

# August Newsletter

## Morse Wines / Il Gioiello Winery



### Winery Events in August

**Vertical Blind Tastings:** We will be doing two blind tastings with multiple vintages of each varietal. We will have special pricing on many of these vintages. These vertical make great gifts or special dinner themes.

**August 6th-7th:** Mourvedre vertical. Discover how this estate wine ages over time and the how the uniqueness of each vintage expresses itself. 2004 – 2007 vintages.

**August 20th and 21st:** Petite Sirah vertical: 2004 – 2007 vintages will be tasted. Come find your favorite or create a special wine dinner set. Perfect with Peppercorn sauce over steaks and potato gratin. Mmmmm...

**Singles Mixer Event: Saturday August 13th 3:00 - 8:00.** We'll try anything once. Few things can encourage meeting new friends like bocce and wine. Throw in a little food, music and a warm summer evening in a beautiful setting and the worst that could happen is a great time. You'll never know unless you try it.

### 2011 Vintage Update:

After a couple vintages of smaller crops and early fall weather, we are encouraged by our 2011 crop. The crop level and fruit set is very good, as we were not adversely impacted by the snow, rain and hail that damaged many of the lower elevation and earlier blooming vineyards across California. Temperatures have been ideal with no over-100 degree days and evening temperatures in the 50's. If we get good weather throughout September and early October, this will be a very good vintage.

### Living- Working the Dream:

In beginning this subject, I at first thought to include a clever quotation on insanity, but after further consideration, concluded that this impulse was a result of questioning why I would want to take on an additional challenge when I'm already working more hours and with more stress than I had ever encountered in my 30 plus years in the high tech world. The answer is simple and one which some might consider a strong indication of insanity.

So I instead choose two quotes which better explain our actions, as no single quote could capture the rational.

*"Don't let the fear of the time it will take to accomplish something stand in the way of your doing it. The time will pass anyway; we might just as well put that passing time to the best possible use."* –Earl Nightingale

### White wine specials throughout August:

For those of you who have enjoyed our Estate Mourvedre Rose and Estate Viognier, we are offering these two spectacular wines for \$15 for the month of August.

We are continuing to offer our Viognier and Roussanne blends for \$9/btl. That's 50% off, and wine club discounts make the discount even larger. Perfect for these hot summer days and nights.

### Big Crush October 1 and 2, 2011

Tickets for the Big Crush are available for purchase via the events page at [www.amadorwine.com](http://www.amadorwine.com). If you use our promo code "Gioiello," you will receive a \$5 discount. Be sure to pick our winery as your starting location, and you can work your way down the line! We promise to have some great food and wine pairings.

and

*“There is no telling how many miles you will have to run while chasing a dream.”*

The action I am slow to get to is the expansion of our property with a renewed aspiration to forge it into a truly special destination for wine enthusiasts and those that share a passion for nature, relaxation and unpretentious adventure.

With our national economy in the dumper and no rational political discourse on the horizon to provide a modicum of hope that better days are over the next rise, we remain optimistic that our region will grow in tourism and continue its reawakening as one of California’s great regions.

We are evaluating the adjoining property to provide additional vineyard land and to provide access to the spectacular site above our Zinfandel vineyards with ambition to build a B&B and location for events.

In case you are not following the wine industry news and keeping your ear to the local gossip, grapes are popular again and in somewhat of a shortage. With significant investment from foreign and domestic established and new wine businesses in Amador wineries and vineyards, we appear to be on the cusp of a renaissance in our sleepy little piece of winemaking paradise.

Our recent growth and expansion could not have been accomplished without the support of our LLC members, and to them I owe them all the effort, enthusiasm and rational behavior I can muster. If any of you are interested in this venture, we are considering taking on additional members to complete this project sooner rather than later. Please [contact me](#) with regards to the requirements and benefits of the LLC.

### **Would you like some Wine with your Oak?**

This brings me to the subject of wine and some very recent observations. We generally enter a few wines in a couple local and national wine competitions, California State Fair, Amador County Fair, San Francisco Chronicle and Orange County. On occasion I have the opportunity to taste many of the overall winners and that’s where the problem comes in.

The word “terroir” is widely used and extensively written about in all wine media. Terroir defines the unique “potential” of a wine. This potential can be complimented or suppressed by the winemaking process. The unique nuances of the soils and climate are what make great wines great, otherwise we’d all be growing wine grapes in potting soil in our back yards. If terroir is so important, then why do some seem to be over-oaking their red wines to a point where the varietal nuances are obliterated? In many cases excessive oak is used to mask other shortcomings in a wine, be it a defect or lightness of desired varietal flavors.

Why do these wooden chew toys often win “Best of” status? Spend an hour or two tasting 20 or 30 of the same varietal, without the benefit of food, and those subtle and wonderful nuances of a wine will be lost to palate fatigue. What stand out in this environment are those wines with a little RS (residual sugar), a silky mouth texture and big and toasty oak, not varietal correctness, terroir or elegance.

If you are like me and like to cook and eat, wine should complement the foods we eat, not compete with it. At a recent tasting, a couple other winemakers and

I tasted our own medal-winning wines alongside our gold medal winners, and each and every one of us thought the judges missed the mark. In all cases, the over-extracted, or over-oaked wines had received higher marks than the other wines we all believed to be better examples of good winemaking and good wine.

What's the bottom line? Unless you like oak tastings (as opposed to wine tastings), try those wines that won silver and bronze medals to find those wines that express the fruit and soil of the vineyard and not the oak and tannin additives that mask the unique characteristics of wines. Our 2008 Montepulciano won gold and double gold – best of class in two recent competitions, and in my opinion needs a couple more months of cellar time before we release it in October of this year. This is a big wine, with very little oak, but its level of extraction is far more than our current release, i.e., the elegant and balanced 2007 vintage. As pleased as I was with the medals, it was my opinion that this wine was not our finest submission amongst our many medal winners.

I have advocated for American wines over our European counterparts for two reasons; in this poor economy, we need to purchase American goods rather than sending our dollars abroad, and I have believed that our wines match the palate of American consumers. We like softer, lower acid wines and our wonderful terroir delivers this result. If we, through wine competitions, push American winemakers toward higher oak and toast levels, the advantage shifts to those European wines, where grapes still make wine, not oak trees.

