

Sébastien's Respectful Rant

My turn:

After making wine for the last 4 years with the Untis (which has been an honor, a privilege and at times a challenge) and sharing a good portion of their daily grind, I was bound to witness and observe a few of their *family interactions* (that's what we will call them) and personality traits. I didn't include Linda nor Julie in this little piece, since, they are women and I know better...

For those of you who have met both George and Mick, this is going to sound obvious but, these guys are different. Mick says he was not adopted - Julie refuses to confirm - but how on earth can they be so very different? They definitively have things in common, though size not being one of them. They both have an extremely odd passion for the Oakland A's, love Italian and Rhone wines (one I can relate to), and most inconvenient for me, they can talk your ear off about pretty much anything, although not at the same pace.

George is at heart a farmer and his internal clock is set to the slow succession of seasons. Because he has a very good memory (something Mick inherited), George will typically begin a story by introducing you to every character's genealogical background, and geographical whereabouts. Details will abound and make for a pleasant, leisurely and interesting experience if you don't happen to have anything scheduled for the next hour. His diction has a calming effect on almost anybody (except Mick). By the end of a story, you have forgotten what started it, and so has he, but it's all good.

Mick on the other hand has a machine gun like vocal organ. His mental connections come so fast and furious that his speech just can't keep up. The inside of his brain must be a telecom operator's nightmare; tangled wires everywhere. Following the guy is a sport in its own right. By the time you finally remember the obscure actor or 80's garage band he's talking about, he is already a million miles away, drawing parallels between pitching techniques in the 70's and modern winemaking in St Joseph. For better or for worse, he pretty much remembers anything (he forgot about my raise, though) and manages to communicate with you while conversing on the phone, answering his e-mails and tasting the new blend (sounds like schizophrenia/ADD/autism or is it just multitasking?).

There you have it: the placid, tranquil patriarch and his fiery, hyperactive son. Kind of crazy that these two even considered getting in business together. The thing is, it works. George has the patience, the modesty and the observation skills required for working with Mother Nature. Mick has the verve, the energy and the vision necessary to reach and convince in the marketplace. Both are excellent tasters, possess an impressive knowledge of good wine no matter where it comes from and can talk passionately about their own creations because their heart is in it all the way. As for me, I like to think that I help bridge these two polarized forces, bringing my own idiosyncrasies into the mix...and I almost feel at home 6000 miles away from home.

Sébastien Pochan

2003 Zinfandel/2003 Petite Sirah....dancing with the one that brung ya

It is only fitting we release our 2003 Zinfandel and 2003 Petite Sirah simultaneously. Not only have the two varietals have been inseparable here in Dry Creek for as long as anyone can remember, but the 2003 vintage is a textbook example of why they make such good music together.

Our **Zinfandel in 2003** conformed to the vine's nasty habit of ripening grapes unevenly. I was about to explain why we loath Zinfandel's tendency to ripen unevenly when I realized that I have mentioned this annoying phenomenon in almost every newsletter I've ever written on the subject (Sébastien graciously omitted my habit of repeating myself, myself). Suffice it to say, our 2003 Zinfandel lot possessed classic Dry Creek Valley berry and pepper character, but it had a few rough edges on the palate. Less than ripe grapes cause some bitterness through green tannins, while the raisins result in a higher alcohol wine, or one that finishes hot. What's a winemaker to do?

In today's world of modern winemaking, there are many technological tools we can employ to correct imbalanced wines: de-alcoholizing (lowering alcohol by sending wine through a spinning cone or reverse osmosis membranes), micro-oxygenation (injecting oxygen at a very slow rate to soften tannins), using sophisticated fining agents, and new oak alternatives, to name a few. Yet, the most effective method for making this 2003 Zinfandel a complete/balanced wine was to use a tried and true method: blend in more Petite Sirah. The traditional Dry Creek Valley prescription for this condition is for it to take a healthy dose of Petite Sirah (and please call me in the morning, preferably with purple teeth). This black stuff gives the wine a richer mid-palate so you don't notice any roughness in the finish. Perhaps it is the rogue in me, but I love it when technology can't answer all of the world's wine problems. Take that Michel Rolland.

The relatively high amount of Petite Sirah makes this a bigger than normal Zin for us. It's a Carl's Jr. "in your face" style, if you will. However, the bright Zin fruit, the dollop of Barbera, and the fact that this wine is totally dry, will let you know it is definitely an Unti Zin.

Our **2003 Petite Sirah** is unique for this varietal wine. Upon pouring this wine, you'll be tempted to pop a Lynyrd Skynyrd cd in your stereo and brace yourself for a full-throttle tannin bomb. Not so quick. This Petite is full of floral/spicy aromas while tasting surprisingly light on it's feet. The 2003 vintage gave us higher than normal acid levels which make this, dare I say, a Petite Sirah with good breeding? Ideally,

this wine could use another year or two in the bottle, and then I would drink it with hearty foods; preferably meat. Only 210 cases produced, so this will go quickly.

Mick

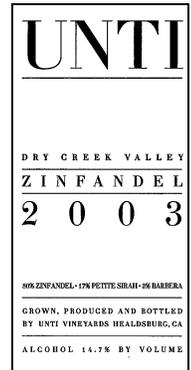
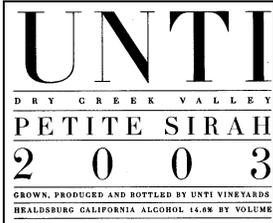
2003 ZINFANDEL	
Harvested:	9/19/03 through 10/11/03
Total Acidity:	0.66g/100ml
pH:	3.75
Aging:	11 months; 85% French Oak (25% new)
Blend:	80% Zinfandel, 17% Petite Sirah, 3% Barbera
Alcohol:	14.7%
Bottled:	9/7/04
Cases Produced:	1360

2003 PETITE SIRAH	
Harvested:	10/9/03
Total Acidity:	0.66g/100ml
pH:	3.75
Aging:	13 months; 60% French Oak (20% new)
Blend:	100% Petite Sirah
Alcohol:	14.3%
Bottled:	12/6/04
Cases Produced:	210

UNTI

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Healdsburg, CA 95448
(707) 433-5590

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New Releases:	# Bottles			
2003 Zinfandel	<input type="text"/>	@ \$22 =	<input type="text"/>	
2003 Petite Sirah	<input type="text"/>	@ \$22 =	<input type="text"/>	
Current Releases:				
2003 Barbera	<input type="text"/>	@ \$24 =	<input type="text"/>	
2003 Grenache <i>**See Review</i>	<input type="text"/>	@ \$26 =	<input type="text"/>	
2002 Syrah	<input type="text"/>	@ \$24 =	<input type="text"/>	
2002 Syrah Benchland Res. 1.5L*	<input type="text"/>	@ \$65 =	<input type="text"/>	
(*1.5L limit: 3 bottles/person)	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	
			<input type="text"/>	
		Subtotal =	<input type="text"/>	
Discounts: 6-11 bottles = 5%, 12-35 = 10%, 36+ = 15% =			<input type="text"/>	
		New Subtotal =	<input type="text"/>	
Taxes: CA=7.75%, GA=\$6/cs, LA=4%, NH=8%, NC=\$2/cs, NV=\$3/cs =			<input type="text"/>	
		Shipping =	<input type="text"/>	
		TOTAL =	<input type="text"/>	

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IA, IL, MO, NE, ND, WI	\$18 – Ground \$29 – 3Day	\$27 – Ground \$45 – 3Day
CT, DC, GA, LA, MN, NC, OH, TX, VA	\$22 – Ground \$35 – 3Day	\$33 – Ground \$50 – 3Day
AK, HI (via 2-Day)	Call	\$58
<p>► Add \$3 if shipping to a Residential address. *If your state is not listed, call for options.</p>		

**Review in Wine Enthusiast, November 2005:
92 Editors Choice Unti 2003 Grenache Dry Creek Valley