



MAY 2015

Hello Bootleg Society Members!

There are often two competing voices in my head. The first is telling me don't try to fix what isn't broken. Your customers have come to expect a certain style and taste in your wines, and your goal is to not mess that up, but be consistent. This voice also went to the school of keep it simple stupid. The KISS school of winemaking dictates that you don't need to get fancy with the latest gizmos, additives, or otherwise cheap makeup to dress up your wines. Attentive vineyard management and quality grapes trump all tricks, and the more you mess with the wine, the more you take away from it. Granted Mother Nature is sometimes a pain, and you are required to intervene, but that's a story for another day.

The second voice in my head is telling me to try something new. That it's boring doing the same thing year after year, and that if you don't innovate, you will be left behind. And this is where a bit of my father comes in. He was a serial entrepreneur, got easily bored doing the same thing, and was constantly tinkering around, and trying new things in his winemaking. And to a great extent, he was so far ahead of his time, that there was no market for his wines. When most CA vintners were planting Cab, Chard, and Merlot in the early 80's, he was planting Touriga, Bastardo/Trousseau, Tinta Cao, etc. Thirty years later, these varieties are now seen as cutting edge.

This second voice and my father's influence are always compelling me to try new things in the vineyard and winery. Some work, and some not so much. One thing is certain; our workers generally think I'm crazy. We mow these 12 rows, but not these 6. We leave a cane unpruned, but then cut it off with all its fruit. We pick one bin from this row, and two bins from that. It goes on and on, but it helps us learn, and ultimately make better wines.

The trick is finding the balance between the two voices, that magical place where experimentation and keeping it simple cross to create delicious and compelling wines. This month's club selections are a direct reflection of where those two ideas meet. The three wines began as experiments, but have resulted in delicious wines that moved our viticulture and winemaking up to a new level.

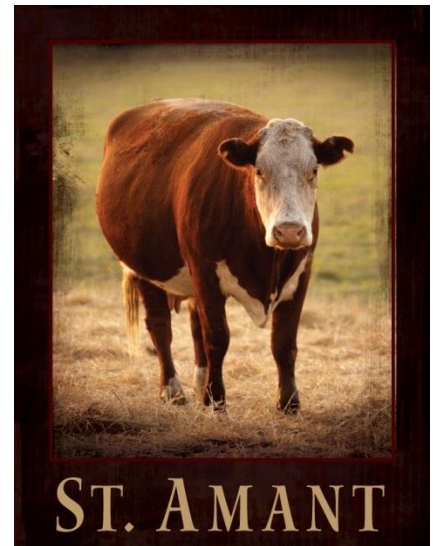
I want to thank you again for supporting our efforts to make original handcrafted wines. I hope you enjoy these wines as much as we do.

Cheers!
Stuart Spencer

MAY 2015 WINE CLUB

2013 Lloyd Martel Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon - Lodi

Lloyd Martel is a dear family friend, and arguably owns Lodi's finest Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard. A UC Davis grad, he was classmates and good friends with Bob Sessions of Hanzell. Went on to train under Joe Heitz and Heitz Vineyards, and ultimately settled in Lodi where he developed one of the earliest Cab vineyards in the region. The 5 acre vineyard surrounds Lloyd's house, and he is on a first name basis with every vine, talking to them daily, and meticulously managing their upbringing throughout the season. The results are fabulous! Our 2013 exhibits slightly riper cassis fruit, nice spice, and a good grip that should allow this wine to evolve for many years. But it's delicious right now! **\$21/bottle, 49 Cases**



2013 Lodi Native Marian's Vineyard Old Vine Zin

Noted wine writer Alder Yarrow called our Lodi Native Project, "One of the most exciting things to happen to California wine in years." The Wine Enthusiast gave the 2012 Marian's Native 92 points, and countless other critics raved about the wines. And guess what? I think the 2013 is event better than the 2012. 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. We obviously chose Marian's Vineyard to work with, and the 2013 is spectacular. Vibrant fruit with a silky texture that just lingers on the palate. **\$35/bottle, 63**



Cases

2013 Touriga- St.Amant Vineyard, Amador

Touriga (Touriga Nacional) is arguably Portugal's most prized variety forming the backbone of their great port wines. In 1980 we planted Touriga in our Amador County Vineyard to produce port-styled wines. Over the years, we have occasionally produced a dry version blended with other varieties called Tres Cachos, but in 2006 we bottled our first varietal Touriga. It was a big hit winning "Best Other Variety" at the CA State Fair. It's been three years since our last Touriga, and this one is a real winner. The wine is noted for its floral violet aromas and crushed berry spices. A truly distinct wine! **\$18/bottle, 81 cases**

