



MAY 2014

Hello Bootleg Society Members!

I've been told by those that knew my father well, that he's rolling in his grave at the thought of St. Amant bottling a Cabernet Sauvignon. And not only are we releasing a Cab with this month's wine club, but I went ahead and planted 10 acres of Cabernet in our Amador County vineyard two years ago. You have to realize my dad hated all things Cabernet. It wasn't that it made bad wine, although there are plenty of bad versions, but to him it was overplayed and symbolized all that can be wrong with the wine business. So I've been told to take cover during thunder storms. But one thing I learned from my dad is that you need to set your own course in life and business, and not worry about what others will think. Including him!

In this month's club selections you will find the 2012 Lloyd Martel Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon. To me it's a wine that transcends the variety, and connects me with my past, present, and future. Lloyd was one of my dad's best friends, an ag teacher, and local winegrower. He was a pioneer in Lodi, planting one of the first Cabernet vineyards, and producing one of the first and finest vineyard-designated Lodi wines back in the early 80's. For several decades Lloyd taught a wine appreciation class at our local community college where my parent's first took his class in 1974, and I'm pretty certain well over half of the Lodi wine and grape community took his course over the years. Lloyd flunked my dad (he missed the final for work), but mom got an A. Lloyd was instrumental in planting the seeds of the artisan wine movement that's blossoming in Lodi today.

He still meticulously farms that original Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard surrounding his house on the east side of Lodi. And when he learned that I was planting a Cab vineyard to the same high quality clone found in his, suggested we make a couple barrels of wine. It has been an incredible project and has produced a delicious wine. It has connected me with my past, present, and future in ways that are hard to describe, and reminded me once again that the best wines are the ones that tell stories.

This month's club selections include two other wines; our 2012 Syrah, that without a doubt is our best Syrah ever, and the 2012 "Lodi Native" Marian's Vineyard Zinfandel. The Lodi Native Zin is part of a collaborative project I undertook with five other local winemakers to shine the spotlight on some Lodi's heritage Zinfandel vineyards. Each of us produced a few barrels using minimalist winemaking protocols that included native yeast fermentations, no new oak, water, acid, or any other conventional winemaking practices. The wines were designed to be a pure expression of the vineyard rather than varietal character or brand. It's been a very rewarding project and the wines are receiving critical acclaim from wine writers across the country.

Cheers!
Stuart Spencer

MAY 2014 WINE CLUB

2012 Lloyd Martel Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon - Lodi

I'm a firm believer that properly grown Lodi Cabernet can make delicious elegant wine. It doesn't need to be propped up with winemaking tricks, but can be expressive, aromatic, and a delightful age-worthy wine. Our 2012 Martel Cab is a classic rendition of Cabernet – 13% alcohol, spicy with a dense core of ripe berries, cassis, and sweet tannins. The wine is impeccably balanced and has delicious fruit and savory notes that linger on the palate. And what's the deal with the cow? Well it reminded me of both my dad and Lloyd. My dad grew up on dairy and loved cows; Lloyd has a funny story of a run in with a particular cow, and this particular one was giving me the eye one day at our vineyard.

\$21/bottle, 49 Cases



2012 Lodi Native Marian's Vineyard Old Vine Zin

In most cases, native yeast fermentations begin much slower allowing yeast that come in on the grapes to play a predominant role in the fermentation.



In some cases this can go very bad, but in others can result in beautiful wines. We actually produced two Native lots in 2012, and the first one was not so good, but the second turned out very well. In my experience, the native wines tend to have more savory elements and a spicy core of fruit. Personally, I'm very pleased with how the 2012 turned out, and we will be judiciously incorporating native ferments into our winemaking moving forward. Below are a few quotes about the Marian's Native Zin - *"Very difficult to put down. An outstanding wine drinking experience."* - Winethropology. *"It was easily the lithest zin I have ever had the pleasure of sipping...kinda like taking an Anna Nicole Smith-bodied wine and wringing it out until it became a J-Lo-bodied wine. Still curvy, still juicy, but lean."* – Gonzo

Gastronomy. **\$35/bottle, 59 Cases**

2012 Syrah – St.Amant Vineyard, Amador

We've been growing Syrah in our Amador County vineyard since 1995, and in my opinion it's the best version of the wine we've ever made. We had a lot of success with Syrah back in the late 90's, but then the market for Syrah wine and grapes fell apart. We've continued growing and selling the grapes and wine in bulk, and over the years have perfected our ways. Aged for 18 months in barrels, the 2012 Syrah has a ripe core of blackberries, dried flowers, pepper, and a spicy grippy finish. It's a delightful wine that should evelove well over the next 5-7 years. Should pair well with herb roasted chicken, braised short ribs, and In-N-Out burgers. **\$18/bottle, 68 cases**

