

March 2019 "SME" Wine Club

(SEND ME EVERYTHING)



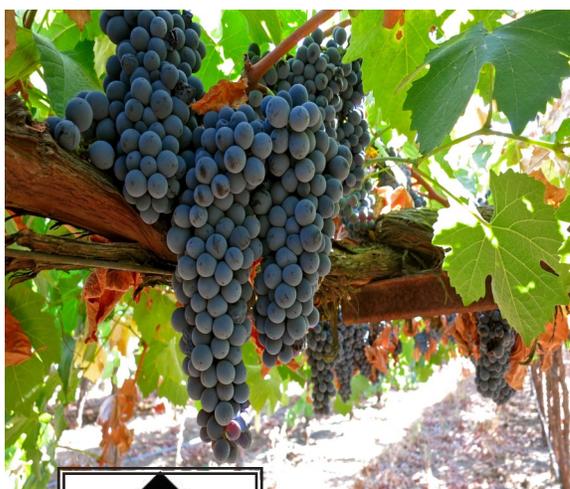
2017 "R" Touriga, Silvaspoons Vineyard, Lodi

Because we make so many wines from lesser known grape varieties I am often asked what made me decide to try making wine from a particular grape. In the beginning we chose grapes from vineyards and growers that I had worked with in the past while working for others prior to launching my own venture. I knew the grapes would make terrific wine, and there wasn't much risk involved. Deciding to try Touriga was a different matter.

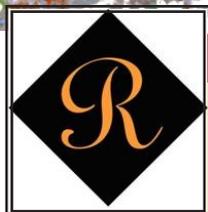
I still remember the first time I tasted a wine made from Touriga. It was 2006 and I was at the Grapes and Gourmet event affiliated with the California State Fair. It was presented to me blind and I was queried as to what I thought it was. The wine had an intense aroma of black raspberry and given the devious nature of the gentleman that presented me with the wine I ventured a guess that it was not a grape wine but a fruit wine from the Soquel winery in Santa Cruz and made from black raspberries. The smile on Bill's face let me know that I was incorrect, and that he had just introduced me to the 2004 Touriga from the Fenestra Winery in Livermore, a wine that had just earned best varietal honors as the best Touriga of the competition. I was smitten by the wine; in addition to the wonderfully intense aroma it had great color and soft supple tannins. I was even more pleased to learn that the grapes used by Fenestra were grown by the same grower, Ron Silva, that provides us with Grenache. All it took was a telephone call and two tons of Touriga rolled into our cellar with the 2006 vintage and we have been producing Touriga ever since.

By way of a more formal introduction, Touriga is a Portuguese variety that is the leading contributor to the production of Port. While Touriga is the most popular choice of all the red grapes permitted for the production of the classic dessert wine the vast majority of Touriga grown in Portugal makes table wine; and it is in that format we offer our Touriga.

The 2017 Touriga has a garnet purple color of medium depth with bright youthful hues. Of all the red wines we produce Touriga has the strongest fruit character; the aromas are floral and bursting at the seams with plenty of red raspberry, cherry, strawberry and boysenberry. In addition to the bright red fruits there is a volatile perfume that leaps from the glass; lavender, lilac, linalool, and violets all come to mind. The bouquet has been relegated to the 'backseat' and with time in the glass may reveal itself as a whiff of buttered toast or blueberry scone. On the pallet the flavors are soft and gentle, juicy and succulent. Zesty almost sweet flavors of red raspberry, currant, and cherry are carried by a wine with a light soft texture that is perfect for the warm months of summer. This is an easy drinking wine perfect for an afternoon or evening on the patio with lighter fare.



Varietal Composition: 78% Touriga Nacional 22% Touriga Francesa
13.5% Alc. 0.68 g/100ml TA 3.42 pH
Oak Regime: 38% French Oak 35% American Oak 27% Neutral Oak
Released: March 1, 2019 516 Cases Produced



10776 Shenandoah Rd
Plymouth, CA 95669
209-245-6282

Suggested Retail Price: \$26.00/Club Price:\$22.10

SME2 Price:\$20.80

March 2019 "SME2" Wine Club

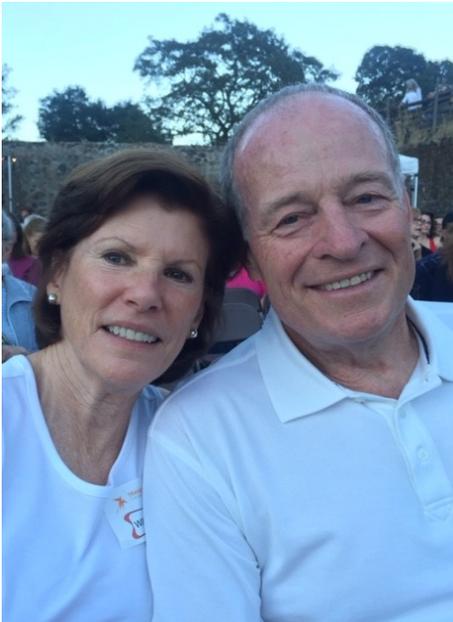
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2017 "R" Pinot Noir, Sisters Vineyard, Los Carneros, Napa

One of the advantages of purchasing the grapes used for our wines is that we don't expose ourselves to all of the agricultural risk of grape growing. This doesn't mean that when yields are dramatically reduced we don't feel some of the pain. Typically, the Sisters Vineyard provides us with 6-7 tons of Pinot Noir each year. In 2015 we received 2.9 tons., in 2016 we crushed 4.0 tons and in 2017 only 2.1 tons; Ouch, Ouch, and Ouch. True, we only pay for the fruit we receive, but we also have only 142 cases to offer of the 2017 vintage. Thus the 2017 vintage of Pinot Noir is not a full Wine Club Selection, but instead it is limited to SME II members only. The 2018 vintage is 'in the barn,' and weighed in at a whopping 4.4 tons. Bob Rogers, the grower, assures us that the vineyard is on the rebound and we hope to return Pinot Noir to a Wine Club Selection with the 2019 vintage.

The 2017 has a dark ruby purple color of considerable depth for Pinot Noir. We have had a string of vintages with exceptional color and I suspect the low yields may have contributed to the increased pigmentation of the grapes. The hues are bright with just a hint of carmine and none of the russet edge that can accompany Pinot Noir. The aromas of this vintage are focused on ripe black cherry and plum fruit accompanied by nuances of currants, quince, and tangerine. Hazelnut, vanilla, and buttered toast, provide a pleasing bouquet. This is most definitely a 'New World' Pinot; the 2017 edition is a rich plush wine with clean fully developed flavors of red cherry, raspberry and black plum fruit that are unobscured by the typical mushroom, truffle and potting soil character exhibited by many Pinots from Europe. There is a dollop of toasted oak which adds a rich creaminess to the wine's texture. The finish is long and lingering and where perhaps a hint of Pinot's 'Old World' origins can be detected.



Varietal Composition: 100% Pinot Noir 14.1% Alc.
0.74g/100ml TA 3.45 pH Oak Regime: 100% French Oak
Released: March 1, 2019 142 Cases Produced

Suggested Retail Price: \$34.00/Club Price:\$28.90/ SME2 Price:\$27.20

Grower Profile: Bob and Muriel Rogers

Bob and Jeff have known each other for close to thirty years. They first met when Jeff was at Montevina. Bob and his young company, Innerstave, were developing barrel renewal systems and Jeff liked their products. With time Innerstave became very successful and Bob and his wife Muriel purchased a small vineyard on Cuttings Wharf Road in Los Carneros at the southernmost tip of the Napa Valley.



For years they supplied Chardonnay and Pinot Noir to Napa Mumm, but in 2000 with inventories backing up, Mumm decided they didn't want Bob's Pinot Noir. Jeff still remembers the phone call when Bob asked him if he was serious about trying to make Pinot Noir. Pinot Noir has a reputation of being very difficult to produce, but this has not been the case with the Sisters Vineyard fruit.

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