

Grave Concern

Lately, there hasn't been much to cheer about in the news. Economic Armageddon has totally consumed our collective consciousness. It is a strange social vibe that has us worried about spending money publicly. It is much more fashionable to appear like we are cutting back. Fortunately for Unti Vineyards, most of you perceive our wine as a basic necessity. So the stories I notice in the media today have me, as Eric Idle would say, looking on *the bright side of life*.

Rickey Don't Lose That Thunder

I know it's tempting to comment on this season's A-Fraud saga of Alex Rodriguez's use of steroids, but I have been more drawn to the commentary surrounding Rickey Henderson's well-deserved selection to the Hall of Fame.¹ Somehow, despite being baseball's best lead-off hitter of all-time, Rickey was not voted into the Hall unanimously. What were those who did not vote for him thinking?

Whether you look at his numbers, or the fact that he helped two different teams win a World Series, Rickey was one of the best players we have seen in recent history.² Yet, most of the media commentary on Henderson has taken the form of mocking his many colorful and cocky quotes. Rickey has a unique way of expressing himself, which reflects his humble upbringing as a black man from Oakland. I find this treatment of Rickey petty. It is probably why some crusty writers didn't vote for Henderson.



Peewee league circa 1964. The coach is lookin' good, isn't he?

Two of America's most revered athletes, Muhammad Ali and Yogi Berra, were famous for either making boastful or unintelligible statements, and yet both men are revered. Ali's "I am the greatest" or Yogi's "It's not over till it's over" have been incorporated into the American vernacular.

Furthermore, how often have you heard broadcasters complain about today's star athletes who, on the advice of their PR manager or agent, are unwilling to say anything other than rote, politically correct quotes as if they were pre-programmed robots. A-Rod couldn't even provide a genuine and honest confession of his steroid use when he was, with tears in his eyes, supposedly spilling his guts to ESPN's Peter Gammons.

Perhaps the greatest irony in the media's criticism of Henderson is that his success story represents all that is good in baseball. Not only was Rickey a blast to watch on the field, he was actually *nice* to fans *and* sportswriters. This behavior is increasingly unusual for superstars. Regardless of his stature as a player, which was mighty, Rickey's quirky personality was good for the game. The same cannot be said for #25 from across the Bay.

As a birthday gift to my dad for recently turning 70 (Can you believe it?), I'm taking him to Cooperstown to see Rickey's induction speech later this year. It will undoubtedly be a hot ticket.

¹ Alex Rodriguez's admission to using steroids was roundly condemned by faux commissioner Bud Selig, who, in my opinion, is the real culprit for rampant use of performance enhancing drugs by major league baseball players. See our newsletter #22 from July, 2006.

² Ian Becker, of Arlequin wines in Hayes Valley, sent out a short, but compelling argument in favor of Rickey being voted into the Hall because of his numbers. Contact him at arlequinwines.com

Glory Days? “The Boss” Meets “The Man” on Highway 61

Another legend, Bruce Springsteen, has been in the news lately. Unless you have been living under a rock, or you reside here in Geysertucky, you were painfully reminded by every media outlet that Bruce performed at Barack Obama’s inauguration celebration, and our beloved national event, the Superbowl.

Springsteen, the popular music icon of a disingenuous generation, has often been compared to such pop/folk voices from a previous era, Bob Dylan and Joni Mitchell. Any true student of rock and roll, or Americana for that matter, knows that Springsteen’s classic songs *Born in the USA* and *Glory Days* make Dylan’s *Visions of Johanna* and Mitchell’s *Hejira* look like simple nursery rhymes. The old folkies simply couldn’t carry Bruce’s jock.

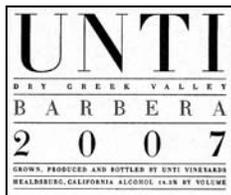
To further illustrate my point, Springsteen secured a deal giving Walmart exclusive rights on releasing his latest cd. Take that and stick it in your harmonicas Bob and Joni! Walmart’s impeccable track record as a model employer is known throughout the world. Any rock star lucky enough to be promoted by Walmart should be honored. Perhaps that is why Bruce is called “The Boss.”

It’s comforting to know that while I’m shopping for cheap petroleum-based-non-biodegradable products made in China, I can pick up a copy of the new Springsteen cd. In fact, rumor has it Bruce is going on a world tour for Walmart to personally sign cd’s. You’ll find him appearing with Rush Limbaugh and Rosie O’Donnell at a store near you. They’ll be in the appliance section, next to 1,000 telephones that don’t ring...

Oh. I almost forgot. We have some exciting new releases.

Mick

2007 BARBERA



Barbera is really a great wine grape. I know this comes as no surprise to most of you, but among wine geeks, Barbera, like Rickey Henderson, is under-appreciated. Fortunately, as Lindsey Buckingham might say, *the world keeps turning* (I must be kidding, right?). Today, there are an increasing number of wines made in Italy and, heaven forbid, in Dry Creek Valley, that make a compelling argument for Barbera as a world class varietal. Perhaps you will join me in becoming a *Barbera believer*.

Burton Anderson, author of two fantastic books on Italian wine, *Vino* and *The Wine Atlas of Italy*, recently said, “No other red wine of Italy has risen so rapidly in favor in recent times as Barbera.”³ We are so impressed with our results from growing and making Barbera that we have planted an additional two acres of it. In a few years, we might even have enough stock to last more than three months.

The 2007 vintage was, across the varietal board, a good one for Unti. For whatever reason, and we think it was a lack of rain during the spring, we had small grape berries in 2007 with almost all of the varietals we grow. This had the effect of concentrating color, flavor, tannin, and with Barbera, acidity.

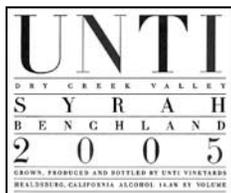


Barbera biodynamique

³ From *Barbera*, a cute little book I checked out from the Healdsburg Library. There are nice essays from Burton Anderson, Mario Busso, Maurizio Gily and Donato Lanati.

Our 2007 Barbera is, as Sebastien likes to say, “...same as it ever was.” It’s almost opaquely dark, very floral and fruity, with a lush, yet snappy, impression on the palate. While the acidity is higher, so is the fruit concentration. Low in tannin, Barbera derives its structure from acidity and the new French oak barrels we use for aging. It is unquestionably the most versatile wine we make when it comes to pairing with food. Please note that the Barbera is throwing harmless tartrate crystals so we recommend you stand the bottle upright a few hours before serving. Only 650 cases produced.

2005 SYRAH BENCHLAND



Our 2005 Benchland is perhaps one of our most structured and age-worthy Syrahs ever. There are several good reasons for this.

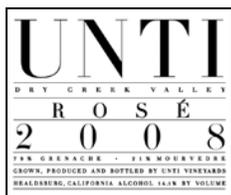
The 2005 growing season was one of the longest we have ever had here. We began harvesting this vineyard October 5th. The slow ripening allows for more complex flavors with solid tannin and acid structure. It is what the French would call a vin de garde vintage.

Our own approach to making this wine is evolving. Each year we get more precise with our vine selection for this wine. In 2005, we tagged individual vines located on the least fertile soils within our 6-acre vineyard. This allowed us to select only the ripest fruit. We then fermented these sections in small wooden and stainless steel vats to maximize their site attributes. We used five separate small lots to make this wine.

We then aged our 2005 Benchland Syrah in sexy French oak barrels, 40% new, for 18 months. This provides additional structure and complexity. Most of our wines couldn’t handle such a slug of new oak, but we felt this 2005 could easily take it in stride. In fact, the oak makes for a more complex and age-worthy wine.

All of which results in a wine that is quite dark, with the intense blackberry and smoked meat character you have come to love from this site. It comes in a more tannic format than in 2004, so I would try to hold on to it for at least two or three years before drinking. If you can’t wait, I suggest you decant. It should have no problem aging 5-7 years from the vintage. 650 cases produced. Also available in Magnum, though limited in supply.

2008 ROSÉ



Since our 2008 Rosé is ideal for “*The Summertime Blues*,” we will release it now even though we bottled it last week. This method of cellaring is a little technique I learned while working for Kendall-Jackson. It’s called “truck aging.”

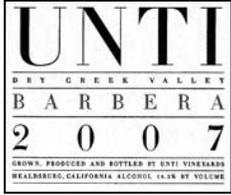
The 2008 Rosé is much like our previous renditions: salmon/onion-skin color, floral, fruity and spicy aromas, in a dry, full-bodied and crisp wine. This ‘08 features a little more Grenache than the past couple of vintages due to a short crop of Mourvedre. Not suprisingly, the Grenache boosts the fruit level up a notch, making it perhaps even more gulpable than last year’s model. Now that Rosé has become quite fashionable, we can all drink it outside of the closet.

LIBRARY WINES

While Alex (our new retail manager), Katie and Sébastien were doing a little spring cleaning, they discovered some hidden inventory. We have a limited amount of library wines for sale. Call the winery or email us to find out what’s available!

UNTI VINEYARDS

4202 Dry Creek Road
 PO Box 1899
 Healdsburg, CA 95448



2007 Barbera
2005 Syrah Benchland
2008 Rosé

Ordering Information: Mail this form to **Unti Vineyards, PO Box 1899, Healdsburg, CA 95448**; or, fax it to **(707) 433-5591**; or, email us from the Store page at www.untivineyards.com; or, call us at **(707) 433-5590**. Use the same methods to contact us for **scheduling tasting appointments** and purchasing on-site.

Today's Date ___ / ___ / ___

Shipping Information:

Residence (add \$4/box to Shipping) Business

Name: _____

c/o Business: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

ST: _____ DOB req'd for OH, HI & WI ___ / ___ / ___

Zipcode: _____

Phone#: _____

Email: _____

Payment Information:

Charge to Credit Card below or Check enclosed

Visa/MC/Discover # _____

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

Signature: _____

Billing Address (if diff. from above): _____

Available:	# Bottles	Price	Extension
2008 Rosé.....		@ \$19 =	
2007 Barbera.....		@ \$26 =	
2006 Petit Frere.....		@ \$20 =	
2006 Grenache.....		@ \$30 =	
2005 Cuvée Foudre.....		@ \$50 =	
2006 Zinfandel.....		@ \$26 =	
2005 Syrah.....		@ \$26 =	
2005 Syrah Benchland.....		@ \$35 =	
2005 Syrah Reserve.....		@ \$50 =	
2006 Petite Sirah.....		@ \$28 =	
2004 Grenache Doux.....		@ \$20 =	
2005 Syrah Benchland Mag...		@ \$75 =	
		Subtotal =	
(6-11 bottles = 5%, 12-35 = 10%, 36+ = 15%) Discounts =			()
New Subtotal =			
(CA = 7.75%; Other states, call for rate) Taxes =			
Use chart (+\$4/box for Residential address) Shipping =			
TOTAL =			

SHIPPING TO A BUSINESS ADDRESS 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 \$26 - 3Day \$32 - 2Day	\$25 - Ground \$45 - 3Day \$54 - 2Day
IA, MO, NE, ND, MN, TX	\$21 - Ground \$37 - 3Day \$49 - 2 Day	\$33 - Ground \$65 - 3Day \$79 - 2Day
CT, DC, FL, GA, IL, LA, NC, NH, NY, OH, VA, WI	\$23 - Ground \$42 - 3Day \$52 - 2Day	\$38 - Ground \$73 - 3Day \$89 - 2Day
AK, HI	\$55 - 2Day	\$89 - 2Day
Add \$4/box if shipping to a Residential address. *If your state is not listed, call for options.		

*Purchasers must be 21 or older.
 An adult signature will be required at delivery.
 Shipping only to states where permitted by law.*