

Uncorked Ventures

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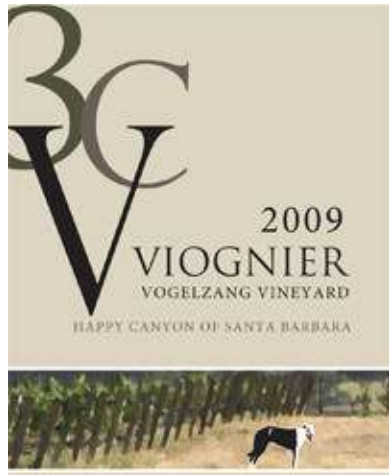
In this month's shipment we see evidence of the evolution happening in California wine. As the wine market and viticulture practices have continued to evolve, more varied and diverse growing sites have been created. Those varied sites have opened the door to produce varieties hardly ever grown before in the Golden State. American Tempranillo is exceedingly rare and Viognier is only now becoming known outside of France.



2009 Straight Line Tempranillo

Winery Tasting Notes: With a deeply hued purple color, this Tempranillo exhibits great depth and character. Intensely perfumed with aromas of blackberry, purple fruit, black pepper, bacon and smoke. The palate is full-bodied yet restrained; fine tannins mingle seamlessly with rich notes of roasted red fruit, dried leaf, roasted meat, Mediterranean herb and an interesting hint of minerality. Sophisticated and rich, this wine has a long length, ending on a note of sweet red berry and smoke.

About Tempranillo: Tempranillo is native to Spain and despite its massive success in Rioja, few other growing regions have been able to grow the wine well. Often aged for many years in oak barrels the best examples of Tempranillo showcase more ingrained oak flavors than even the finest Cabernet Sauvignon. The grape generally dislikes warm, dry climates which makes growing sites difficult to find in California, but Lake County (approx 50 miles north of Napa Valley) seems to be a nice fit.



2009 Cimarone 3CV Viognier

Wine Enthusiast Tasting Notes:

89 Pts Shows the exoticness of Viognier, with crisp acidity and a dry minerality that gets the tastebuds whistling. The lime, quince, apricot, white flower and woodspice flavors finish with the tart briskness of a Sauvignon Blanc, only more opulent.

About Happy Canyon and AVA's:

AVA's or American Viticulture Areas are meant to give some idea about the type of wine in the glass. Too often over the past 20 years, politics and connections have helped to include wineries in some AVA's while disallowing others. Happy Canyon is one notable exception since being formed on Nov 9, 2009 after extensive lobbying by local vintners. For vintners in the area, they wanted to show that despite being part of Santa Barbara county, they were a warm weather growing region, with a heavy night time coastal influence. Happy Canyon in fact is among the smallest AVA's ever approved in California and does tell you a lot about a wine.