

Only the Rhonely

2002 Syrah Dry Creek Estate
2002 Syrah Benchland Reserve
2003 Grenache Dry Creek Estate

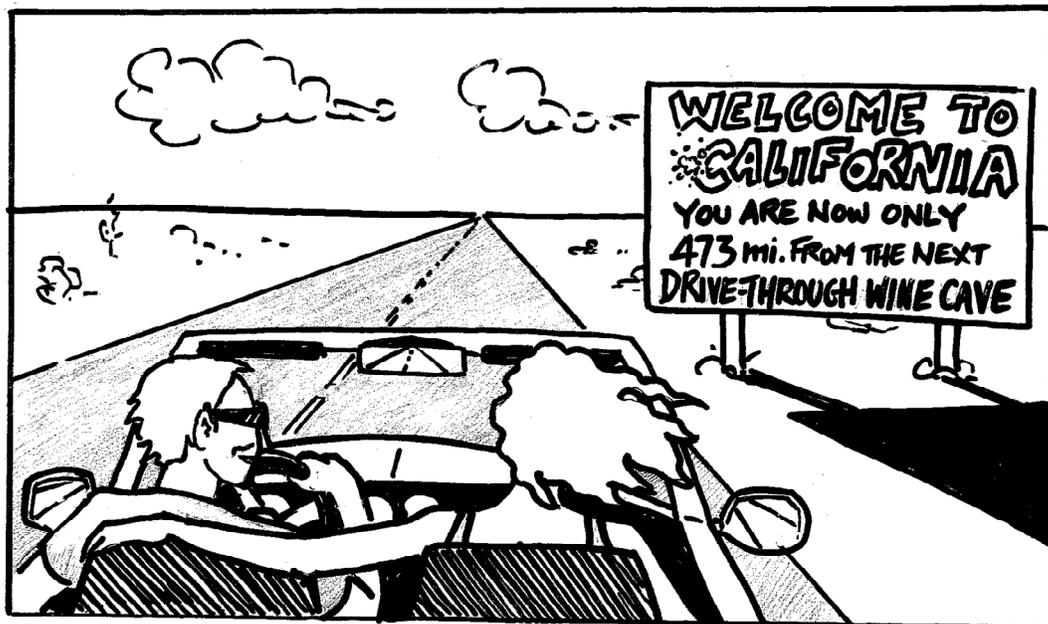
Keepin' up with the Jonesenellis

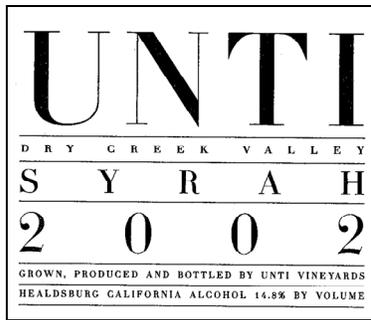
Here in wine country, we have discussed the movie *Sideways* 'til we're *Blue in the Face* (another great movie by Jim Jarmusch). However, it is still a worth seeing for a couple of good reasons: 1) It's a cute, funny, well written and acted movie; 2) It pokes fun at the pretentious aura surrounding wineries and the wine country in general. As you might have guessed, I find this last point intriguing.

The wine country is fraught with puzzling behavior and marketing strategies. Wineries have displayed inappropriate art from the erotic to the absurd (notice I distinguish between the two), shuttled visitors to their tasting room on a tram, provided music from really bad rock bands, built a costly facility that looks like a sewage plant, and have come up with confusing packaging that would insult the intelligence any level-headed consumer (not that we would ever do such a thing). I'm sure you can add a few more problems to this dubious list. I'd like to think this goofiness occurs only in that other valley, but wineries all over the state cannot help themselves.

I don't have enough room here to fully explain why wineries engage in such activities except to say that it looks like we proprietors are playing one-ups-manship with one another trying to attract customers. The latest wine country phenomenon is *wine caves*. Your winery can't really be taken seriously unless you have one. One winery recently proclaimed that wine caves are "almost organic." I'm curious to know where you find organically grown dynamite to blow up that hillside for a cave. Bio-dynamic! Perhaps you just employ very active worms.

Anyway, we here at Unti Vineyards aren't about to be outdone by anybody. So, in the great American tradition of roadside attractions, such as, The Incredible Thing, The World's Largest Ball of Yarn, The Winchester Mystery House, and Stuckey's, we are embarking on the wine industry's first DRIVE-THROUGH WINE CAVE. It's fun for all ages.





2002 SYRAH Dry Creek Valley Estate “It’s the Dawning of a New Era”

It seems like my favorite musical performers, sports franchises and, yes, wineries, have a string of successful years that might be called a “golden age”. Some examples include: the Stones circa 1970 with Mick Taylor; the late 1980’s Oakland A’s Bash Brothers Jose Canseco and Mark McGuire (Oops! That was the beginning of a different era.); the early 1970’s A’s with Catfish Hunter, Reggie Jackson and Rollie Fingers; the entire past 100 years with J.J. Prum winery in Germany’s Mosel region.

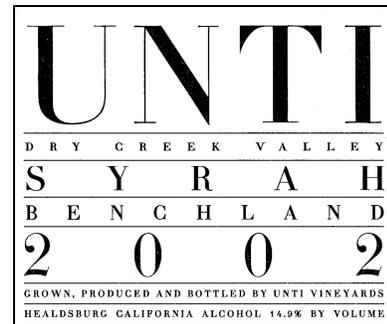
This 2002 Syrah heralds a new era for Unti Syrah. We have a unique synthesis of factors contributing to this being a more complex Syrah. By 2002, we were making wines from our Northern Rhone Syrah clones 174, 877, 383 and 470. Despite being from young vines, a couple lots were so good they had to be rushed to the major league level, thus we included them in our standard Syrah (sounds like the A’s 2005 starting pitching). The new clones add a blueberry/olive component to the wine, which is classic St. Joseph or Cornas.

Additionally, this Syrah shows winemaker Sébastien Pochan’s hand. Sébastien felt strongly about including the new-vine Syrah into our main blend for the aforementioned reasons. Furthermore, for the first time ever, we decided to blend 5% Grenache into our main Syrah. Here, we are using Grenache for the same reason other producers blend Viognier into their Syrah; for added aromatics and a juicier mouth-feel.

Oh, by the way, this wine benefits from the 2002 vintage: big, dark and juicy wines with great acid balance. This ’02 definitely represents our (George, Mick and Sébastien) style of making Dry Creek Valley Syrah. It’s complexity is driven by the fruit and vineyard character. While this is a clean Syrah, it still has a wild side that would make Lou Reed proud.

2002 SYRAH

Harvested: 9/24 through 9/27/02
Total Acidity: .61 g/100ml
pH: 3.75
Aging: 14 months in French oak barrels & puncheons, 30% new
Blend: 95% Syrah, 5% Grenache Noir
Alcohol: 14.8%
Bottled: 11/11/03
Cases Produced: 993



2002 Benchland Reserve SYRAH Our BALCO Blend

For years we have been eyeing the scraggly vines located on a little knoll within our original 6-acre benchland Syrah vineyard. Here, the vines have fewer clusters of tiny thick-skinned Syrah grapes. In 2002, we harvested this section separately to see if our intuition of getting more concentrated wine was correct. From day one in the fermenter this wine proved worthy of a special designation.

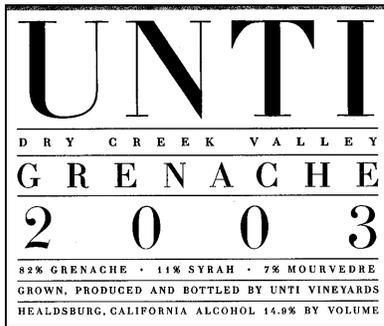
So what should we do with our most concentrated Syrah to date? Age it in a high percentage of new French oak for 18 months; longer than any other Syrah we’ve ever made. What you get is a 2002 Benchland Reserve wine that tastes like we are pandering to the press by making chewy, jammy Syrah with flashy oak. Untivino? If you are wondering about the wine’s hat size, or the status of one of its delicate body parts, I’ll have you talk to my attorney. Besides, we only use flaxseed oil to clean our Benchland Reserve barrels.

While the Benchland Reserve will currently satisfy those of you who are longing for a full-throttle Unti Petite Sirah, in 4 to 6 years it should be much less audacious. In time, the oak will retreat to where it belongs (the background), in exchange for the wild Syrah aromas/flavors of bayleaf, blackberry and smoked meat; descriptors that have always been part of the wine’s vineyard pedigree. This is definitely one for the cellar.

In addition to the 310 cases of this 2002 Benchland Syrah, we have 294 magnums (1.5 liters) for you collectors or hedonists. There is a 3 bottle limit per person for the magnums.

2002 SYRAH BENCHLAND RESERVE

Harvested: 9/24 through 9/27/02
Total Acidity: .50 g/100ml
pH: 3.9
Aging: 18 months in French oak barrels, 30% new
Blend: 100% Syrah
Alcohol: 14.9%
Bottled: 03/15/04
Cases Produced: 310 750ml and 49 1.5L



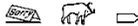
2003 GRENACHE Buxom and Curvy

This is my favorite Unti wine, as if you didn't already know. The warmth I feel for Grenache-based red wines, especially from the South of France, has been within me for over 20 years now (Ouch. Am I really that old?). Maybe that's why I always manage to use the word "sexy" in describing Grenache wines. Dad and Sébastien share my fanaticism toward Grenache, which explains for why we all carry a more serious game-face while walking through this vineyard at harvest. If there is a holy grail we are pursuing here at Unti, it surely is producing a great California Grenache; worthy or even better than those from the Rhone.

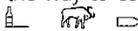
Both in the vineyard and in the winery, this is the most laborious wine we make. Dad's crew usually thins this vineyard (grapes cut off the vine) at least two or three times prior to harvesting. We sample this vineyard for flavors and sugars more often than any other on the property. We will then pick the same vineyard two or three times in order to select only the

CONNOISSEURS' GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA WINE March 2005 Syrah Reviews

☞ 89 UNTI Benchland Dry Creek Valley 2002

Both of the Unti offerings require patient cellaring to be at their best, and this solid youngster is by a small measure the slightly more solid and better filled of the two. Its concentrated black-berry fruit is highlighted with pepper and violets and oak, and its well-extracted flavors hint at a touch of dark earth. Imposing tannins cut things short at the finish, and the wine needs a good half-dozen years of age.  \$30.00

☞ 88 UNTI Dry Creek Valley 2002

Here is a big, blustery, well-extracted Syrah that is a long way from being polished, but its youthful lack of refinement and all too plentiful ragged edges are more than compensated for by a very deep center of varietal fruit. Its suggestions of chocolate, leather, hardwoods and game point the way to complexity to come with bottle aging.  \$24.00

ripest grapes, leaving the balance to more fully develop flavors. It's the kind of vineyard work that is usually reserved for \$100 a bottle Cabernet Sauvignon from that *other* valley.

Once the grapes are de-stemmed and crushed, we bleed off some of the juice to increase the skin-to-juice ratio, giving the wine more structure and color. This usually extends Sébastien's work day by about two or three beers. All of the Grenache and Mourvedre grapes are handled in this manner. Of course, we end up with this wonderful salmon colored stuff that is fermented dry and consumed in mass quantities during the summertime. More on the 2004 Grenache Rose next month.

Then there is the difficult, but fun, task of assembling the blend. We first select the best lots of Grenache (the others get de-classified to Petit Frere or sold in bulk), and the right barrels of Syrah for the main blend. The latter is important because it is very easy for some of our Syrah to overwhelm the fruit and spice of Grenache and Mourvedre. In 2003, the Grenache we used was darker and more intense than the entire 2002 finished blend. It could handle a small amount of our Benchland Reserve Syrah. This information, more than anything, should tell you what we think of this wine.

Whether you liked the more rustic and tannic 2001 Grenache or the lush and complex 2002, you'll love this 2003. It has it all and more. Because of its size (more tannin and alcohol), this 2003 will need a bit more time before it really shines (though it is so darn fruity, you will be tempted to drink it now). I'd give it at least a year or so and it will show the complex fruit and sexy (sorry, I can't help it) texture that inspires all of us. In hindsight, I wish we had bottled some magnums in order to see how long this thing could really age. As such, it should do very well over the next 5 to 6 years. For more technical poop on the 2003 Grenache, see our new and improved website or see us at the winery. Hint: the winery is more fun.

2003 GRENACHE

Harvested: 10/17/03 & 10/21/03

Total Acidity: .58 g/100ml

pH: 3.65

Aging: 13 months in neutral French oak

Blend: 82% Grenache, 11% Syrah, 7% Mourvedre

Alcohol: 14.9%

Bottled: 12/6/04

Cases Produced: 700

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Healdsburg, CA 95448
(707) 433-5590

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Ordering Information: Mail this form to Unti Vineyards, 4202 Dry Creek Rd., 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. You may also call (or email) to schedule an appointment for tasting and purchasing at our winery.

New Releases:

	# Bottles		
2002 Syrah	<input type="text"/>	@ \$24 =	<input type="text"/>
2002 Syrah Benchland Reserve	<input type="text"/>	@ \$30 =	<input type="text"/>
2003 Grenache	<input type="text"/>	@ \$26 =	<input type="text"/>

Current Releases:

2003 Segromigno	<input type="text"/>	@ \$15 =	<input type="text"/>
2003 Barbera	<input type="text"/>	@ \$24 =	<input type="text"/>
2002 Zinfandel	<input type="text"/>	@ \$22 =	<input type="text"/>
2001 Syrah	<input type="text"/>	@ \$26 =	<input type="text"/>
2002 Syrah "Petit Frere"	<input type="text"/>	@ \$20 =	<input type="text"/>

Subtotal =

Discount: 6-11 bottles = 5%, 12-35 = 10%, 36+ = 15% =

New Subtotal =

Taxes: CA=7.75%, GA=\$6/cs, LA=4%, NH=8%, NV=\$3/cs =

Shipping =

TOTAL =

Shipping Information:

Order Date: __ / __ / __

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State*: ____ Zipcode: _____ - _____

Daytime phone#: (____) _____ - _____

*DOB (req'd for HI & WI) __ / __ / __

Payment Information:

Charge to Credit Card below ____ or Check enclosed ____

Visa/MC # _____

Expiration Date (MM/YY): ____ / ____

Name / Billing address for Cr. Card if different from shipping information.

***SHIPPING COSTS (subject to change)**

State	6 Pk Box (w/4-6 bottles)	12 Pk Box (w/7-12 bottles)
No.CA, NV	\$13 – Ground \$17 – 3Day	\$18 – Ground \$27 – 3 Day
So.CA, CO, ID, NM, OR, WA	\$15 – Ground \$22 – 3Day	\$21 – Ground \$36 – 3Day
IA, IL, MO, NE, ND, WI,WY	\$18 – Ground \$29 – 3Day	\$27 – Ground \$45 – 3Day
GA, LA, MN, TX, and most others	\$22 – Ground \$35 – 3Day	\$33 – Ground \$50 – 3Day
AK, HI (via 2-Day)	Call	\$58

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

*Due to hot weather we do not recommend shipping via Ground to most states after May.