

2005 ZINFANDEL Back in the Rotation



Thanks to a couple of great vintages, namely 2005 and 2006, Zinfandel has made it back into my rotation of everyday wines. The wines we've made in both '05 and '06 remind me of why we were drawn to Zins from Dry Creek Valley in the first place. Back in the 1980's, when we weren't listening to the B52's, Flock of Seagulls and Depeche Mode, we enjoyed Dry Creek Zins two or three times a week. They were robust, yet full of juicy fruit, balanced with bright acidity, void of residual sugar and generally close to, but rarely over, 15% in alcohol. In other words, they were balanced wines that went with a wider variety of foods than today's trendy heavyweight-style Zinfandels, which seem to be more appropriate as cocktail wines.

In 2005, a long, cool growing season, combined with a lower than normal crop size, yielded uniformly ripe bunches. We were able to pick our Primitivo-clone Zinfandel and our benchland head pruned Zinfandel vines at maximum ripeness without the prune flavors from raisins or the sharp peppery flavors caused by under-ripe grapes. This is seldom the case with our fickle friend, Zin, which is ever-so prone to variable ripening.

Much hoopla has been made over the 2005 vintage in Bordeaux, Burgundy and the Rhone. Most critics call it a "must purchase" for fans of those wines. The same can be said for our 2005 Zinfandel. Its dark color, deep core of fruit and spice, solid tannin structure and bright acidity make it a classic vintage for Unti Zinfandel—one that will age longer than any of our previous Zins.

It is certainly nice to see Zin make its way back to my dinner table. It's like listening to an old Bob Dylan or Neil Young record I haven't played for years. Don't think twice (about buying this wine), it's alright.

2005 ZINFANDEL	
Harvested: 9/28/05 through 9/30/05	Blend: 85% Zinfandel, 11% Petite Sirah, 4% Barbera
Total Acidity: 0.58g/100ml	Alcohol: 14.9%
pH: 3.75	Bottled: 8/28/06
Aging: 11 mo. in French Oak, 25% new	Cases Produced: 1,345

2004 SYRAH BENCHLAND RESERVE Same As It Ever Was



I have always been one who places more stock in great vineyards versus great vintages. My favorite wines, no matter the geographic location, come from certain producers who have unique vineyards. More often than not, these wineries make more enjoyable wines in average vintages than average vineyards do in great years (does that make sense?). Chances are a Groffier Chambolle Musigny Les Amoureuses or Siro Pacenti's Brunello di Montalcino or a Domaine de la Janasse Chateauneuf-du-Pape "Chaupin" will show both quality and the personality of the vintage every year. I think that's very cool.

Since 2002, we have been making Syrah from a small section of low-vigor vines within our Benchland vineyard. The wine from here is

so concentrated, it more than stands up to being aged in new French oak for 16 to 18 months, resulting in our most dramatic statement with Syrah. While our Benchland Syrah may have to wait many years before being enshrined in the "Vineyard Hall of Fame," it does have one thing in common with the above mentioned great wines: a strong vineyard personality. Upon tasting the three vintages (2002, 2003 and 2004), you'd say these wines are very similar: black in color, with classic blackberry/smoky/chocolate flavors. They all have excellent depth and tannin structure to age well. It is what you have come to expect from this Unti vineyard.

Yet, upon further scrutiny of the three vintages, you'd find subtle differences. The 2002 was a big, almost port-like wine, while the 2003 had a floral, spicy aroma, brighter acidity and more structure. This 2004 shows the riper nature of that growing season. It has a blackberry liqueur aroma and flavor that is more obvious than in past vintages. While this wine is big, its slightly lower than normal acidity makes for a lush and forward wine. It is already drinking better than the 2003. It is a worthy addition to your collection of preceding vintages of Benchland Syrah.

I guess you can take the Benchland Syrah out of Dry Creek, but you can't take the Unti out of the wine...or something like that. Only 250 cases were produced. Purchases limited to six bottles per person.

2004 SYRAH BENCHLAND RESERVE	
Harvested: 9/10/04 through 9/16/04	Blend: 100% Syrah
Total Acidity: 0.70g/100mL	Alcohol: 14.8%
pH: 3.82	Bottled: 3/24/06
Aging: 17 months in French Oak, 45% new	Cases Produced: 250

2004 SYRAH MAGNUMS Ode to Kevin Mitchell and Dick Allen



It's that time of year for those of you who like to swing the big lumber. We are releasing the 2004 Syrah in 1.5 liter bottles. Apparently Kevin Mitchell and Dick Allen used 38 ounce bats during their colorful careers as fearsome power hitters. Now you can supply the power for your next gathering of family and friends.

This year's mag is a unique lot. It is our main lot of 2004 Syrah (not the Benchland Reserve), only it was aged in new French oak an additional 4 months. As such, this wine shows even more fruit than the Benchland. As I always say, this larger size is ideal for those who want to see how our Syrah ages. But most of you don't listen to this nonsense. You proudly pour our mags at parties with your *special* friends. Why not? As Sean Penn says in *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, "Hey bud, let's party."
Mick

2004 SYRAH MAGNUMS	
Harvested: 9/10/04 through 9/16/04	Blend: 100% Syrah
Total Acidity: 0.69g/100mL	Alcohol: 14.8%
pH: 3.85	Bottled: 3/24/06
Aging: 14 months in French Oak, 30% new	Cases Produced: 63

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Shipping Information:

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Name: _____

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Address: _____

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Zipcode: _____

Phone#: _____

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Payment Information:

Charge to Credit Card below or Check enclosed

Visa/MC # _____

Expiration Date: ___ / ___ / ___ Ver#: _____

Signature: _____

Billing Address (if diff. from Shipping Info. above): _____

New Releases:	# Bottles	Price	Extension
2005 Zinfandel	<input type="text"/>	@ \$25 =	<input type="text"/>
2004 Syrah Benchland <small>Limit 6</small>	<input type="text"/>	@ \$35 =	<input type="text"/>
2004 Syrah Magnum	<input type="text"/>	@ \$65 =	<input type="text"/>
Current Releases:			
2005 Petit Frere	<input type="text"/>	@ \$20 =	<input type="text"/>
2005 Segromigno	<input type="text"/>	@ \$20 =	<input type="text"/>
2005 Grenache	<input type="text"/>	@ \$30 =	<input type="text"/>
2004 Syrah	<input type="text"/>	@ \$26 =	<input type="text"/>
Total # of Bottles	<input type="text"/>	Subtotal =	<input type="text"/>
(6-11 bottles = 5%, 12-35 = 10%, 36+ = 15%) Discount =			(<input type="text"/>)
		New Subtotal =	<input type="text"/>
(CA = 7.75%; Other states, call for rate) Taxes =			<input type="text"/>
(Use chart +\$4/box for Residential address) Shipping =			<input type="text"/>
		TOTAL =	<input type="text"/>

SHIPPING TO A BUSINESS RATES (Subject to change)		
State	6 Pk Box (4-6 btls)	12 Pk Box (7-12 btls)
Northern CA	\$14 - Ground	\$19 - Ground
So. CA, CO, ID, NM, NV, OR, WA, WY	\$17 - Ground \$25 - 3Day \$28 - 2Day	\$25 - Ground \$42 - 3Day \$49 - 2Day
IA, MN, MO, NE, ND, TX	\$21 - Ground \$34 - 3Day \$43 - 2 Day	\$33 - Ground \$58 - 3Day \$71 - 2Day
CT, DC, FL, GA, IL, LA, NC, NY, OH, VA, WI	\$23 - Ground \$38 - 3Day \$43 - 2Day	\$38 - Ground \$64 - 3Day \$74 - 2Day
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Add \$4/box if shipping to a Residential address. *If your state is not listed, call for options.		

*Purchasers must be 21 or older.
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