



Bedrock Wine Co. Fall Release

August 2013

Dear Friends,

We are so excited for this release. The 2012's have been much anticipated and they are all lovely wines. In comparison to 2010 and 2011 where I triaged heavily (almost 40% of the fruit in both vintages) the 2012 harvest was both abundant and of almost uniformly excellent quality- a combination that only occurs every decade or so. The wines run the gamut from softer and forward to dense and structured. The wines in this release tend to be the most forward of the vintage as we wanted to give some of the other wines a little more time in barrel and bottle before being directed your way.

As this release hits your inbox Chris is driving Chardonnay and Pinot up from Chalone and tomorrow we will be picking the first ancient vine Carignane from Contra Costa County for 2013 Ode to Lulu rose. I will be running the release from a plastic table and chair while electricians, plumbers, and welders scramble to get the winery completed. To say it is an early year is an understatement. That it is the year that we are attempting to build a new winery is a classic example of Murphy having some fun. Thankfully the industry is filled with good friends and good neighbors and we can continue to do early fermentations in the same space we have been making the wines for the last few years until the winery is completed.

So far 2013, though early, has excellent potential. Unlike the last warm year of 2008, crops are a bit healthier which will slow the ripening curve down and hopefully make picking decisions relatively un-panicked. The dry winter has made for moderate canopies and unlike the last couple of years where we had been on constant mildew control this year has been easy. Though having an early year after several late years feels disconcerting, the reality is that most vineyards are tracking closely to 2007 and 2008, both of which were excellent vintages.

Also, though we have said goodbye to a couple of vineyards this year due to sale or other factors we are also thrilled that Jake and Scot Bilbro, the new owners of Limerick Lane Winery and McDowell Valley Vineyards, have chosen Bedrock to be the one winery to receive fruit from the oldest Syrah plantings in the country at Gibson Ranch which were planted in the 1890's. The block is actually an amazing field-blend of Syrah, Petite Sirah, Peloursin, Trousseau Noir, Palomino, and a few other things. We will also be receiving some of the equally old Grenache Gris from the vineyard for Ode to Lulu Rose'. Also, somehow, the beautiful Nervo Vineyard in Alexander Valley and its 117-year-old Zinfandel and mixed blacks dropped in our lap last week. This is a qualitatively great site but also one of great emotion for me as Nervo Winery was one of my grandfather's favorite wineries back in the 1960's. It was at my grandfather's tasting group that my father started tasting wine as a kid, so somehow in the cosmological soup I feel like Nervo is linked to my family, to a grandfather that I never got to meet, and me getting to do this unbelievably wonderful and rewarding work.



These two vineyards are an extension of a theme that runs through the current release. As you will see below in the notes relating to Sodini, and from the piece written on Frank Evangelho yesterday, we feel it is incredibly important to work with vines from California's past. The mix of varieties and resulting wines from these old vineyards are totally unique in the viticultural world as the mix of Iberian, French, Italian, Croatian, and Eastern European varieties is found no where else. These vineyards are, just like the state in which they are grown, a melting pot. On top of this, they also carry with them the last vestiges of varieties now forgotten or sometimes near extinction in their ancestral homeland. Bedrock Vineyard has, among its 22 interplanted varieties grapes like Castets, where the only known three vines in California find protection. We relish this aspect of working with old vineyards as we feel more like curators of museum-albeit one that can give delicious results.

Before getting onto the wines I just wanted to give a word towards pricing. 2012 was an abundant year of high quality and there is a little more wine to go around then normal. As such, we wanted to pass some of mother nature's goodness onto you and reduced the price of our most popular wine, the Old Vine Zinfandel. We have kept pricing the same on all other wines.

The Wines

2012 Compagni Portis Heritage White Wine, Sonoma Valley: The 2012 from this lovely vineyard is a beauty. A field blend of Gewurtzraminer, Trousseau Gris, Riesling, Roter Veltliner, Chardonnay and a few others, the vineyard and wine are truly singular. Planted in 1954, the vineyard is dry-farmed, organically farmed by myself in concord with guru Phil Coturri, and typically crops somewhere between 1 to 1.5 tons per acre. In 2012, we were blessed with a little more fruit to work with which, naturally for us at Bedrock, meant a great opportunity to experiment a little! With this in mind, rather than whole-cluster pressing, as has been the standard practice in years past, we chose to de-stem half of the fruit and soak it overnight. The results were very interesting and will bear repeating in the future. Though the whole-cluster pressed lot was more texturally satisfying and retained a little better acid, the de-stemmed lot had ridiculous aromatics, the juice coming out of the press smelled like roses and red hots (which would also make a great name for a teenage romantic comedy). The two lots fermented with native yeasts and then were combined pre-MLF. In contrast to previous years where I have bottled the wine in five months I gave the wine an extended elevage in stainless steel and neutral barrels for a slightly more evolved aromatic profile (aka, getting rid of a slight hefeweizen aromatic character that as bugged me in past renditions of this wine upon early bottling). I am thrilled with the finished wine. Drinking Window 2014- 2018 \$25.



2012 Sonoma Valley Old-Vine Zinfandel: No wines in 2012 benefited more from the combination of quality and quantity than the Sonoma Valley Old-Vine Zinfandel and the North Coast Syrah (to be released with the Winter Release). For instance, the ancient vines at Bedrock, despite the same farming practices as normal yielded almost 3 tons per acre rather than the average 2.3 and that extra fruit needed to go somewhere. As such, the 2012 Sonoma Valley Old-Vine is nearly 40% Bedrock Vineyard Zinfandel, with the remainder coming from Casa Santinamaria Vineyard, Monte Rosso Vineyard, Stellwagen Vineyard, Los Chamizal and Scatena. Best yet, I think the 2012 might be the best version yet of the wine- carrying the hallmark spice and perfume of the Sonoma Valley appellation along with deep fruit and good framing acid structure. All native yeast fermented and raised in 12% new French oak. Back up the proverbial truck! Axe that, back up the literal truck! Drinking Window 2014- 2022 \$20.

2012 Evangelho Heritage Wine, Contra Costa County: After falling in love with the fragrant and forward 2011 wine, and with the quirky and strangely alluring sands of Contra Costa County, we decided that Evangelho Vineyard deserved a place in the permanent stable of Bedrock Wine Co.. The 2012 is a worthy successor to the 2011. Composed of roughly 40% Carignane, 38% Mourvedre, with the remainder Zinfandel, Palomino, Alicante, and Mission, the wine is a great expression of the fresh fruits and zippy acid (natural pH here of 3.4!) found from the well-tended, own-rooted vines planted in the 1890's in Frankie's field'o'goodness. Raised in a combination of smaller French oak barrels and a 600 gallon foudre the wine possesses crunchy red fruits of the Carignane, the sappiness of fresh Zinfandel, and the feral and exotic spice and earth of the terrestrial Mourvedre. Drinking Window 2014-2020 \$30.

2012 Kirschenmann Zinfandel, Lodi: Though I am stoked on all of the 2012's, I might be most excited about this wine for myriad reasons. 1) It is the first vintage from this vineyard that is owned and farmed by the indefatigable Tegan Passalacqua, who is also responsible for the winemaking and vineyard management at Turley (and, in our opinion, is making the best wines Turley has ever made). 2) The vineyard, planted in 1915 is dry-farmed, organically-farmed, and own-rooted in silica rich soils along the Mokolumne River. 3) The wine is anathema to most peoples' expectations about Lodi in that it is perhaps the most feminine, bright, Grenache-like, expression of Zinfandel from 2012. Most people have the assumption that Lodi is much hotter than Napa and Sonoma but the reality is that many sections are actually on par with Calistoga, St. Helena and Healdsburg. In reality, farming for yield, and all of the related growing decisions, such as excess irrigation, lack of canopy work, lack of fruit work, etc. is largely responsible for wines of, errr, less drinkable nature. And this wine is compulsively drinkable- it has exotic, red-fruited aromatics and spice, beautiful toothsome fruit, and supple but sneaky tannins that are as fine as the silica soils on which the vines grow. Drinking Window 2014- 2020 \$28.



2012 Sodini Vineyard Zinfandel, Russian River Valley: Another vineyard first for Bedrock Wine Co. in 2012 and one of which I am incredibly proud, not merely for the wine but also because it is an amazing vineyard that was on the verge of being ripped out. In early 2012 I received an email from a guy named Steve Sodini who had a read a piece in the local newspaper that mentioned our deep love of old-vine material and California viticultural history. He mentioned that he had been hit hard in the heat of 2010 and lost nearly all of the crop, and had an equally hard 2011. He was at wits-end, tired of taking a loss on the vineyard, and was thinking that the only option might be to pull out the vines are replant to something higher yielding. It is not an uncommon tale as to how many old vines find their roots dismembered from the ground and their crowns unceremoniously dumped into a mass burn pile. After talking with Steve, it came out that the vineyard was on Limerick Lane next to such great vineyards as Forchini, Bacchi, and Collins (score!), was planted in 1905 (score!), was dry-farmed and nicely head-trained (score!). On top of this the fruit had been going to Marrietta since 1978 and also Rochioli, who vineyard-designated the vineyard in the 90's. After calling Jake Bilbro at Marrietta to get his blessing (and happily forging a new friendship in the process), and asking friend Mike Officer if he would be willing to share the vineyard, we took oversight of farming and the grapes. The 2012 is wonderful juice, and a happy sign that if the quality is this good after years of essentially no soil amendments and rudimentary farming, that a few years of good cover crops, spading, compost, should turn this vineyard into an absolute jewel. What I love about the vineyard is that it truly lies at the intersection of Russian River Valley and Dry Creek Valley: It lies on the far eastern boarder of RRV, just south of the town of Healdsburg. Not only this, but the flat section of the vineyard lies on sandy-clay loams like much of the Russian River while the hill section lies on an outcropping of iron-laced red soil almost identical to what is at Lorenzo's/Teldeschi on the Dry Creek Bench. The wine echoes this provenance as it possesses the bright acids and blue fruits of Russian River with some of the structure and opulence of Dry Creek Valley. Drinking Window 2014-2022 \$32.

2012 Bedrock Vineyard Carignane, Sonoma Valley: Carignane from Bedrock has long been one of the "secret ingredients" in the Bedrock Heritage Wine. In 2012 we had enough of it that we could keep four barrels of it separate (something we hope to do every year but the final Heritage wine ends up demanding it). Personally, I adore Carignane in its spicy, bright, beauty. My favorite description of the wine comes from the wine writer Elaine Hawk Wakawaka (whose website is well worth regular reading!), who said of a glass pulled from cask "it's all women from another planet wrestling tigers in here." Drinking Window 2014-2020 \$34.



2012 Bedrock Vineyard Heritage Wine, Sonoma Valley: The 2012 Bedrock Vineyard Heritage Wine is a doozy- big and beautiful, it is a theoretical cross of the 2008 and 2009. Composed of the 22 interplanted varieties at Bedrock Vineyard the wine is roughly 55% Zinfandel, 20% Carignane, with the remainder being all the other cofermented things (Petite Sirah, Alicante Bouschet, Mourvedre, Grand Noir, Trousseau Noir, Merlot, Cabernet, Syrah, Tempranillo, Castets, etc. etc.). The fruit richness and power of the Zinfandel is framed by the acid, structure, and color brought by the other varieties. As always, I make this wine with an eye towards the past, when variety was secondary to wine-style, when it was endeavored to make “California Claret.” This is a singular effort and one that brings me great joy. Drinking Window 2015-2025 \$36 750 ml/ \$90 for Magnum.

As always, we at Bedrock thank you deeply for your ongoing support of our project!

Best,
Morgan
