



Harvest 2013: A Stellar Sonoma Year -- and Excellent Yields, too!

Sebastopol, CA – The 2013 growing season was as close to perfect as a worried farmer could hope for: outstanding quality, nicely sized grape clusters, and very good yields. But this year was especially hectic. We picked fruit in various blocks at both of our vineyard sites practically non-stop for a month.

Long and Slow Ripening Throughout the Summer

We started with a warm spring, which predicted an early year. Shoots were growing by leaps and bounds, and we thought harvest would be about two weeks early. Bloom came in late April / early May and véraison in late July at our Don Miguel Vineyard in the Russian River / Green Valley; but not until August at the Sonoma Coast's Doña Margarita Vineyard, which is about 10 degrees colder because of its proximity to the Pacific Ocean.

Summer was absolutely ideal, with temperatures never too high and not a drop of rain. However, circumstances were perfect for our #1 enemy, powdery mildew (oidium), which struck all vineyards around us; but thanks to our vineyard team's painstaking work, berries remained clean of this feared fungus – which is also much harder to achieve in an organic vineyard. It's not by chance that little more than 2% of vineyards in the foggy Russian River Valley are organic!

Albariño and Tempranillo are thriving

We are particularly excited about the looks of our Albariño and Tempranillo. The new Tempranillo planting gave us our first crop last year, and this year we planted another 2+ acres of Albariño!

Always the last picked, the Tempranillo came in on October 17. And this year we'll make the first 100% Tempranillo – 250 cases of it!

Harvest Kicked Off September 3rd

We started with the Dijon 115 and Swan clones of Pinot Noir at the top of the vineyard, and week later we traveled to the coastal Doña Margarita Vineyard. An unexpected downpour Sept. 21 jangled nerves, but the next day dawned sunny and breezy so no harm was done. All the Pinot Noir was picked by September 23, ending with the Doña Margarita Vineyard.

A Buzzing Cellar and Clean Fermentations

Between September 3 and October 2 we harvested seven days a week, except for three days – when the cellar was full and we had run out of tank space! It was indeed a marathon harvest, and the cellar team as well as the vineyard crew did an outstanding job keeping on top of everything. Total production is a record 17,000 cases – the largest in our history!

This year we have used our native yeast for most fermentations, which have all finished clean and strong. So next year we plan to use it for all our wines.

Celebrating the End of Harvest

On October 2nd we finished picking the Chardonnay: the Spring Mountain clone, always the last one. That marked our last breakfast with the vineyard crew, which the dogs and I brought to them every day at sunrise. The next day we celebrated with our end-of-harvest dinner. It used to be a BBQ, but this year they asked for pizzas, cooked in our new outdoor wood-burning oven! I had to say OK, of course – and a wonderful party it was.

Marimar Torres
Winegrower / Proprietor

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2013 HARVEST



**CHICO & BONITA HELPED A LOT DURING HARVEST,
AS YOU CAN SEE HERE!**



**ON SEPT 10 WE STARTED HARVESTING THE DOÑA MARGARITA
VINEYARD, ABOVE OUR EQUESTRIAN CENTER**



**BY OCTOBER MORNINGS WERE COLD & DARK, BUT
THE POWERFUL LIGHTS MADE NIGHT PICKING EASY**



**CHICO & BONITA NOT ONLY KEPT AN EYE ON THE
CREW BUT ALSO ATE A LOT OF CHARD GRAPES!**



**AN EXAMPLE OF OUR PINOT NOIR CLUSTERS THIS
YEAR – BOTH BOUNTIFUL AND WITH FABULOUS
FLAVORS!**



**LAST BREAKFAST WITH THE CREW AT SUNRISE:
OCT 2, WHEN THE CHARD HARVEST (& NIGHT
PICKING) ENDED**