This will allow the glaze to get through the thicker skin to fully flavor the ham. Insert the whole cloves all around the ham, distributing them evenly across the surface.

To make the glaze, melt the butter and sauté the shallots until soft and translucent in a medium saucepan. Add the jam, orange juice and zest, and cook to a low boil. Add the rest of the ingredients and cook until well blended, stirring constantly.

Pour half of the glaze over the ham and cover the roasting pan with a lid or foil. Cook for 1 to 1.5 hours, or until internal heat reaches at least 145° F, then turn off oven. To avoid drying out, baste the ham with some of the remaining glaze about every 30 minutes while cooking. After the ham has reached 145° F, pour the rest of the glaze over the top of the ham and put it back in the oven, uncovered, to caramelize the glaze. Let the ham rest for 5 to 10 minutes then slice and drizzle drippings over the top for serving.

Enjoy with all of your holiday side dishes and a bottle of Mediterranean Vineyards 2018 Merlot.