

27/7/2014

טעימות יין בקליפורניה: סונומה (Sonoma), נפה (Napa), פאסו רובלס (Paso Robles)

אשר טישלר

הביקור ביקבים ו/או במרכזי טעימת היין שלהם בשלושת האזורים הללו (סונומה, נפה, פאסו רובלס) נערך בתאריכים 23-29 ביוני 2014 על ידי נורית ואשר טישלר.

המטרה העיקרית של הסיור הייתה לבקר ביקבים המייצרים פינו נואר (Pinot Noir), בעיקר בסונומה, אזור המתמחה בענב זה. בנוסף לכך חזרנו לבקר ולטעום יין במספר יקבים יוצאי דופן באזורים נפה ופאסו רובלס שבהם ביקרנו כבר בעבר.

בכל אחד משלושת האזורים בהם ביקרנו נמצאים מאות יקבים שחלק מהם איכותי מאד. לכן, רצוי להתחיל ביקור כזה לאחר הכנה מתאימה - קריאת חומר על כל אזור וסביבתו, יצירת רשימת יקבים המתאימים לך (מבחינת סוגי היין, מיקום גיאוגרפי, מחירי היין המיוצר ו/או המשווק ביקב או בחדר הטעימה שלו, עלות הטעימה, ועוד), התייעצות עם חברים שהיו באזורים אלה, ועוד. איננו מכירים ספר המתאר את כל היקבים ו/או היינות של כל אחד מהאזורים בהם ביקרנו בסיור זה. לכן, התייעצנו עם מספר חברים שביקרו שם או גרים שם, עברנו על פרסומים שונים המפורסמים באופן קבוע בכל אזור (יש לא מעט כאלה), ולמדנו על היקבים בכל אזור מאתרים שונים באינטרנט (כולל, כמובן, אתרי היקבים עצמם, וירחונים כגון Wine Advocate, Wine Spectator, ועוד). מידע זה עזר לנו ליצור רשימה של יקבים איכותיים בהם היינו מעוניינים לבקר. קיבלנו הסברים, הפניות ליקבים ועצות טובות מהאנשים הבאים: Marshall Polk, Maayan Koschitzky (Napa), Doreen Justice (Sonoma), Thomas Lys (Kellogg) (Paso Robles). בנוסף לכך התייעצנו לפני הנסיעה עם חברים רבים בארץ ובח"ל ועם בעלי יקבים בנפה ובפאסו רובלס אותם הכרנו מנסיעות קודמות. אנחנו מודים מקרב לב לחברים אלה שתרמו רבות להצלחת הסיור.

ברוב היקבים בקליפורניה, ובוודאי ביקבים הבינוניים והקטנים, יש (בדרך כלל חובה) לתאם פגישה (וטעימת יין) מראש.

בסיור זה ביקרנו ב- 15 יקבים בסונומה, 4 בנפה ו- 5 בפאסו רובלס. להלן תיאור של חלק מן היינות אותם טעמנו.

Sonoma (or very close to Sonoma)

Kosta Browne

We tasted about 12 barrel samples of 2013 Pinot Noirs from Santa Lucia Highlands, Russian River Valley and Sonoma Coast. About half of the tasting came from new oak barrels and the other half from neutral barrels.

Most of the wines were very good, and some were excellent. Tannins are more noticeable in the Santa Lucia Highlands wines. All the wines that we tasted were smooth, balanced, somewhat complex or complex, close to full bodied or full bodied.

We also tasted the 2012 One sixteen Chardonnay which is a balanced, complex, somewhat less than full body, dry wine. It is a very good wine.

We also tasted a 2007 and a 2012 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noirs. Both were very good wines.

This high quality winery is very impressive and most of its wines are of very high quality. A visit to this winery is highly recommended. One cannot buy wines at the winery.

Martinelli

- Jackass Hill, Muscat of Alexandria, Muscat, 2011. 15.9% alcohol, \$28. Balanced, less than full body, not complex, not elegant. Reasonably good wine.
- Bella Vigna Pinot Noir, 2011. 14.5% alcohol, \$40. Balanced, full body, somewhat complex, somewhat elegant, fruity, very young. Reasonably good wine.
- Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir, 2011. 14.8% alcohol, \$45. Balanced, close to full body, somewhat complex, somewhat elegant. Soft tannins at the end. Good wine.
- Zio Tony Ranch Pinot Noir, 2011. 14.7% alcohol, \$60. Balanced, close to full body, somewhat complex, somewhat elegant, very soft tannins. Good wine.
- Vellutini Ranch Zinfandel, 2011. 16.1% alcohol, \$52. Balanced, close to full body, not complex, simple, not elegant, some bitterness at the end. Reasonably good wine.
- Vigneto di Evo Zinfandel, 2011. 15.6% alcohol, \$32. Balanced, close to full body, not complex, simple, not elegant, some bitterness at the end. Average wine.

Papapietro Perry

- Russian River Valley Pinot Noir, 2011. 14% alcohol, \$51. Blend from several Papapietro's Pinot Noir vineyards. Close to be balanced, less than full body, somewhat complex, not elegant. Reasonably good wine.
- Russian River Valley, Nunes Vineyard, Pinot Noir, 2011. 14% alcohol, \$56. Balanced, full body, complex, somewhat elegant, some soft tannins at the end. Very good wine (the best Pinot Noir that we tasted at Papapietro).
- Russian River Valley, Leras Family Vineyard, Pinot Noir, 2011. 13.9% alcohol, \$56. Balanced, Close to full body, complex, elegant, not as powerful and sharp as Nunes Vineyard Pinot Noir. Very good wine.
- Anderson Valley, Charles Vineyard, Pinot Noir, 2011. 13.5% alcohol, \$56. Balanced, close to full body, complex, somewhat elegant, some soft tannins at the end. Good wine.
- Russian River vally, Mukaida Vineyard, Pinot Noir, 2011. 13% alcohol, \$77. Balanced, full body, somewhat complex, elegant, some soft tannins at the end. Good wine.
- Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel, 2010. 15% alcohol, \$42. Balanced, less than full body, complex, not elegant, simple wine, nice bitterness at the end. Good wine.

A solid winery that offers Pinot Noir (some not listed here) and Zinfandel. A visit to this winery (or tasting room) is recommended.

Gary Farrell

- Westside Farms Chardonnay, 2009. 13.6% alcohol, \$48. Balanced, right acidity, full body, somewhat complex, elegant, very dry. Very good wine.
- Rochioli Vineyard Chardonnay, 2012. 14.2% alcohol, \$50. Not balanced, too low acidity, Somewhat full body, complex, somewhat elegant, somewhat boring. Good wine.

- Hallberg Vineyard – Dijon Clones Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.5% alcohol, \$60. Somewhat unbalanced, too low acidity, close to full body, complex, somewhat elegant, somewhat boring. Good wine.
- Toboni Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.5% alcohol, \$55. Somewhat balanced (difficult to identify as Pinot Noir), full body, complex, elegant. Some soft tannins at the end. Good wine.
- Russian River Selection Syrah, 2011. 13.5%, \$40. Balanced, full body, somewhat complex. Some soft tannins at the end. Good wine.
- Maffei Vineyard Zinfandel, 2011. 14.5%, \$45. Balanced, full body, somewhat complex, simple, not elegant, somewhat sweet at the end. Reasonably good wine.

A solid winery with a nice scenery. Produces and sells several types of red and white wines. A visit to this winery is recommended.

Williams Selyem

- Vista Verde Vineyard Chenin Blanc, 2012. 12.5% alcohol, \$35. Light, simple, balanced, not complex, very little body. Good wine.
- Unoaked Chardonnay, 2012. 13.1% alcohol, \$39. Balanced, some body, sharp, very dry, complex, clean, smooth. Very good wine.
- Block 10 Mass Selection Estate Vineyard, Pinot Noir, 2011. 13.7% alcohol, \$85. A blend of 18 Pinot Noir clones. Balanced, Almost full body, complex, velvety feel, round, somewhat elegant. Very good wine.
- Westside Road Neighbors Pinot Noir, 2012. 13.8% alcohol, \$69. A blend of several Pinot Noir vineyards. Balanced, Almost full body, complex, sharp, somewhat elegant. Very good wine.

A well-known, high quality, solid and beautiful winery with a great scenery. Produces several Pinot Noirs and some white wines. A visit to this winery is highly recommended.

Rochioli

- Estate Sauvignon Blanc, 2013. 14.5% alcohol, \$26. Blend from several Rochioli's Sauvignon Blanc vineyards. Balanced, some body, not sharp, not sufficiently dry, not complex, clean. Simple wine. Reasonably good wine.
- Blanc de Noir, 2011. 12.5% alcohol, \$60. Sparkling, made from Pinot Noir. Balanced, some body, not sharp, not sufficiently dry, refreshing, clean. Good wine.
- Estate Chardonnay, 2012. 14.5% alcohol, \$42. Balanced, some body, not sharp, not sufficiently dry, not complex, clean. Reasonably good wine.
- Estate Pinot Noir, 2013. 14.5% alcohol, \$54. Blend from several Rochioli's Pinot Noir vineyards. Balanced, close to full body, complex, not sharp, clean. No particular characteristics. Very good wine.

This solid winery offers many wines. We tasted only the Estate (blends) wines. A visit to this winery is recommended only if you can taste some of its single vineyard and/or other higher quality wines.

Lynmar Estate

- La Sereinite Chardonnay, 2011. 14.1% alcohol, \$70. Balanced, full body, complex, right acidity, not sharp enough. Very good wine.
- Quail Hill Vineyard Chardonnay, 2010. 14.3% alcohol, \$40. Balanced, full body, somewhat complex, very dry, somewhat simple. Good wine.
- Susanna's Vineyard Chardonnay, 2011. 14.6% alcohol, \$50. Balanced, full body, somewhat complex, dry, somewhat too much oak. Very good wine.
- Quail Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.4% alcohol, \$60. Balanced, full body, complex, round, dry, fruity, not elegant, somewhat sweet at the end. Very good wine.
- Terra de Promissio Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.2% alcohol, \$70. Balanced, full body, complex, dry, somewhat fruity, elegant, sharp, somewhat sweet at the end. Very good wine (the best Pinot Noir that we tasted at Lynmar).
- Quail Hill Vineyard, Old Vines, Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.3% alcohol, \$70. Balanced, full body, complex, dry, somewhat fruity, somewhat elegant, sharp. Very good wine.

Very solid organic winery. Very nice location, beautiful scenery with a well-groomed organic garden around the winery. A visit to this winery is recommended.

Merry Edwards Winery

- Olivet Lane Chardonnay, 2011. 14.1% alcohol, \$60. Balanced, close to full body, complex, elegant. Very good to excellent wine.
- Sauvignon Blanc, 2012. 13.9% alcohol, \$32. Balanced, higher acidity will be a plus, no body, light, soft and somewhat buttery wine, not complex, very dry. Reasonably good wine.
- Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.3% alcohol, \$39. Balanced, almost full body, complex, somewhat spicy, soft tannins at the end. Very good wine (the best Pinot Noir that we tasted in this winery).
- Olivet Lane Pinot Noir, 2012. 14% alcohol, \$62. Balanced, full body, complex, elegant, soft tannins at the end. Very good wine.
- Georganne Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.4% alcohol, \$57. Balanced, full body, complex, somewhat elegant, soft tannins at the end. Good wine.
- Meredith Estate Pinot Noir, 2011. 14.4% alcohol, \$57. Balanced, full body, complex, somewhat spicy, soft tannins at the end. Very good wine.

A quality and solid winery with a nice scenery. Produces several types of red and white wines. A visit to this winery is recommended.

Marimar Estate

- Don Miguel Vineyard, La Masia Pinot Noir, 2010. 14.5% alcohol, \$44. Balanced, Less than full body, somewhat complex, not elegant, light. Average wine.

- Don Miguel Vineyard, Estate Pinot Noir, 1997. 13.5% alcohol, \$59. Not balanced, Less than full body, not complex, not elegant, heavy. Does not feel like a Pinot Noir. Less than average wine.
- Donna Margarita Vineyard, Mas Cavalls Pinot Noir, 2011. 13.5% alcohol, \$44. Balanced, full body, somewhat complex, not elegant, not smooth. Average wine.
- Don Miguel Vineyard, Cristina Pinot Noir, 2010. 14.8% alcohol, \$57. Balanced, full body, complex, not elegant, very dry, soft tannins at the end. Reasonably good wine.
- Don Miguel Vineyard, Syrah/Tempranillo, 2010. 13.5% alcohol, \$45. Balanced, almost full body, somewhat complex, not elegant, very dry. Light. Average wine.

VML

- Sauvignon Blanc, Russian River, 2013. 14.3% alcohol, \$23. Balanced, right acidity, less than full body, somewhat complex, dry. Good wine.
- Gewurtztraminer, Russian Valley, 2013. 14.3% alcohol, \$23. Balanced, less than full body, dry. Reasonably good wine.
- Rose of Pinot Noir, 2013. 15.1% alcohol, \$20. Balanced, less than full body, not complex, not too sweet. Reasonably good wine.
- Russian River Valley Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.8% alcohol, \$32. Unbalanced, not full body, not complex. Less than average quality.
- Moon Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.7%, \$48. Not fully balanced, somewhat low acidity, less than full body, somewhat complex. Reasonably good wine.
- Bradford Mountain Zinfandel, 2012. 14.8%, \$25. Balanced, less than full body, somewhat complex. Light wine. Reasonably good wine.

Littorai

- Charles Heintz Chardonnay, 2012. 13.2% alcohol, \$70. Balanced, Less than full body, complex, elegant, very dry, light. Very good to excellent wine.
- Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir, 2012. 13.3% alcohol, \$42. Balanced, less than full body, somewhat complex, somewhat elegant, light. Good wine.
- Roman Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2012. 13.7% alcohol, \$70. Balanced, less than full body, somewhat complex, soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5-7 years. Good wine.
- The Pivot Vinyard Pinot Noir, 2012. 13.6%, \$70. Balanced, less than full body, somewhat complex, light wine, elegant, some soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5-7 years (will improve). Very good wine.
- The Haven Vinyard Pinot Noir, 2012. 13.8%, \$80. Balanced, full body, complex, light wine, elegant, round, some soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5-7 years (will improve). Very good to excellent wine (the best Pinot Noir that we tasted in this winery).

A quality and solid organic winery with a beautiful scenery. All the wines that we tasted were elegant and on the light side. A visit to this winery is highly recommended.

Faila

- Sonoma Coast Chardonnay, 2012. 14.1% alcohol, \$34. Balanced, almost full body, complex, smooth, dry. Good wine.
- Napa Valley Hudson Vineyard Chardonnay, 2012. 14.2% alcohol, \$50. Balanced, close to full body, complex, dry, sharp. Very good wine.
- Estate Vineyard, Fort Ross Seaview Chardonnay, 2012. 14.2% alcohol, \$44. Balanced, close to full body, complex, dry, very sharp. Very good wine.
- Haynes Vineyard, Coombsville Chardonnay, 2012. 14.2% alcohol, \$58. Balanced, close to full body, complex, dry, sharp. Very good wine.
- Pearlescence Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.1% alcohol, \$45. Balanced, full body, somewhat complex, somewhat high acidity, not elegant. Reasonably good wine.
- Keefer Ranch Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2012. 13.9%, \$48. Balanced, full body, complex, not elegant, soft tannins at the end. Very good wine.
- Whistler Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.1%, \$56. Balanced, full body, complex, somewhat fruity. Very good wine.

A solid winery situated in a beautiful area. All the wines that we tasted were solid. The whites were, on average, better than the reds. A visit to this winery is recommended.

W.H. Smith Wines

- Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir, 2013. 14.2% alcohol, \$32. Balanced, less than full body, not complex, simple, smooth, light, dry. Drink now. Good wine.
- Hellenthal Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2009. 14.2% alcohol, \$53. Balanced, close to full body, complex, fruity, dry, soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5 years. Very good wine.
- Hellenthal Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2011. 14.2% alcohol, \$53. Balanced, close to full body, complex, dry, light, soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5 years. Very good wine.
- Maritime Pinot Noir, 2010. 14.2%, \$54. Balanced, close to full body, complex, dry, light, somewhat elegant, soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5 years. Very good to excellent wine.
- Howell Mountain Cabernet Bronze Label, 2010. 14.2%, \$48. Balanced, Less than full body, complex, velvety, somewhat sweet feeling at the end, some soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5-7 years. Good wine.
- Howell Mountain Cabernet Purple Label, 2010. 14.2%, \$64. Balanced, almost full body, complex, velvety, somewhat bitterness as well as sweet feeling at the end, some soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5-7 years. Very good wine.

A solid winery. All the wines that we tasted were solid. A visit to this winery's tasting room is recommended.

Joseph Swan Vineyards

- Kent the Younger Chardonnay, 2012. 14.3% alcohol, \$38. Balanced, right acidity, some body, not complex, velvety. Very good wine.
- Ritchie Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc, 2013. 14.5% alcohol, \$24. Not balanced, too acidic, soft and somewhat buttery wine, not complex, simple. Average wine.
- Cuvee de Trois Pinot Noir, 2011. 14.6% alcohol, \$29. A blend of Pinot Noir vineyards, somewhat balanced, somewhat full body, not complex, simple, not elegant. Good wine.
- Saralee's Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2011. 14.4% alcohol, \$39. Somewhat balanced, too high acidity, full body, complex, not elegant. Some soft tannins at the end. Good wine.
- Trenton Estate Vineyard, Syrah, 2007. \$28. Balanced, somewhat full body, somewhat complex, not elegant. Some soft tannins at the end. Reasonably good wine.
- Mancini Ranch Zinfandel, 2008. \$30. Somewhat balanced, somewhat full body, somewhat complex, not elegant, simple. Good wine.

A solid winery. A nice scenery. Produces several types of red and white wines. A visit to this winery is recommended.

Dehlinger

- Estate Chardonnay, 2011. 14.7% alcohol, \$40. Somewhat unbalanced, somewhat low acidity, close to full body, somewhat complex, dry, sharp. Good wine.
- Claret, 2011. 14.7% alcohol, \$40. 95% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Syrah. Balanced, somewhat low acidity, less than full body, somewhat complex, elegant, smooth. Reasonably good wine.
- Goldridge Syrah, 2010. 14.9% alcohol, \$45. Balanced, almost full body, complex, elegant. Good wine.
- Altamont Pinot Noir, 2011. 14.9% alcohol, \$60. Balanced, full body, complex, some bitterness at the end, soft tannins at the end. Very good wine.
- Altamont Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.9% alcohol, \$50. Balanced, almost full body, medium, elegant, somewhat complex, some bitterness at the end. Good wine.

A solid winery with a nice scenery. Produces several types of red and white wines. A visit to this winery is recommended.

Napa

Ovid

- Ovid Napa Valley, 2007. \$450. 14.8% alcohol. About 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, about 25% Cabernet Franc, the rest are Merlot and Petit Verdot. Full body. Balanced. Very complex. Noticeable strong tannins. Smooth. Will improve (a lot) in the future. Keep for 3-10 years. An excellent wine.
- Ovid Napa Valley, 2010. \$225. 14.8% alcohol. 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Cabernet Franc, 5% Merlot and 35 Petit Verdot. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Soft tannins. Smooth. Will improve (a lot) in the future. Keep for 3-10 years. An excellent wine.
- G8.1 (an experiment), 2011. 81% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Cabernet Franc, 7% Merlot and 0.01% Petit Verdot. Not for sale. About 14.5% alcohol. Full body. Slightly off-balanced. Somewhat too low acidity. Complex. Soft tannins. An interesting wine.
- S31 (an experiment), 2011. 48% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Syrah, 23% Cabernet Franc. Not for sale. About 14.5% alcohol. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Soft tannins. An interesting wine. Great promise for an excellent wine.

A beautiful high quality organic winery in a very nice location and great scenery (a beautiful view on some parts of Napa Valley). The winery produces one great wine (Ovid). The 2007 Ovid is very different, more powerful and more tannins, than the 2010 Ovid that we tasted this year and the 2008 Ovid that we tasted last year. The winery conducts various experiments based on their Cabernet Sauvignon with various shares of Cabernet Franc, Syrah, Merlot, and Petit Verdot. A visit to this winery is highly recommended.

Harlan Bond and Promontory

- Melbury, Bond, 2008. About \$350. 14.5% alcohol. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Full body. A little off-balance, too low acidity, complex. Soft tannins. Drink now or later (better later; 2-10 years). Will improve. Very good wine.
- Quella, Bond, 2008. About \$350. 14.5% alcohol. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Nice bitterness at the end. Drink now or later (better later; 2-10 years). Will improve. An excellent wine.
- St. Eden, Bond, 2008. About \$350. 14.5% alcohol. Mostly Cabernet Sauvignon, 2-3% Cabernet Franc. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Noticeable soft tannins. Somewhat elegant. Drink now or later (better later; 2-10 years). Will improve. An excellent wine.
- Vecina, Bond, 2008. About \$350. 14.5% alcohol. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Somewhat noticeable but soft tannins. Drink now or later (better later; 2-10 years). Will improve. An excellent wine. The best of the five wines that we tasted at Bond.
- Pluribus, Bond, 2008. About \$350. 14.5% alcohol. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Very noticeable tannins. Drink later (5-10 years). Will improve. An excellent wine.

- Promontory, Harlan, 2009. About 14.5% alcohol. About \$400. Mostly Cabernet Sauvignon. About 6% Petit Verdot and Malbec. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Very smooth. Noticeable soft tannins. Nice bitterness at the end. Drink now or later (better later; 5-10 years). Will improve. An excellent wine.

This is a high quality winery that produces five single vineyard Cabernets (listed above). They are similar but not identical. In 2008 the Vecina is the best of the five. Last year we tasted the 2006 wines with similar outcomes (the Melbury was better in 2006). The Promontory project is finally a mature one and the wine is available for sale. The Promontory is an excellent wine that will be produced at the new location of this winery. A visit to this winery is highly recommended.

Opus One

- Overture, 2010. Blend. \$90. 14.5% alcohol. The second wine of the winery. Close to full body. Balanced. Somewhat complex. Fairly elegant. Soft tannins. A good wine.
- Opus One, 2010. \$235. 14.5% alcohol. 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5.5% Merlot, 5.5% Cabernet Franc, 4% Petit Verdot, 1% Malbec. Full body. Balanced. Complex. Soft tannins. Nice bitterness at the end. Will improve (a lot). Keep for 3-10 years. An excellent wine.

This winery produces two wines, or only one, every year. Their main wine is Opus One, which is an excellent wine. A visit to this winery is recommended.

Futo

- O.V. 2011. 14.8%, about \$140. Balanced, full body, complex, higher acidity will be a plus, somewhat elegant, soft tannins at the end. Will develop. Drink now or (better) later (3-5 years). Very good wine.
- Futo 2010. 15%, about \$300. Balanced, full body, complex, somewhat elegant, soft tannins at the end. Will develop. Drink now or (better) later (5-7 years). Excellent wine.

This is a high quality and impressive winery situated in a beautiful area. It produces two wines (listed above). A visit to this winery is highly recommended.

Paso Robles

Daou

- Chemin de Fleurs, 2013. 14% alcohol, \$36. 55% Grenach Blanc, 26% Viognier, 19% Roussanne. Balanced, light body, fairly complex, smooth, light. Good wine.
- Micho, 2011. 13.5% alcohol, \$46. 60% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon. Balanced, somewhat full body, complex, smooth, some bitterness at the end, soft tannins at the end. Drink now or (better) in 2-3 years. Good wine.
- Reserve Seventeen Forty, 2012. 14.5% alcohol, \$56. 70% Cabernet Franc, 30% Merlot. Balanced, somewhat too low acidity, full body, complex, some bitterness at the end, soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5 years. Very good wine.
- Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, 2011. 14.2% alcohol, \$56. 79% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Cabernet Franc, 5% Merlot, 9% Petit Verdot. Balanced, full body, complex, some bitterness at the end, soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5 years. Excellent wine.
- Pinot Noir, 2012. 14.4%, \$65. Balanced, close to full body, complex, light-medium, elegant, smooth, soft tannins at the end. Very good to excellent wine.
- Mayote, 2011. 14.4% alcohol, \$85. 44% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Syrah, 12% Petit Verdot. Balanced, full body, complex, some bitterness at the end (and some sweetness at the end - "too elegant"), soft tannins at the end. Drink now or within 5 years. Very good to excellent wine.

An impressive high quality winery with a beautiful scenery. Produces red and white wines. The winery is focused on Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and blends (regular and reserve). All wines are impressive. A visit to this winery is highly recommended.

Tablas Creek

- Cotes de Tablas Blanc, 2012. \$27. 13% alcohol. 34% Viognier, 30% Marsanne, 30% Grenache Blanc, 6% Roussanne. Balanced, less than full body, light and elegant, complex. Some sweetness at the end. Good to very good wine.
- Esprit de Tablas Blanc, 2011. \$40. 13.5% alcohol. 64% Roussanne 26% Grenache Blanc, 10% Picpoul Blanc. Balanced, less than full body, somewhat complex, very dry. Good wine.
- Esprit de Beaucastel Blanc, 2006. \$50. 13.5% alcohol. 65% Roussanne 30% Grenache Blanc, 5% Picpoul Blanc. Balanced, full body, complex, very dry. An interesting older white wine. Very good wine.
- Dianthus, 2013. Rose. \$27. 14.3% alcohol. 57% Mourvedre, 28% Grenache, 15% Counoise. Ballanced, some body, light and elegant, somewhat complex, very dry. Good wine.
- Patelin de Tablas, 2012. \$20. 13.8% alcohol. 53% Syrah, 27% Grenache, 18% Mourvedre, 2% Counoise. Ballanced, little body, light, somewhat complex. Simple wine. Reasonably good wine.

- Tanat, 2011. \$40. 14% alcohol. 95% Tanat, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. Somewhat unbalanced, less than full body, somewhat complex, somewhat elegant, smooth, light. Reasonably good wine.
- Esprit de Tablas, 2011. \$55. 14.5% alcohol. 30% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 40% Mourvedre, 10% Counoise. Balanced, somewhat too low acidity, close to full body, complex, smooth, rough. Not as good as the 2010 that we tasted last year. Keep for 1-3 years. Good wine.
- Esprit de Beaucastel, 2010. \$55. 14.5% alcohol. 30% Grenache Noir, 21% Syrah, 45% Mourvedre, 4% Counoise. Balanced, somewhat too low acidity, close to full body, complex. smooth. Some bitterness at the end. Keep for 1-3 years. Very good wine.
- Esprit de Beaucastel, 2006. \$70. 14.5% alcohol. 28% Grenache, 22% Syrah, 45% Mourvedre, 5% Counoise. Balanced, full body, complex, smooth. Some bitterness at the end. Soft tannins at the end. Keep for 1-3 years. Very good to excellent wine.
- Panoplie, 2010. \$95. 14.5% alcohol. 30% Grenache Noir, 10% Syrah, 60% Mourvedre. Balanced, full body, complex, soft tannins at the end, some bitterness at the end. Keep for 2-8 years. Somewhat better than the 2009 that we tasted last year. Excellent wine.

A high quality impressive winery. Nice scenery. This winery produces several quality red and white wines. A visit to this winery is highly recommended.

L'Aventure

- Rose Estate, 2013. \$25. 39% Syrah, 27% Grenache, 26% Mourvedre, 8% Petit Verdot. Balanced, little body, light, not complex, not too sweet. Good wine.
- Optimus, 2012. \$45. 15.8% alcohol. 53% Syrah, 38% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Petit Verdot. Balanced, somewhat too low acidity, somewhat full body, somewhat complex, some bitterness at the end, soft tannins. Drink now or keep for 1-3 years. Good wine.
- Cote a Cote, 2011. \$85. 15.8% alcohol. 10% Syrah, 30% Mourvedre, 60% Grenache. Balanced, full body, complex, somewhat elegant, some bitterness at the end, soft tannins. Drink now or (better) in 3-4 years. Better than the 2010 that we tasted last year. Excellent wine.
- Estate Cuvee, 2012. \$85. 15.8% alcohol. 57% Syrah, 31% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Petit Verdot. Balanced, full body, complex, some bitterness at the end, soft tannins. Drink now or (better) in 2-4 years. Better than the 2010 that we tasted last year. Very good to excellent wine.

A high quality impressive winery. Nice scenery. This winery produces several quality red wines. A visit to this winery is highly recommended.

Justin

This is a well-known winery situated in a beautiful area. The two tasting rooms and the winery are impressive.

We tasted the 2012 Right Angle (red), 2012 Reserve Malbec (red), 2011 Justification (red), 2011 Isosceles (red), 2012 Savant (red), 2013 Sauvignon Blanc (white) and 2013 Chardonnay (white).

We ranked all these wines as average (at best). We were disappointed by the quality of all these wines.

Peachy Canyon Winery

We tasted about 12 barrel samples of 2011-2012-2013 Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Syrah, Syrah and blends; 2012 Chardonnay and Viognier and a ten-year blended Port. All the wines are from Paso Robles grapes. Several of the tastings came from new oak barrels and the other from neutral (or semi-neutral) barrels.

Most of the wines were good, and some were very good. All the wines that we tasted were smooth, balanced, somewhat complex or complex, close to full bodied or full bodied.

This solid and professional (old school) winery is impressive and most of its wines are of high quality. A visit to this winery or to its tasting room is recommended.