



Bedrock Wine Co. Spring Release February 2015

Dear Friends,

*Drink it,
and remember in every
drop of gold,
in every topaz glass,
in every purple ladle,
that autumn labored
to fill the vessel with wine;
and in the ritual of his office,
let the simple man remember
to think of the soil and of his duty,
to propagate the canticle of the wine.*
-Pablo Neruda

Spring Release

It rained yesterday. An atmospheric river above us they said. A thrashing lusty thing that filled aquatic coffers and downed top-heavy trees. Today, my boots sink joyfully, making indelicate sounds, into the muddy topsoil of vineyards—the golden shale-flecked Nervo, the rusty reds of Bedrock and Monte Rosso, the granitic beach sand of Evangelho, and the smearing pale clays of Pagani and Papera. Fava beans tickle my knees and the delicate pink and white flowers of sweet peas open their aspirational faces to a warming sun. The smell of earth, sun, and water surrounds and it is hard to repress the gentle gurglings of excitement and trepidation for the new vintage that stretches out before us.

Spring seems an ideal time to look back and take stock of things—to check life's pantry for what is good, what is expired, and what might need more time to cure. With this in mind, a small group of us tasted through every wine Bedrock made from 2007 to 2010. We are, all-in-all, thrilled with the way the wines are developing—there are a few rockstar wines, a lot of stuff we are really happy with, and a couple of wines to learn from. The group, which consisted of Chris, Papa Joel, assistant winemaker Cody, cellarmaster Luke, friend Paul Costigan (one of the original founders of the Rare Wine Co. though that is hardly his sum) and myself, wrote down notes and impressions. Hopefully, this gives folks holding onto older Bedrock wines a resource for the wines we think are ready to go and which could use a little more time.



Personally, the tasting was a bit emotional for me. It is sometimes too easy to get lost in nostalgic panacea when thinking back on something that you love. Tasting through each vintage brought back to focus the many small victories, frustrations, blow-ups, moments of jubilation, and straight up f#ck ups that occurred since deciding to embark on this expedition in 2007. That time I took a turn too quickly and flipped 28 cases of wine into a roadside ditch, the time I forgot to close the bottom manway on the tank before filling it, the time all of our glass was left outside by the custom crush facility before bottling with rain in the forecast and Chris spent four hours in the pitch-black of night moving it inside, the time the rental truck loaded with Brosseau Chardonnay broke down in Salinas and had to be towed all the way to Sonoma with fruit still on it, the time I released 2009 Russian River Valley Zinfandel and then decided to recall it because it went volatile in bottle, and so many other Don Quixote-esque moments of ridiculousness. And then there was the time my best friend moved from New York to join the winery, the nice first professional reviews, the realization that Bedrock might actually support me, the time I heard through the grapevine that my father said my wines were better than his (not true, but nice to hear), the first time arriving at Evangelho Vineyard at dawn, the founding of the Historic Vineyard Society with colleagues and confidants, saving Katusha's Vineyard from being ripped out, and the many times like this last Monday that we got to eat and share wine, simple food and thoughts with great friends and fellow winemakers.

While thinking back on the timeline of the winery, Chris and I remembered a video done of the very first day of harvest for Bedrock; for curious readers, you can see the video [here](#). Both Caritas, my Great Pyrenees, and I are pups! The video, though full of cheese, is a good reminder of how little the winemaking has changed. We tend to pick a little earlier these days, know a lot more about farming, have nicer equipment (no longer pitch forking fruit), have a few more fermenters and barrels, a veritable smorgasbord of amazing vineyards and most importantly seven more years of experience. And though my pretty (pretty clumsy!) Caritas is getting a little milky in the left eye, and I have a few more wrinkles and crinkles, and Chris has even less hair, we feel blessed to have great friends, healthy families, and more joy in our daily strides now than ever.

Of course, none of this would have happened without you, which is something we will never forget and why we continue to do our best to hold pricing despite the increase in demand.

"Eventually, all things merge into one, and a river runs through it. The river was cut by the world's great flood and runs over rocks from the basement of time. On some of the rocks are timeless raindrops. Under the rocks are the words, and some of the words are theirs.

I am haunted by waters."

-Norman Maclean



Wines:

*"Its inhabitants are, as the man once said, 'wh*res, p!mps, gamblers, and sons of b*tches,' by which he meant Everybody. Had the man looked through another peephole he might have said, 'Saints and angels and martyrs and holy men,' and he would have meant the same thing." – John Steinbeck*

This release contains some of the very best wines we have made. We feel it nicely balanced between wines built for near-term enjoyment such as the Lulu Rose, Albarino and Sauvignon Blanc and some of our most age-worthy offerings with 2013 Kamen Cabernet and 2012 Alder Springs Syrah. It features two vineyards farmed and owned by the Bilbro brothers, who are as good at spotting vineyard talent as anyone, with the perfumed and lithe Limerick Lane Zinfandel and the truly singular Gibson Ranch Heritage Wine. Last but not least, it includes our latest offering from Hudson Vineyard T'n'S blocks, one of the greatest sites for Syrah in the state.

"Love's a gift that's surely handmade"
-Guy Clark

2014 Ode to Lulu Rosé, California: Like the last few years, this rosé comes from vines planted prior to 1940 (or perhaps we should say prior to FDR's third term). Picked specifically for rosé, at lower potential alcohol and whole-cluster pressed, this pale and perfumed rosé belies its lighter color and has plenty of density. It bears a strong resemblance to the 2010 and 2011, both of which are still showing nicely now. The backbone of the wine is the ancient Mourvedre—with all of its coniferous perfume and spice—with dashes of Cemetery Vineyard Carignane for salty crunch and Evangelho for red-fruited crackle. \$19

2014 Judge Ranch Sauvignon Blanc, Bennett Valley: I think this is my favorite Sauvignon Blanc we have made since the original 2009 version from Kick Ranch. The vineyard is so rocky that Joe and Gail Judge were forced to remove 1000 tons of stone before creating adequate soil for vines. This greatly devigorates the overly enterprising Sauvignon Blanc vines and results in fragrant wines of solidly wrought temper. The wine was fermented entirely in the ciga barrels made famous by Didier Dagueneau, coopered to our specifications (aka, tight grain and very light toast) for us by our friends at Tonnellerie Atelier. Exotic and ambrosial this wine captures what I love best about good Sauvignon Blanc—great aromatic complexity paired with nice texturing. \$25



2014 Abrente Albarino, Carneros: Michael Havens and I both think this is one of the strongest Albarinos to date. In a reverse from the last couple of years the fruit from Stewart Ranch, planted on clay, was the stronger of the two lots—showing beautifully precise aromatics hinting at the tropical, nice density and crackling acidity. The Watson Ranch lot contributes nice structure and a distinct steely citrus character. This will be a major part of my own summer wine consumption! \$22

2013 Limerick Lane Zinfandel, Russian River Valley: Our first release from this wonderful vineyard owned by Jake and Scot Bilbro and farmed by Steve Matthiason. This vineyard has especially important meaning to me, as my father made the Limerick Lane Winery wines from 1994 to 1996 at Ravenswood. He has long thought the vineyard to be one of the best in the state for Zinfandel and it is wonderful to see it getting the meticulous farming it deserves. Planted in 1910, this is a singular expression of Russian River Valley fruit. The soil is remarkably rocky compared even to other vineyards like Sodini Ranch that are on the same small stretch of road. The resulting wine is structured and highly perfumed, potently fresh with aromatics of blood orange, pomegranate and dust. \$38

2013 Papera Ranch Heritage Wine, Russian River Valley: This venerable vineyard planted in 1934 produced a beautiful wine in 2013. The field blend, based around Zinfandel and Carignane and planted in the very cool Piner-Olivet area of the Russian River Valley, is always one of our favorites for its deep color, smoked blue fruit with a trace of stone fruit and cherry skin. It has considerable girth in 2013 but is held proudly erect by penetrating acidity. Trying this alongside the 2013 Limerick Lane and the 2013 Dolinsek (from the Fall 2014 release) one can really see three unique expressions from the sprawling Russian River Valley AVA. \$38

"I may have been born just poor white trash, but Fancy was my name."
-Bobbie Gentry

2013 Gibson Ranch Heritage Wine, McDowell Valley: This is one of the most unique field blends we have had the pleasure of making. Rather than a constellation of varieties creating a crucible around Zinfandel, this vineyard contains no Zinfandel, nor mixed-black stalwarts Carignane or Alicante Bouschet. Instead, these physically imposing 1880s plantings are a mix of Syrah, Petite Sirah, Peloursin, Trousseau Noir and Grenache. To me, there is fascinating logic behind this blend. A bit of East meets West, or yin and yang, like Lynn Swann, a football player who practiced ballet. Peloursin is a savage, all color and tannin. Syrah is color but perfume, pepper and a bit of grace. Petite Sirah, which is a cross of the two, shares a bit of each of its parents attributes. The raw power of this family of grapes is balanced against two of the lightest colored and most perfumed grapes out there, Grenache and Trousseau Noir. The result is a wine of great backbone but with aromatic finesse and perfume (particularly with time in the decanter). \$38



"I'm just an old chunk of coal, but I'm gonna be a diamond someday"

-Billy Joe Shaver

2012 Alder Springs Syrah, Mendocino: Much has been said about this remarkable site in the far northern reaches of Mendocino County. Located one ridge in from the Pacific Ocean the vineyard is planted on steep slopes of decomposed sandstone. It is a remarkable terroir farmed by the lovingly maniacal Stu Bewley. Though we started working with the vineyard in 2011, the fruit that year came in on November 1st and finished at under 11% alcohol due to the incredibly cool year (and an indicator of the sites extremity). The 2012 is one of my favorite, and certainly one of the most age-worthy, Syrahs we have made. Vinified with 80% whole-cluster and 3% cofermented Viognier. \$39

2013 Hudson Vineyard T'n'S Blocks, Carneros: In contrast to the extremity of Alder Springs and its vintage-to-vintage shape-shifting, Hudson is one of our most consistently awesome vineyards. This is, without a doubt, due to the meticulous vineyard practice of Lee Hudson and vineyard manager Kelly Mcleod. The 2013 Hudson continues the string of excellence. Vinified with 50% whole-cluster in 2013 the wine was raised in a mixture of barriques and puncheons without racking. This is classic Hudson- smoke and bacon fat, brined green olives and violets. \$39

Living on the road my friend, was going to keep you free and clean, now you wear your skin like iron and your breath is as hard as kerosene.

-Townes Van Zandt

2013 Kamen Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Moon Mountain District: When we make Cabernet we are looking for inspiration from the old school--M ayacamas, Dunn, Mt. Eden, Corison, Togni, Laurel Glen, Ravenswood Pickberry, Chappellet, and Kenwood Artist Series. At Kamen, where the farming is as perfectly modern as it gets under the careful watch of Phil Coturri, we have found a wonderful intersection of modern farming with traditional winemaking and picking levels. Picked at relatively low sugar by Cabernet standards, this wine was fermented in concrete tank where it stayed on skins for almost two months. After pressing it was put down to 50% new oak from Taransaud, Sylvain, Darnajou and Boutes where it remained, unracked, until bottling. This is aromatically driven, mountain Cabernet. It should bring pleasure for several decades. \$58



“Now you are man and wife, Reader and Reader. A great double bed receives your parallel readings. Ludmilla closes her book, turns off her light, puts her head back against the pillow, and says, “Turn off your light, too. Aren’t you tired of reading?” And you say, “Just a moment, I’ve almost finished ‘If on a winters night a traveler’ by Italo Calvino.”
-Italo Calvino

Cheers,
Morgan and Chris

Postscript: Please excuse the editing of curse words. Artistic freedom cowers to corporate spam filters.
