

Barreto Cellars VINTAGE VIEW

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2002 BOTTLED, 2003 JUST BEGINNING

JUST DAYS AFTER BOTTLING OUR 2002 VINTAGE
GRAPES START ROLLING IN FOR 2003

By-Michael Barreto: August 20, The first vintage of Barreto Cellars fine wine was bottled, yielding 397 cases of heritage based wines featuring Tempranillo, Touriga Nacional, Vinho Tinto (red blend), Sauvignon Blanc and Malbec. After 10 to 11 months of aging and lots of preparations. Selecting the right bottles, corks, capsules and don't forget labels (colors, fonts, sizes and descriptions) it all came down to a few hours in the morning. It was kind of exciting after all that hard work, watching as bottles of wine started making their way down the bottling line, through the filler, corker, capsuler and labeler, it is a lot different than doing the same procedures by hand.



Labeling bottles by hand vs. labeling by machine

However, there is not much rest for the weary, the next weekend the first lot of grapes for the new vintage was harvested. This time it was Verdelho, this white grape is found primarily on the island of Madeira and is one of the prime varieties used in the wines of the same name. The grape is

now slowly finding it's way into table wines of Spain, Portugal, Australia and the U.S. This wine was small batch fermented, will be aged entirely in stainless steel, bottled and released by the summer 2004.

The reds came next with Tempranillo arriving first. I was able to conduct a few experiments on the variety this year including natural fermentation and extended maceration. We will have to wait to see how these turn out.

A new red variety for the year is Tannat. Found primarily in the Basque region of France as well as new world production in Uruguay. This grape is known for deep color, a powerful tannin structure and great depth. This is one of the California newcomers that I



Tempranillo nearing ripeness

am sure will make a lasting impression on winemakers and consumers everywhere.

Touriga Nacional, last years most pleasant surprise returns, confirming its greatness and ability to make truly great table wines. A small lot of this variety and some Tempranillo were made into the first commercial lot of Port, this one will be worth the wait.

As the harvest 2003 came to a close, an opportunity presented itself to obtain some Central Coast Cabernet Franc, giving me the opportunity to make one of my favorite Bordelaise varieties as well as something that a few people have heard of, ha, ha. When it is all said and done, look for the production of close to 600 cases for the vintage, a small growth over 2002.



Teaching the correct pronunciation of "Touriga Nacional"

Overall the vintage was above average in quality, with a slow beginning and abrupt ending. This meant a longer than normal wait for early varieties to ripen, however, the mid and late season ones were right on time, which created a real crunch time during crush! Trying to process the grapes as they reached there peak ripeness was a real challenge.

To add to the challenge of this harvest, just days before the first grapes arrived, I accepted an offer to become the Assistant Winemaker at Sylvester Winery in Paso Robles. A mid-sized Estate Winery that produces about 20,000 cases of wine for its own label as well as custom crushing 800 tons of grapes for various clients. If you are ever in the neighborhood please stop by for a tour.

In order to determine if consumers would accept these new wines we had a "Sneak Peek" party at Great Gatsby's, wine shop. The turnout was spectacular over 150 people showed up to experience the premier wines from Barreto Cellars. It appeared that most consumers were receptive to unique varietals. The wines were all received well with many encouraging comments and accolades by those in attendance.



"Sneak Peak" party attendees

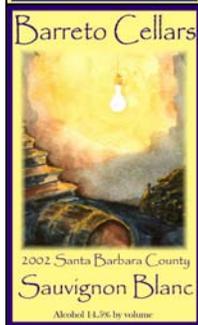
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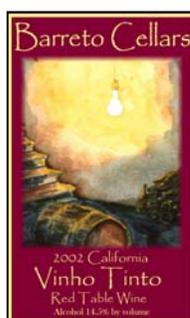
Barreto Cellars collection of 2002 wines



Tempranillo Tasting Notes: This interpretation of the king of Spanish wines dares to break from tradition by capturing the upfront fruitiness of the variety and presenting it to the pallet with a smooth velvety texture that adds to its pleasant finish.

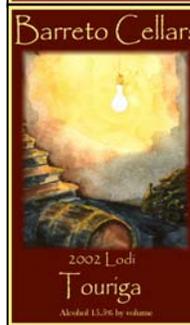


Sauvignon Blanc Tasting Notes: This crisp fruity wine displays an abundance of tropical fruit on the nose and shows its ability to stand up to powerful foods by refreshing the pallet with its acidity and mouth feel.



Vinho Tinto (Red Blend) Tasting Notes: The blending of Tempranillo and Touriga is as common in the Douro, as is blending Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot in Bordeaux.

Once blended the two varieties come together to create a complex and rich tasting wine that balances the fruity forward nose by extenuating the earthy properties of each, producing a well rounded wine that stands well on its own, or is the perfect with



Touriga Tasting Notes: Touriga Nacional is one of the main grape varieties used in the production of Port wines. Its use as a table wine is just now making it to the mainstream.

This example makes a bold statement by exhibiting fruit, floral and spicy aromas at the same time while possessing plenty of body and balance that lead to a smooth and lingering finish.



Holiday Wishes



Joey keeps asking me if I can put off writing this newsletter anymore than I already have? Well it is not Christmas Eve yet, so I guess I am still ahead of the game, but I am still sorry it is so late.

We would both like to thank everyone who has helped out in some way or another this year. Especially, all of you who turned out for our "Sneak Peak" party, your support helps add validation to this endeavor that we have undertaken.

As we take time together with family and friends during the holidays, please take a moment to reflect back on those who are no longer with us and raise a glass to honor their memory.

MARKETING BRIEF

Please look for the general release of Barreto Cellars wines in the late Spring or early Summer at local retailers and restaurants. The wines should retail between fifteen and twenty five dollars. Also, we should be sending out information for joining our wine club as well as giving you the option to purchase wines direct via mail order. We are also planning on participating in a few wine tasting events, hopefully one near you.

SHAKE RATTLE AND ROLL

Yes, we felt the earthquake on December 22. It did some damage at the winery, breaking water and cooling lines, and disrupted the bottling that we were doing that day.