

Great Trios



Hall of Fame trio? Not quite. But, "we're number one!"

This month's triad has me thinking of my favorite threesomes. (Say what?) I've been lucky enough to see the Keith Jarrett Trio three times over the past eighteen months. This great jazz trio is comprised of pianist Keith Jarrett, bassist Gary Peacock, and drummer Jack DeJohnette. Each artist is accomplished and legendary among jazz enthusiasts. As a trio, though, they are truly magical.

If you ever have the chance to see them, do not for any reason, pass it up. I have never seen three musicians play any more seamlessly, while playing the most inspiring music I have heard. Furthermore, they can improvise on any tune at any time during the song, and it still sounds like music! Many jazz musicians talk a fine improvisational game, but these guys seriously walk it. And to still be doing it at their age is simply remarkable. Just don't bring your camera or I-phone to the show...

Seeing The Trio reminds me that real professionals *never* give away an at bat. If virtuosos like The Keith Jarrett Trio refuse to "mail it in," who am I to do the same? One can only hope Bob Dylan, Willie Nelson and John Mellencamp will do the same during their tour of Minor League baseball parks this summer.

2007 SANGIOVESE Our "Dark Star"



Sangiovese is one of our toughest challenges. The grape is not only very sensitive to different sites, but also is prone to more vintage variation than any other variety we cultivate. But when Sangiovese is on, like the Grateful Dead back in the day, especially if they opened the second set with China Cat Sunflower, it can be fantastic. Conversely, in some years, Sangiovese can miss the mark, which is like a Dead show consisting of primarily Bob Weir songs. The 2007 Sangio is definitely *on*.

The 2007 vintage will forever be known for featuring very small berries with almost every grape variety we grow. Small berries mean we had a lower-than-normal Sangiovese crop, which usually leads to a more intense wine. As such our upper Westside section of the vineyard, which is always our best site, produced our most concentrated and complex Sangiovese wine since 1999.



The hills are alive with the "Sound of Sangiovese".
Our Sangiovese vineyard planted in 1992.

When a vintage like 2007 comes around, it will vindicate my dad for taking a chance on planting Sangiovese back in 1992. While we both enjoyed Tuscan wines back then, George was much more emotional than I was about Chianti, VINO Nobile de Montepulciano (no relation to the grape) and Brunello di Montalcino¹. I advocated planting Grenache and Mourvedre.

¹ I realize George may not look the part, but he gets far more fanatical about certain wines than I do. Just ask him what he thinks of Verdicchio, if you have a spare hour or two.

But we had fantastic results in 1999 making a big, fruity and firmly structured (acid and tannin) Sangiovese from this vineyard. The 2007 is much the same. This wine might be called a baby Brunello or a very Italian-like Cal-Ital. Either way, this beautiful wine will age gracefully over the next five to eight years.

250 Cases Produced \$35/bottle

2006 MONTEPULCIANO



As promised in an earlier newsletter, we are releasing the 2006 Montepulciano, our first take on making this under-appreciated Italian variety. Why Montepulciano? For the same reason we have Sangiovese planted: George wanted to try growing it. As you can see, we go through layers of marketing bureaucracy to make decisions around here.

In 2004, George and Linda visited Le Marche, a region located along the Adriatic or eastern side of central Italy, directly east of Umbria. Le Marche offers a bucolic, pristine countryside featuring a plethora of indigenous foods and wines. The best shellfish I've ever tasted is from the Mediterranean Sea. The two finest grapes of the region are Verdicchio, the white grape of Marche, and Montepulciano, the corresponding red.

I'm not quite sure how or when during the trip it happened, but George fell madly in love with Verdicchio and Montepulciano. No joke. Upon his return, you could talk to George about any subject and somehow he would manage to direct the conversation toward these two Marchegiana varieties.

So the natural response is to plant, right? I guess. Verdicchio cuttings were not available, but we could get some Montepulciano from Abruzzo (the region just south of Marche). We grafted about 1,000 vines of Syrah over to it in 2005. This 2006 Montepulciano is the first wine made from that experimental planting.

Our first harvest of Montepulciano in 2006 took place at the end of October, after we had picked everything else. Not having seen Montepulciano grapes before, we were surprised at their relatively large size and extremely grapey (we're talking Welches grape jelly out of Flintstone jars) flavors. Similar to the other Italian varieties we grow, Montepulciano seems to achieve ripeness while it maintains vibrant acidity.

The wine did not disappoint. It is black and rich, but that acidity keeps it juicy. That grapey character we tasted early on has evolved into a licorice/chocolate flavor profile. Our Montepulciano has some big tannins making it a great candidate for at least three to four years of cellaring. Very cool stuff.



She's a good hearted woman in love with a good timin' Unti fan. Martha Richardson, bless her heart, traveling with our 2006 Montepulciano. Photo provided by husband, Ken Richardson.

120 Cases Produced \$30/bottle

Montepulciano Grape or Vino Nobile de Montepulciano?

Probably the biggest obstacle to learning Italian wines is the sheer number of indigenous grape varieties there. It's overwhelming. To make matters worse, once you begin to feel comfortable pronouncing a wine like Montepulciano, you find out there are two types. Mama Mia!

Upon hearing the term "Montepulciano" many of our customers smile and begin dreamily reminiscing about their time spent in this majestic Etruscan city located in southern Tuscany. However, conforming to quintessential Italian logic, the wines from the town, *Vino Nobile de Montepulciano*, are not made from the grape bearing that same name. They are made from Sangiovese - a clone they call *Prugnolo Gentile*, to be specific. It is probably something similar to what is called Sangiovese grosso in Montalcino, because both types of wines tend to be full-bodied. We, too, love the town of Montepulciano and recommend several *Vino Nobile de Montepulciano* wines. Some of our favorite producers include: Poliziano, Avignonese and Dei.

But when we talk about Unti Montepulciano, we are referring to the grape, which is not related to Sangiovese. Montepulciano is native to Abruzzo and is grown in the regions near the Adriatic Sea: Le Marche, Abruzzo, Molise and Puglia. Montepulciano can be grown in a variety of sites and can make a nice soft and fruity wine when it is made from heavily cropped vines. However, when grown with an eye toward quality, Montepulciano can make a dark, powerful and structured wine that retains the charm of a jammy Zinfandel. Some of the best examples can be found in the northern part of Abruzzo and in southern Le Marche. We recommend vineyard designate wines from: Illuminati and Valle Real in Abruzzo; Rosso Conero from Moroder and Le Terrazze. Also, Kurni from Oases de Angeli - the most intense version I've ever tasted.

2006 MOURVEDRE



You say Mataro, I say Mourvedre. You say Monastrell, I say it doesn't matter which name you use for this Spanish grape grown in Provence, the Rhone and our lower property here in Dry Creek Valley. We call it Mourvedre, and it made one of our best wines in 2006.

Like many of you closet Rhone wine freaks, I was first exposed to great Mourvedre by trying the stunning Bandols from Domaine Tempier. Once I tried their great rosé and red wines, I knew I had crossed over to the "dark side." Sebastien developed a love for Mourvedre when he served as an intern working at Chateau de Pibarnon, another great producer in Bandol.

Bandol is the beautiful region in Provence where Mourvedre is the star grape variety. Both red and rosé (by far my favorite rosé on the planet) wines show a meaty, peppery rustic and cherry character that is at the very least, savory. The reds are often very dark, tannic and slightly high in acid. Bandol can have very warm summer weather, which is perfect for fully ripening this Mourvedre.

We planted Mourvedre to blend with Grenache for both structure and complexity. As a blending grape, Mourvedre is a player "whose contributions don't show up in the box score." The down side to Mourvedre in Dry Creek is that it sometimes doesn't ripen fully, which can lead to lighter color and some green tannins.



About a year ago, I mentioned how nice our 2005 Mourvedre was while describing our Cuvée Foudre. Our tiny batch of 2006 Mourvedre, was even more complex, as we were able to achieve full ripeness that year. As such, this wine shows explosive fruit, pepper and body. It is not exactly low in tannin, so I would hang on to a few bottles for at least four to five years.

75 Cases Produced \$30/bottle

UNTI VINEYARDS

4202 Dry Creek Road
 PO Box 1899
 Healdsburg, CA 95448

2007 Sangiovese
2006 Montepulciano
2006 Mourvedre

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): _____

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

Available:	# Bottles	Price	Extension
2007 Sangiovese.....		@ \$35 =	
2006 Montepulciano.....		@ \$30 =	
2006 Mourvedre.....		@ \$30 =	
2007 Barbera.....		@ \$26 =	
2006 Grenache.....		@ \$30 =	
2006 Zinfandel.....		@ \$26 =	
2005 Syrah.....		@ \$26 =	
2005 Syrah Benchland.....		@ \$35 =	
2005 Syrah Reserve.....		@ \$50 =	
2006 Petite Sirah.....		@ \$28 =	
2006 Petit Frere.....		@ \$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 btl)	12 PK BOX (7-12 btl)
Northern CA	\$14 - Ground	\$19 - Ground
So. CA, AZ, CO, ID, NM, NV, OR, WA, WY	\$17 - Ground \$26 - 3Day \$32 - 2Day	\$25 - Ground \$45 - 3Day \$54 - 2Day
IA, MO, ND, MI, MN, TX	\$21 - Ground \$37 - 3Day \$49 - 2 Day	\$33 - Ground \$65 - 3Day \$79 - 2Day
CT, DC, FL, GA, IL, IN, LA, NC, NH, NY, OH, RI, VA, WI	\$23 - Ground \$42 - 3Day \$52 - 2Day	\$38 - Ground \$73 - 3Day \$89 - 2Day
AK, HI	\$55 - 2Day	\$89 - 2Day
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