

September 8, 2008

The Sommelier Says....

Hello and welcome to the weekly newsletter for <http://www.wine-sommelier.com/>

SPECIAL NOTE: You are receiving this newsletter because you gave me your email address. Legal action has been threatened against me for using TMK wine email list that was given to me. So this newsletter is going out to about 25 people as opposed to 120. If you know others that used to get this newsletter and want to continue to receive it, please have them go to <http://www.wine-sommelier.com/> and fill out the Contact me section, requesting to be added to this email list. Thanks- Tim

Bottle Shock

It opened in Simi Valley on September 5, at the Regal Civic Theater at 2751 Tapo Canyon, show times are 11:30am, 2:20, 4:50, 7:40, and 10:10. I saw it again this past weekend....

Wine tasting in Murphys California....

Why is it everywhere they produce wine, they call themselves 'Wine Country'?

Last weekend Bev and I took a motorcycle ride up to Murphys, California, what.. you have never heard of Murphys? How about Calaveras County and the annual Frog Jumping contest? Oh yeah, *That* place. <http://www.frogtown.org/>

Well, they also have a wine country in Murphys. I have to say that I was pleasantly surprised with a couple of wineries I discovered there.

Hatcher Winery; Located in the heart of Murphys, under ground! You have to walk down an alleyway, down some stairs and under the main street (*I think it is even called Main Street*) and you will find a small darkened room where some of the best wines in the area are served.

Matt Hatcher is the owner and winemaker, and his wine making talents have put Hatcher on the don't miss list of Foothill wineries.

All of their wines are under \$25 a bottle, which I feel makes them all a great value. I most enjoyed their '06 Merlot, '06 Barbera and their '06 Mourvedre. I bought a few bottles of each wine. The Merlot was my personal favorite and reminded me of my initial reaction to my first tasting Keverson's Zin, 'I thought this is how Merlot SHOULD taste.' It had some Classic Bordeaux characteristics. On the nose, cut hay, rose petal, tobacco and dark berries. The palate brought

on cherries integrated with oak gave it a good structure and balance that lead to a nice long finish.

Hatcher is open from 11:00am-5:00pm Friday thru Sunday and 12:00pm-5:00pm Monday thru Thursday. They are located on Main Street in downtown Murphys, (across from Grounds restaurant).

<http://hatcherwinery.com/>

Vina Moda: If I say Caymus, Heitz, Stags Leap, what do you think of? Some of the finest Cabernet Sauvignons California makes right? Well, stand back folks- **Vina Moda** has entered the room!

Winemaker, owner Nathan Vader (no relation to Darth) has brought out a wonderful 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon. It literally made my knees buckle when I tasted it. I am serious.

Don't let the screw-cap closure on this bottle fool you either. (*I asked Nathan why he would want such a fine wine in a screw cap bottle; his response was that he did not want to risk the chance of just one bottle being ruined by oxidation*) This is no New World fruit bomb from down under or over yonder. The nose on this Sierra Foothills Cab struts Old World character with cedar and pencil shavings (yes I said *pencil shavings*) reminiscent of Bordeaux, followed by red berry fruit with very subtle herbal notes. On the palate, it is a tight package of red berry and sour cherry fruit, with tarry notes supported by ample fine-grained tannins and an appealing earthiness. The wine finishes with good grape tannic grip and still lively acidity at nearly 5 years of age. You could lay this wine down for another 10 years. This wine was perfectly balanced.

If you've been avoiding California Cabernets because you think it is all sweet jelly jar grape juice, then you may want to reconsider your preconceptions. This wine, at just 13.5% alcohol, it represents a wonderful counterpoint to that more mainstream fruity style California Cab. I bought 6 bottles of the Cabernet, and I will probably order more. It is a very limited production. And at \$36 a bottle, when you have to pay \$50 and up for what I consider equal wines from Napa, you can not go wrong! They also had a Petite Sirah that Bev fell in love with too.

Their website isn't up yet with the details of their wine, but it does have their contact information.

<http://www.vinamoda.com/>

There are a lot more wineries in the Sierra Foothill area, Twisted Oak <http://www.twistedoak.com/twisted/index.jsp> is one in particular, and I was a wine club member of them for many years. The area is a nice get away spot for long weekends. It is only about 375 miles from Simi Valley.

Cheers-

Tim

If you would like to be removed from this list, please reply to me at tim@wine-sommelier.com and request removal from this list.