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Tony Terlato

*The Man Who Built The
World's Greatest Wine List*



Lockwood shaly loam is a porous marine deposit consisting of crushed fossilized seashells, chalk and limestone.



Monterey Mission

BOISSET BRINGS LOCKWOOD TO FRUITION

by Randy Caparoso

In November 2011, Boisset Family Estates' Jean-Charles Boisset made another bold move: acquiring the Lockwood Vineyard brand, signing a long-term contract to secure the best grapes from the San Lucas Vineyard, which anchors the 75,000-case winery.

For Boisset, the opportunity to work in Monterey's San Lucas—its own American Viticultural Area since 1987—was a no-brainer. "I find phenomenal flavor profiles in these wines. The vineyard has its own soil type [Lockwood shaly loam], and when you taste the wines—specifically Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir—you find a unique minerality, which I find exciting. San Lucas has its own complexity, but in a lot of ways it is uncomplicated, even more of a pure expression of fruit than what we get in Napa or Sonoma."

San Lucas Vineyard is home to Lockwood's vines.





Jean-Charles Boisset and Winemaker Darin Kinzie.

San Lucas Vineyard actually totals 1,850 acres, first planted by longtime grower Paul Toeppen, with his two partners Phil Johnson and Butch Lindley, in 1981. At that time it was not only the largest contiguous vineyard in the world, it was also one of the most ambitious, located at the southernmost, and warmest, end of Monterey, where growing seasons are marked by the most extreme diurnal swings in the state (around 50° Fahrenheit before dawn, soaring as high as 110° within hours).

The partners started up the Lockwood winery in 1989, and the wines quickly earned critical raves. Eric Pooler, who manages all the Boisset Family Estates vineyards, tells THE TASTING PANEL, “There is a blanket of morning fog that keeps things cool earlier in the day, but an even bigger factor is the wind blowing in everyday from Monterey Bay. It is often strong enough (up to 20 mph) to shut down stomata in the leaves, really making an impact on hang time.”

Combine this with the Lockwood shaly loam—a porous marine deposit consisting of crushed fossilized seashells, chalk and limestone—and you get a situation that Lockwood Winemaker Darin Kinzie calls “a viticultural ideal . . . vines need to work a little harder, but also regulate themselves.” Kinzie has been chomping at the bit, watching their first full vintage (2012) come to fruition. “As far as terroir expression,” says Kinzie, “San Lucas is as distinct as any of the regions we work with. Pinot Noir here grows in small, loose bunches with tiny berries and good skin-to-juice ratios, giving us nice, intense fruit at 3.5 to 4 tons per acre.

“Jean-Charles likes to work from the premise that wines should over-deliver on price, and it won’t be a problem here. Pinot Noir here has pretty fruit, fine tannin and pepper-spice qualities. Chardonnay will also have a different fruit profile: crisp apple qualities that we will emphasize by utilizing no oak and partial ML.” ■■



Lockwood Liquid Velvet

A brand new wine, personally assembled by Boisset and Kinzie: the **Lockwood 2011 Liquid Velvet (\$20)**, a Merlot/Cabernet Sauvignon. Says Boisset, “When you think of Lockwood, you don’t think so much of Bordeaux varietals, but this wine epitomizes what we find unique about San Lucas. The 2011 Liquid Velvet has a density that I describe as being very horizontal—a true feeling of “velvet” in the mouth—while it also has a spiciness, a peppery, paprika-like quality, almost like Southern Rhône.”

A Special Terroir

Although 2012 will be the first Lockwood vintage grown and produced entirely by the Boisset team, the current Lockwood releases are replete with sensations reflecting this special terroir:



Lockwood 2011 Sauvignon Blanc, Monterey (\$14) Lemony crisp, medium-bodied dry white showing honeydew melon varietal fruit, infused with a New Zealand-ish leafiness and the mineral salinity of the San Lucas terroir pushing on through.

Lockwood 2010 Chardonnay, Monterey (\$14) Creamy texture and minerality suffusing a refreshingly subdued, moderately weighted varietal style.

Lockwood 2009 Pinot Noir, Monterey (\$18) Always one of California’s best buys in Pinot Noir; zesty, brightly perfumed cherry/berry fruit highlighted by spicy, smoky complexities.

Lockwood 2010 Merlot, Monterey (\$14) Another fantastic value; properly plush black cherry of considerable breadth and depth, with cinnamon-spice and olive-nuanced varietal notes.