

# Dan Berger's Vintage Experiences

## The Weekly Wine Commentary

Volume XVI, Issue 24

July 5, 2012

## Tasting Notes

The wines below were tasted open within the last week.

### Exceptional

2011 Y Rousseau Old Vines Colombard, Russian River Valley (\$18): This dramatic wine is the best Colombard ever made in the United States and maybe anywhere. Lifting melon/leafy/citrus aroma and a minerality simply impossible to describe. Crisper than previous vintages (low pH of 3.21!), and a dry finish that demands food. One of the most exciting wines you'll ever taste. Should sell for \$30. Multiple-bottle purchases suggested.

2010 Mission Estate Syrah, Hawke's Bay (\$18): True varietal character of pepper, violet, and a subtle spice element in a moderate-alcohol, medium-bodied wine from New Zealand's north island, which is fast becoming a star region for red wines. This wine ought to be \$30 or more, but occasionally is discounted to \$15 or even less!

2009 Fenestra Grenache, Livermore Valley (\$25): When decanted, this stylish red offers a perfect varietal nose of red cherry, loganberry, traces of pepper and spice, and a silky aftertaste with no tannic bite. It will be released in 2-3 weeks. Made primarily to be sold to members of the Fenestra Wine Club (who pay only \$22). To order call 925-447-5246.

2010 Freeman Chardonnay, Russian River Valley, "Ryo-fu" (\$40): This cool-climate, cool-year wine has a distinctive Burgundian note along with the citrus/lemon curd aroma of other cool-region Chardonnays. If served chilled, the wine will be a bit mute. Great acid and structure. Served with cream-based foods and not too cold.

### Very Highly Recommended

2009 MacMurray Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast (\$27): Not a very

adventuresome wine, but lovely aromas of leaves, tea and clove and a lower alcohol (13.5%), to pair with lighter meat dishes and some seafood. And well-priced.

2009 Tierra Divina Malbec, Mendoza, Val de Uco (\$17): At first the aroma of this faintly rustic red is slightly muted and the finish awkward. But aeration shows the slightly cooler region from which it comes. Rather deep and rich, with great food compatibility.

2010 Pali Chardonnay, Sonoma Coast (\$20): Light citrus and some depth from time in the bottle. A slight amount of oak helps flesh out the mid-palate, and the finish is crisp enough for food.

2011 Cupcake Riesling, Mosel Valley (\$14): Fresh, lilted aroma, medium-sweet, and slightly spritzy. A fine if simple summertime sipper.