

L'AVENTURE NEWSLETTER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Vintage Notebook</i>	1
<i>HWY 46 West</i>	2
<i>Paso Dogs</i>	2
<i>1215 Spring Street</i>	3
<i>Where's Stephan?</i>	3
<i>Villa California</i>	3
<i>Dans le Vignoble</i>	4

Special points of interest

- 2003 Estate wine release in June
- Zin Festival March 19, 20
- Look for Southern California Wine Dinners at Four Seasons and Sam's at the Beach, as dates become available



Racking

VINTAGE NOTEBOOK 2004

The 2004 vintage has finished malo-lactic fermentation, and as Stephan moves through the barrel cellar tasting the wines, he shares the following comments.

With the 2004 wines, he has decided to rack the wines less. In the past, he has racked Syrah and Cabernet, and the resulting blends 3-4 times in advance of bottling. This year, he will leave the wines on the lees for most of their life in barrel, racking perhaps just once or twice in advance of bottling. "Somewhere, this will not change too much the style of the wines, but will add some complexity and freshness, I think. The lees contain million of dead yeast which can give back a lot to the wine (volume flesh). During ageing, they impart a richness to the wine that it would otherwise lack, a character generally missing from "commercial" wines. We will rack at the end of March for the first time, and then we will see."

Stephan notes that each variety produced here on the estate yielded very small quantities of very small clusters in 2004. As noted in the November newsletter, a long, cool "classic" vintage season became another of our muscular, powerful "California" style vintages when a hot spell moved-in in late August and early September, creating a harvest scramble that saw all varieties coming in at just about the same time. Tasting through the wines confirms this low yield harvest as an-



Degustation

other excellent one on the estate. In the spirit of 1999 and 2001, the wines are rich, highly concentrated, and intense in color, with great nerve, and are very big bodied. Cabernet Sauvignon from the arena block is bright, with cherry and cacao notes on the palate, while the Cab from block 5 is elegant, with hints of cedar emerging from tobacco and cassis. The Estate Syrah is characteristically spicy, with white pepper, clove and vanilla aromas and flavors complimenting the developing hibiscus and roasted coffee at its center. Tasted together, with 17% Petit Verdot in the blend, they become Stephan's first ever "field blended" Estate Cuvée. While the majority of the Estate Cuvée is still to be blended, as is the case with

Optimus 2004, this wine was made by crushing and fermenting these grapes together, a rare occurrence in our winefield. Incredibly dark in color and dense in body, this impeccably structured wine offers aromas of roasted coffee, tea leaf, and leather, which give way to intense sweet cherry flavors, the middle palate demonstrating the tight, classic "grip" of Petit Verdot. Only 15 barrels made, with 400 of the 600 6-packs reserved for Club L'Aventure members. Last, Côte à Côte fans will be glad to know that the 2004 Grenache is luscious, cherry, passion-fruit, that, in equal parts with Syrah and Mourvedre, will live up to its acclaimed 2002 debut.

HIGHWAY 46 WEST WINETRAIL

L'Aventure Winery and 16 other "West-side" producers, have come together as a group to help our visitors find the great wines of Paso Robles. Each West-side winery is distinctive, with unique

and winemaking in our region, as well as technical wine tasting protocol. For more details on events, please visit our website at www.paso46westwineries.com

passport participant is entered into our quarterly drawing for fabulous prizes! Dining reservations at Paso's best restaurants, Bed & Breakfast overnights, and unique wine collections are among the rewards for traversing the west-side wine country! Of course, the best prize of all is the chance to taste and become acquainted with the diverse wines of Paso Robles' West-side winemakers. We welcome you to enjoy life in our little slice of wine country.

-Connie McBride



Connie McBride in the Salon

wine making styles. I want to invite you to enjoy our neighborhood, relax in our friendly environment, and savor every drop of our excellent West-side wines.

Our West-side group will be hosting quarterly events and prize drawings for visitors and locals alike, with food, entertainment, an, of course, wine tasting. Most events are free, with donations accepted on behalf of charities such as Loaves and Fishes Food Bank. Come meet our winemakers, and learn about grape growing

Enclosed is a Highway 46 west Wineries brochure. The brochure enables travelers to move fluidly from winery to winery, with the reward of discovering each producers unique culture. Located on the back of the brochure which is available at

all participating wineries, is a space where wine lovers can collect stamps from each tasting room as they sample their wines. When eight stamps are collected, the passport holder takes home a beautiful poster, which features each wineries label. When all seventeen passport stamps are collected, the passport holder receives a collectors-edition poster, signed by all 17 winemakers. Signed or unsigned, the posters are suitable for framing, and display in your home or wine cellar. In addition, each



PASO DOGS HAVE THEIR DAY



That's my dog! Throw him a bone! This guy is barking up the right tree. Kevin Smith of Linne Calodo is spearheading- "shepherding", if you will- the production of a coffee-table book on the winery dogs of Paso Robles. From Poodles to Pugs, the loyal canines from a number of local wineries will be pictured, and their stories told, alongside more mundane information on the wineries they call

home, and their wines. L'Aventure's resident dogs, Ella and Lexie, will be among the "big dogs" profiled. Read about their exploits and opinions; find out what they eat, who their favorite footballers are, their musical tastes.

Publication is scheduled for later this year.



Ella, our Ambassador

We will keep you posted as regards contact information, as publication date draws near. Looks like a classic case of the "tale wagging the dog!"

1215 SPRING STREET

As one walks through the doors of 1215 Spring, one is already caught-up in the unpretentious and sincere mood that sets the table, so to speak, for the dining experience ahead. Italian designer chrome barstools, stunning leather banquettes, and black walnut bar and tables by Obie O'Brien embolden the rich, coco interior, all together a stimulating monochromatic composition. Owners Bill and David Hales, and Bill's wife Megan, owners of Blue in SLO, have installed the experienced New York team of Ron Hammond and chef Brian Price in Paso

Robles' newest and coolest restaurant. Ron brings 20 years operating experience with him, and has crafted 1215 as "classic American", with the emphasis on fresh and local, and a menu that changes monthly. Chef Price describes it like this. "I don't take myself seriously, but I take my food seriously. I want to present sophisticated American food, but unpretentious, without too much sauce, no bells and whistles, uncomplicated, like myself. Our menu is seasonal and non-threatening- food your mom cooked, but now it comes to you in a restaurant" Chef says "try the seafood

stew".

The Bar at 1215 is an entity unto itself. "There are no beer taps, there is no TV," Ron points out, emphatically. "It's a neighborhood bar where you can relax." Behind the bar, Bernard will expertly guide you through the wine list, which is focused on the best of Paso, and includes wines from the Pacific Northwest and "New World" as well. I want to add that wine prices at 1215 are among the best values I have seen in a restaurant. Service is friendly and efficient, and staff is knowledgeable. Call 239-4999 for reservations.

1215

Paso Robles



L'AVENTURE EVENTS.....WHERE'S STEPHAN?

Catch him if you can!

- Feb. 21 Wine dinner at Blades, Ft. Worth,
- Feb. 23 Wine dinner at Zula's, Houston,
- March 18 Wine dinner and tasting at Boca Baccanal, Boca Raton, Florida

- March 21 Wine dinner AIX, Jacksonville, Florida
- April 4 Paso Robles Grand Tasting, Chicago
- April 6 Wine dinner American Place, St. Louis
- April 24 Wine dinner at Thee Bungalow, San Diego
- April 27 Wine dinner at

Buona Tavola, Paso Robles

- May 13, 14 Hospice du Rhone, Paso Robles
- May 20, 21 Paso Robles Wine Festival

Whew...there's more, but let him catch his breath!

VILLA CALIFORNIA !

At Villa California, the trade winds blow softly through the Mango, Avocado, and Palms shrouding the retreat. Rhum not Estate Cuvée, is the preferred libation. Exotic dishes such as Accras de Morue, Colombo de Poulet, lobsters, and Flan Coco grace local menus. Welcome to Beatrice and Stephan's new place in paradise. Recently completed, Villa California is to be found in the tiny town of Deshaies,

French Guadeloupe. An expansive deck extends this open-air, Brazilian hardwood home right into the tropical forest. A gurgling stream that runs aside the villa leads to one of the islands most beautiful beaches, just a

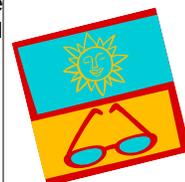


Villa California

five minute walk. Villa California is the last destination added to "travel by L'Aventure" by

Stephan and Beatrice. For more information and photos, please see our website, or call Beatrice to learn more about a Caribbean adventure or a relaxing time in Bordeaux area!

Villa California.....where Rhum, not Estate Cuvée, is the preferred libation.



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DANS LE VIGNOBLE

We have had lots of rain this winter, around 7 inches, which is starting to get us back to normal after two consecutive years of 50% below average rainfall. The many storms drove us inside, where Dave, Guillaume, and Stephan were able to turn their attention to odd jobs that needed tending. As of publication, however, we're back to pruning. The vines are dormant over the cold winter months. With the sap not running, this is the time that we perform this most critical of vineyard operations, that will determine quality at harvest. While we also drop fruit (up to 60%) at veraison, and sort fruit before crushing, it is pruning that directs the vines productive tendencies. On the estate, we utilize two pruning styles, spur and cane. Around 80% of the vineyard is spur pruned, meaning the spurs are set on



Dave, Stephan, and Guillaume dans le vignoble.

cane. In either configuration, the aim is to reduce the number of clusters per vine, and drive the maximum amount of energy to each cluster from our VSP canopy.

The last act of pruning will be to shape the new vines that just went in the ground back in July. They will be cut back to two

cut back to two buds, with one emerging the stronger, the cane of which will be kept and developed into the trunk of the vine as it enters its second year.

With 2,100 vines per acre, Dave, Guillaume and the crew have their work cut out for them!

the cordon itself, in our case 6-8 positions per vine, from which 1 shoot and 1 cluster will be grown. Of the 12- 16 buds that will break from the vine, only half will survive, as we thin the crop for quality control. When cane- pruned, the vine sets its fruit on two canes that grow from the cordon, setting 5 buds per

