



SPRING 2011

kukkula

news

Upcoming Events



April 28-30

Hospice du Rhone

Annual event held at the Paso event center. Saturday afternoon Grand Tasting. hospicedurhone.org for info.

Friday, April 29 7 pm

Winemaker Dinner

Winemaker dinner in the kukkula barrel room. Five courses catered by Chef Charlie. \$105 per person, \$85 wine club members. Limited to 40 guests.

May 14, 4-6 pm



Spring Shipment Pick-up Party

Wine club members and their guests are invited to enjoy a sampling of Farmstand 46 foods paired with kukkula wines (including new releases).

May 20-22

Paso Robles Wine Festival

Tickets are now on sale for the 29th annual Paso Wine Festival. Although kukkula won't be pouring in the park, the tasting room will be open!

July 17

San Francisco Grand Tasting

kukkula will be joining the PRWCA for the Grand Tasting in San Francisco. Winemaker dinners, trade and consumer tastings are planned. pasowine.com.

KEVIN'S MESSAGE: IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME

What a year it's been since our last newsletter! Our intent was to communicate twice a year, but it's becoming obvious that I've tested the limits of just how much one can accomplish in a given day. Especially last year. We broke ground on our new facility in mid October 2009, and completed construction mid September 2010, just in time for harvest. And what a harvest it was! More on that later.

If you ever want to do a stress test on the family dynamic, might I suggest you try to build a winery, farm the land, make the wine, manage your career, and spend quality time with your wife and kids? Better yet, just take it from me. You and your family will enjoy life a lot more if you just do the last, and maybe

consume copious amounts of kukkula wine while doing it.

Back to our new digs. In short, they're really cool! We are thrilled to be in our new modern facility. The architecture is creating quite a buzz, and was designed by the same architect that designed our home, Scott Lindenau of Studio B (www.studiobarchitects.net). Check out his website, or go to kukulawine.com, and see some of the images we've downloaded.

As we did with our home, we tried to integrate the structure into it's environment. We partially dug it into the hillside, and the exposed sides, for the most part, are veneered in a one foot thick wall of rocks mined from the property. They are held to the building

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KEVIN'S MESSAGE (CONT.)

THE 2009 WINES AND THE 2010 HARVEST

within a gridwork of heavy gauge galvanized baskets. Not only does this create a really cool aesthetic that ties it to the environment, but it acts as a wonderful thermal mass, which helps us be more energy efficient.

As a counter point to the rough facade, the structure (which is really two simple opposing shed roof structures tied together in the middle by a canopy over the crush pad) is finished in a sleek rust colored panel system. Our tasting room cantilevers out of the larger structure and is a sleek looking galvanized box with lots of large glass panels looking out into the vineyard, and into our barrel room. If you haven't visited since we've opened, you've got to come and check it out.

COMING SOON....

We bottled our 2009 vintage reds and 2010 white in the middle of February. This vintage represents our first in which the vast majority of our red fruit was estate. Specifically, the Syrah, Grenache, Zinfandel and Counoise were all grown in our vineyard. We purchased Mourvedre and some of our our Cabernet from Halter. It's an exciting period for us as the benefits of six years of hard work are finally coming to the bottle. The organic dry farming seems to be really paying off. Our fruit is coming in with more intense flavors and aromatics than the purchased fruit. The weight of our wines is immediately apparent, and the wines, although still elegant, are bigger and exhibit a greater complexity than prior vintages.

We've been pouring our 2009 **sisu** and **pas de deux** blends at a few wine events in the last few weeks to huge excitement. Unfortunately, if you're not a club member, it will be a while before these wines are readily available. For wine club members, some will be released this Spring and Fall.

The 2010 harvest was interesting, to say the least. I was figuring that with the wet winter in '09/'10, and the unusually cool growing season, we'd have wines with high acidity and more restrained fruit. As a dry farmer, I automatically assume that we'll have higher acids, lower pH. Interestingly enough, that didn't happen in 2010. Syrah, in particular, started to shut down in one block by the end of September. And, although the fruit easily came to physiological ripeness, the pHs were fairly high. In barrel the wines are solid, but we had a host of issues in and around harvest: a couple of stuck fermentations, MLs not finishing, one instance of elevated VA, and botrytis in the Roussanne to work around. So, on top of a beyond exhausting year of construction, we had a three month harvest from hell!

That said, I think 2010 will prove to be a very solid vintage for us. Our Syrah is beautiful, aromatic, big. I'm even tempted to say it's better than 2009. Our Zin was textbook perfect. Mourvedre was harvested for the first time from our vineyard, and although we only got 2.3 tons, it's downright pretty, with great acidity and bright red fruit. Counoise might just be the surprise of the vintage. I really try to limit fruit to about 1 1/2 tons per acre. Needless to say, I was a bit panicked when I picked 3 1/2 tons of fruit from 1 1/2 acres. This is only my second harvest, so I can't really say I know much about this varietal. I expect big fruit, light color, and not as much complexity. Much to my surprise, though, this year the color was solid, the fruit big, and acidity high. The wine has an incredible intensity which lingers on the mouth for quite some time. Later this year we will introduce a new (2009) blend which we call "Aatto", named for my dad. It is a blend of Grenache Mourvedre, and

Counoise (20%). We love the 2010 Counoise so much, that I suspect the "Aatto" blend will have a larger piece of Counoise in the future. Short of Tablas Creek, I don't know anyone else working with this fruit. The weakest links, at least at harvest time, appeared to be Grenache and Cabernet. After bringing in the Grenache, I was somewhat concerned that I had jumped the gun. Yet now that it's finished and it's in the barrel, I'm enjoying its lighter fruit. It's tasting somewhat austere, delicate, and will be a beautiful counter balance to our big, chocolatey Syrah. The jury is still out on the cab which came in at around 24 brix. Cab is always one of the last picked, and mother nature wasn't allowing it to ripen to the level we wanted. It was pulled in early November. In barrel subtle hints of cassis and cherry are evident but dominated by tannins and leafy notes. A few days ago I was tasting through the barrels with one of our coopers and stressing about the cab. He suggested that I was being a bit hasty in my judgement. as Cabs in Bordeaux were most likely significantly difficult at this point. So, I guess I'll reserve judgement for a bit.

A final note about plans over the next year or two. We're entering into an agreement with a good friend who owns some beautiful property on Adelaida Road to plant, oversee, and ultimately buy his fruit for our wines. It will be organically dry farmed, as we do with our property. We're also going to clear another thirty acres of land on our ranch next year and plant the following year. The hole seems to keep getting deeper. Oh well, it's all fun!

Kevin

Paula's kukkulati: tasting room, olives and more!

The kukkula tasting room is now open Friday-Sunday 11-5. We've been promising food, and just finalized an agreement with Farmstand 46 to feature selected sandwiches and salads from their menu paired with kukkula wines by the glass. You no longer need to interrupt your day of tasting and drive 20 minutes for a great lunch. Eat in, picnic under the walnuts, or take it with you, starting the weekend of April 23rd.

In addition to the wine and food, we are also selling (and tasting) our estate olive oil. We picked and pressed our first harvest on December 3rd, 2010. All went very smoothly with the Olea Farm "Mill on Wheels" and about 25 pickers arriving early that morning. By 11:00, most of the fruit was harvested and the mill was ready to press. An hour or so later, the first olive oil was pouring out of the mill, and the picking was complete. Next year we'll let everyone know our press date and everyone can see the process. All together we harvested about 3 tons of olives which brought us 130 gallons of oil.

We think it tastes great, and the lab tests show that the polyphenols are off the charts (which means it's also great



The kukkula tasting room and kitchen hours are 11-5 Friday-Sunday. Featuring kukkula wines--and sandwiches and salads from Farmstand 46!

for you, and has a longer shelf life too). Stop in to try it. Our 250ml bottles sell for \$15 each, and club discounts apply. In the future we will have larger sizes available and possibly refillable containers. The trees are still quite small, so our future production will be much bigger.

We also have kukkula wine jelly and spice rub available, along with some beautiful handmade gift items.

So, keep us in mind if you're thirsty, hungry or need a gift Friday-Sunday 11-5!



Ashley Barnes shown here with the board she painted for the Adelaida Schoolhouse fundraiser. She featured the hillsides of Adelaida with a fox and lupine in the foreground.

Templeton Middle School Students Create Art for the Adelaida Schoolhouse

If you've been in the tasting room during the last few months, I'm sure you've noticed the amazing art on display and for sale by the Templeton Middle School Art students. Our daughter, Anna, has coordinated a fundraiser for the old Adelaida Schoolhouse (the one room schoolhouse located across the vineyard from us on Chimney Rock). Students have painted scenes of the Adelaida area directly on original siding from the Schoolhouse (built in 1917).

When the building was re-sided two years ago, Kevin put aside the best of the old boards, which Anna later sanded and delivered to the middle school. Mrs. Dutra (the art instructor) folded a lesson about folk art into the project which produced 34 boards for sale at \$75 each. The project was so successful, they are on "board" to do it again next year!

All proceeds from the sale go directly to Schoolhouse restoration.



KUKKULA WINE CLUB

The next level club:

Next level club members commit to purchasing two cases per year (6 we pick and 6 you pick in each shipment), and receive a **30%** discount on all wine and kukkula merchandise (including olive oil).

If you would like to step up to the next level, give us a call and we can change your status in time for the Spring shipment!

The kukkula wine club is a great opportunity to get access to all of our best wines as well as a 20% discount on every bottle you purchase. Discounts are also extended to other kukkula branded purchases (logo items and olive oil, for example). Your commitment is for a minimum of one year, and you will receive two six bottle shipments per year (we pick). Shipments go out each April or May and November, and can be picked up at the winery or shipped to you.

In addition to regular shipments and discounts, wine club members get invitations to member-only events and first dibs on limited availability wines and events. You also receive free tastings for you and your guests in the tasting room.

Call us at (805)227-0111 to join or change your status, or come by the tasting room. You may also join online at www.kukkulawine.com.



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