2019 Gewürztraminer, Cuvée Traditional: Rollercoaster
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2017 Mourvèdre, Mendocino: Ready to shake hands
Operating a business during a pandemic is challenging; we had actually considered skipping this newsletter to conserve cash. During our morning walks, we usually pass our tasting room and witness empty picnic tables under the wisteria. It makes us feel lonely and we realize how much we miss chatting with and pouring wines for our friends. Our nostalgia prompted this summer newsletter to be a bit different from prior ones—the photos include many personal favorites which we want to share. Even though the images may not directly sell wine, they offer a reminder of all that is special about wine from a family farm. This summer brings the release of five Gold Medal-winning red wines. Two of these wines, Barbera and Petite Sirah, were produced from grapes grown in Al Tollini’s vineyard; the other three, Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre, were produced entirely from biodynamically grown grapes at Dark Horse Vineyards. Three white wines, perfect for summertime enjoyment, are available now: Navarro’s value-packed Cuvée Traditional Gewürztraminer, our Alsatian-inspired Edelzwicker with enticing citrus-pear flavors and a dazzling Late Harvest Gewürztraminer, our first since 2013. 2019 is the final vintage of Mendocino Rosé, produced from Grenache and Carignane grapes grown on vines planted decades ago. Cuvée Traditional Gewürztraminer, Edelzwicker and Rosé are offered with case specials for as little as $14.75 per bottle, a great way to celebrate family and balmy weather. Special pricing on samplers and value-wine case specials, as well as One-Cent ground shipping and reduced air freight for all 12-bottle orders, will be available until August 31.

Thanks for supporting our family farm during these difficult times,

Ted Bennett and Deborah Cahn
Aaron and Sarah Cahn Bennett
2019 Gewürztraminer
Cuvée Traditional
Anderson Valley, Mendocino

Casey Hartlip and Jim Klein, Navarro’s winemaker. Casey manages Valley Foothills Vineyard, our neighbor to the west. In the 1990s they planted a field of Gewürztraminer that is pruned, trellised and farmed to Navarro’s specifications. Although we don’t refer to this bottling as estate bottled, technically it could be.

Rollercoaster

With the economy on a rollercoaster, we’ve had difficulty predicting how much wine to bottle. We had selected and blended the final cuvées for our Estate Bottled Gewürztraminer and Anderson Valley Pinot Gris when we abruptly decided to bottle less of each. A few weeks later we noticed an increased demand on our website for Navarro’s “value wines” and being unabashed marketers, we decided to use these excess wines and bottle a 2019 Cuvée Traditional Gewürztraminer. The main component, 55% of the cuvée, is the same wine as our 2019 Estate Bottled (Dry)—the part we had just cut back on. Another 20% of this bottling is from a cask of good, dry Gewürz wine that was not originally in our Estate Bottled cuvée. The final 17% of this Cuvée Traditional Gewürztraminer is Pinot Gris—the part of our Anderson Valley Pinot Gris that we had decided not to bottle. The Gris addition reduced the alcohol a little and added a citrus element that made the cuvée a little more crisp and bright. Flavors of peach, lime and kumquat with sprinklings of nutmeg and honey tied up with a bright, mineral finish.

SUMMER SPECIAL!
Buy it by the case for only $177.00; a savings of $39.00! That’s only $14.75 per bottle.

Harvested: Sept. 11-19, 2019
Sugars at harvest: 23.0° Brix
Bottled: June 17, 2020
Cases produced: 407
Alcohol: 13.5%
Titratable acidity: 7.1 g/L
pH: 3.30
Price (750 ml): $18.00
2019 Edelzwicker
36% Pinot Gris, 33% Riesling, 26% Gewürztraminer, 5% Muscat
Anderson Valley, Mendocino

One day back in the early 1980s when few Americans had heard of Edelzwicker, Ted was in Navarro’s tasting room and noticed a customer with a German accent sipping Edelzwicker who pronounced the name perfectly. Ted walked over to chat and learned the visitor was Marcus Moller-Racke whose family in Germany had recently purchased Buena Vista Winery in Sonoma. Several months later, Buena Vista Winery released Spiceling, a white wine blend produced from the Alsatian grape varieties. Ted was flattered. A year passed, perhaps two, and Marcus visited Navarro’s tasting room again. Ted, recognizing Marcus, said hello and they chatted for a while until finally Ted asked, “Why didn’t you name your white wine blend Edelzwicker?” Marcus responded that most Americans would have difficulty pronouncing Edelzwicker. Maybe so…but they certainly don’t have trouble enjoying it! We began the tastings for this 2019 cuvée by blending Pinot Gris and Riesling and discovered a 50-50 blend was the most pleasing with crisp flavors suggesting citrus and apple backed up by plenty of acidity. Next we added Gewürztraminer—a 26% addition contributed more body and some tropical fruit flavors. Finally, we added a tad of Muscat to heighten the floral aromas. You’ll be amazed how quickly you’ll finish a bottle. Gold Medal winner.
We’ve been making rosé from Debbie Pallini’s ancient head-trained Grenache vines in Calpella for 17 years; five vintages ago, we began blending in wine produced from Al Tollini’s venerable Carignane vines in Redwood Valley (we’ve been blending in old-vine Carignane for 16 years, but not all from Al’s vineyard). In past vintages we’ve also blended in rosé wines from Syrah and Mourvèdre grapes, but we have had trouble taming Syrah’s tannins and have found that Mourvèdre’s earthy tree bark flavors don’t complement Grenache’s strawberry-like fruit. For us, Carignane provides the perfect complement to Grenache’s charms, adding notes of tropical fruit, more acidity and a red accent to Grenache’s orange-toned skin pigments. The grapes were destemmed as two lots, pressed after one or two hours of maceration and the juice racked to stainless steel tanks for a slow, cool fermentation to dryness before being racked to seasoned French oak barrels. Sadly, this is Navarro’s last vintage of Mendocino Rosé as we’ve decided to concentrate our winemaking efforts on producing Pinot Noir rosé. We will miss visiting with the Pallini family and savoring the unique flavors of the fruit produced from those old vines. Fresh watermelon, strawberry and hibiscus tea aromas and flavors with crisp acidity and moderate alcohol. Gold Medal Winner. Best of Show.

Harvested  Sept. 29-Oct. 7, ’19
Sugars at harvest  23.0° Brix
Bottled  Feb. 20, 2020
Cases produced  521
Alcohol  13.6%
Titratable acidity  6.1 g/L
pH  3.24
Price  (750 ml)  $21.00

SUMMER SPECIAL!
Buy it by the case for only $198.00; a savings of $54.00! That’s only $16.50 per bottle.
Navarro Samplers and Gifts
Medal-winning wines with savings up to 21%
Samplers are pre-packaged and each contains wines in limited supply. All subject to prior sale.

No. 1
12 bottles

A Navarro cellar
A bottle each of Navarro's nine new releases topped off with three of Navarro's best whites: five robust reds, five crisp whites, a delightful summertime rosé and our modestly sweet Late Harvest Gewürztraminer.

2019 Gewürztraminer Cuvée Traditional
2019 Edelzwicker Anderson Valley
2019 Rosé Mendocino (Dry)
2016 Petite Sirah Mendocino
2017 Syrah Mendocino
2017 Grenache Mendocino
2017 Barbera Mendocino
2017 Mourvèdre Mendocino
2017 Gewürztraminer Late Harvest (375 ml)
2017 Chardonnay Première Reserve
2018 Pinot Gris Anderson Valley
2018 Pinot Noir Anderson Valley
2019 Rosé of Pinot Noir Anderson Valley
2018 Pinot Gris

#2A—12 bottle Sampler $205.00

Savings of $43.00

#2B—6 bottle Sampler $108.00

Savings of $16.00

#3A—12 bottle Sampler $239.00

Savings of $55.00

#3B—6 bottle Sampler $125.00

Savings of $22.00

No. 2
12, 6, 3 bottles

Red, white & rosé
Take your choice of one, two or four bottles each of Navarro's summertime quaffers; exceptional flavor at family prices.

2019 Gewürztraminer Cuvée Traditional
2019 Rosé of Pinot Noir Anderson Valley
2018 Pinot Noir Anderson Valley

No. 3
12, 6 bottles

Mid-season six
Choose either one or two bottles each of six dry Navarro wines: two crisp whites, a blushingly beautiful dry rosé and three Gold Medal-winning reds.

2019 Gewürztraminer Cuvée Traditional
2018 Pinot Gris
2019 Rosé of Pinot Noir Anderson Valley
2017 Barbera Mendocino
2017 Grenache Mendocino
2017 Syrah Mendocino

No. 4
12, 6 bottles

Anderson Valley whites
Choose either one or two bottles each of six Anderson Valley white wines that established Navarro's reputation.

2019 Gewürztraminer Cuvée Traditional
2019 Edelzwicker Anderson Valley
2017 Chardonnay Première Reserve
2019 Sauvignon Blanc Cuvée 128
2018 Pinot Gris Anderson Valley
2018 Muscat Blanc Estate Bottled (Dry)

No. 5
12 bottles

Ted's summertime sippers
Ted picked out a dozen wines that should slide down easily this summer: five dry whites, two rosés, four reds and a 375 ml bottle of Late Harvest Gewürztraminer to pair with melon.

2019 Gewürztraminer Cuvée Traditional
2018 Gewürztraminer Estate Bottled (Dry)
2018 Pinot Gris Anderson Valley
2019 Sauvignon Blanc Cuvée 128
2018 Chardonnay Mendocino
2019 Rosé Mendocino (Dry)
2019 Rosé of Pinot Noir Anderson Valley
2018 Pinot Noir Anderson Valley
2016 Pinot Noir Méthode à l'Ancienne
2017 Syrah Mendocino
2016 Petite Sirah Mendocino
2016 Pinot Noir Deep End

#6A—12 bottle Sampler $319.00

Savings of $83.00

#6B—6 bottle Sampler $165.00

Savings of $36.00

No. 6
12, 6 bottles

Full-bodied reds
Choose either one or two bottles each of six Gold Medal-winning Mendocino red wines, four of which were also rated as Best of Class.

2017 Barbera Mendocino
2017 Grenache Mendocino
2017 Mourvèdre Mendocino
2017 Syrah Mendocino
2016 Petite Sirah Mendocino

Until August 31 Gimmena and the rest of the sales team will be staffing the phones extra hours from 8 AM to 6 PM daily to help you take advantage of full-case specials, bargain sampler prices and One-Cent ground shipping. Our website is available 24–7 at www.NavarroWine.com.
In mid-September of 2019, we left a block of Gewürztraminer unharvested with the hope that the grapes would rot before they were lost to birds or bears, and that the rot would be clean botrytis. Fortunately, we were able to drip-irrigate the vines; this helped maintain a full canopy which protected grape clusters from the birds. Bears go wherever bears want to go but the big bruisers prefer our most remote vineyards. Finally by mid-October, the leaves yellowed and slowly began to fall. We decided to harvest on the 23rd and were thrilled that botrytis had infected many of the clusters. These were our last grapes harvested which is always a relief as well as a festive occasion. The grapes were destemmed and allowed to macerate, releasing flavors and volatile esters from the skins. After pressing, the juice was cool-fermented in stainless steel to retain all the fruity aromas and flavors. Gewürztraminer’s varietal perfume and exotic tropical fruit flavors are well suited for sweet wines and they shine in this bottling. However, this wine’s sweetness is counterbalanced with ample acidity so that the finish is clean and crisp. A perfect pairing with ripe melon. Gold Medal winner.
We’ve produced Petite Sirah wine since 1994 and are quite familiar with the highly pigmented and tannic grape skins of Petite Sirah grapes, as compared to Pinot Noir. In the 1880s, a French nurseryman—Durif—propagated the variety, a cross between Syrah and Peloursin Noir, both of which also have an abundance of skin pigments. Whereas the pale color of Navarro’s Pinot Noir rosé is achieved after two to three hours of skin-contact time, if Petite Sirah grapes macerated for just a few minutes, the resulting rosé would look more like a red wine. Al Tollini’s vines, lovingly referred to as “Pets,” are approaching 90 years old. It’s likely that more than 10% of the vines are actually Peloursin interplanted with the Pets, which may help explain the unique flavor profile. Unlike wines produced from modern clonal selections, Navarro’s Petite Sirah has some red fruit flavors and a dried herb quality which we think might be from the Peloursin. If you’ve never tasted Peloursin, Mike Dunn at RetroCellars.com harvests his Peloursin vines separately, and has a well-made 2015 bottling of the variety. We destemmed Al’s grapes into an open-top fermenter, and punched down the same as we do for Pinot Noir, to help tame Petite’s tannins. When the remaining sugars in the fermenting must reached zero Brix, we pressed the grapes and racked the juice to seasoned French oak barrels to finish primary and secondary fermentations and age for about two years. The finished wine contains 12% Zinfandel—Al also has some 90-year-old Zinfandel vines—which adds a wild blackberry note to Pet’s rich, plummy flavors. Gold Medal winner.
Home schooling

Syrah is a primary grape variety in the Rhône and has probably been grown there since Roman times. Research at the University of California at Davis and the University in Montpellier proved Syrah to be a genetic cross of two obscure varieties, Mondeuse Blanc and Dureza; all three of these varieties are indigenous to France. In the Rhône, Syrah was traditionally co-fermented with a modest proportion of Viognier (white) grapes to perfume and lighten the blend. Today most of the red winemaking is committed to producing massive wines frequently aged in new barrels and priced accordingly. Navarro’s style is definitely not massive, and although we’ve never tried co-fermenting Syrah with Viognier, our winemaking regimes result in a wine that is perhaps more like old-time Syrah: the grapes are destemmed and punched down by hand twice daily to keep the tannins rounded, then pressed when the alcohol reaches 12% to avoid harsh seed tannins. Richly textured with flavors of boysenberry and black cherry mingled with notes of pepper, coffee and mint. Gold Medal winner.

European union

There are three variations of Grenache: Noir, Blanc and Gris. Grenache Noir is the world’s most widely planted red wine grape variety; sometimes it is made into a standalone varietal wine but more frequently it forms the backbone of red blends, the most famous of which is Châteauneuf du Pape. Although the fame is from wines grown in the south of France, Spain is most likely this grape’s origin and plantings here of Garnacha are three times larger than Grenache plantings in France. It is the dominant red wine variety in Spain’s most successful appellation, Rioja. The Grenache grape is relatively low in skin pigments so it is frequently co-fermented with highly pigmented Syrah or Carignane. This bottling is 85% Grenache and 15% Syrah, both grown biodynamically at Dark Horse Vineyards. The grapes were destemmed and fermented in open-top tanks, then after pressing, the wine was aged 10 months in seasoned French oak barrels and bottled unfiltered. A medium-bodied beauty with a gentle, round palate; inklings of strawberry, cherry, white pepper and anise. Gold Medal winner. Best of Class.
2017 Barbera
Mendocino

Jim, Al Tollini and No Mo inspecting one of Al’s older blocks. The vines are planted on a six-by-six-foot grid without a trellis, allowing Al to disc in both directions in springtime. These vines are probably older than Al and were planted either by Al’s father or grandfather.

Harvested Oct. 1, 2017
Sugars at harvest 25.3° Brix
Bottled Aug. 15, 2018
Cases produced 306
Alcohol 13.4%
Titratable acidity 5.7 g/L
pH 3.65
Price (750 ml) $27.00

The major characteristics of Barbera grapes are their deep color, low tannins and high acidity. The vines of this grape variety are capable of producing large crops, which unfortunately increases the acidity and decreases flavors and tannins in the fruit. Al Tollini’s vines are teenagers now and Al knows how to keep their youthful exuberance in check in order to harvest a moderately sized crop and deliver fruit that can produce a flavorful, full-bodied wine. The 2017 grapes were destemmed into an open-top tank where they fermented for 10 days; then the must was pressed and the wine racked to barrels to undergo a secondary malolactic fermentation which reduced the acidity. The shortage of the variety’s grape tannins was counterbalanced by the additional framework of oak tannins from 10 months of barrel aging. New-age Barbera: bold fruit flavors with hints of blueberry, cherry, cedar and clove with a backbone of fresh and lively tartness. Gold Medal winner. Best of Class.

2017 Mourvèdre
Mendocino

Heath Dolan is the second generation managing the family farm. We appreciate that the vines are farmed biodynamically; perhaps we’re romantics, but wines from vines grown in healthy soils seem more complete.

Ready to shake hands

This 2017 bottling is Navarro’s fifth vintage of Mourvèdre produced from biodynamically grown grapes in a tiny block at Dark Horse Vineyards farmed by the Dolan family. We’ve known Paul Dolan ever since we moved to Philo in the 1970s; in those days Paul was the winemaker at Fetzer Vineyards and championed organic grape growing in Mendocino County. Mourvèdre is a late ripener and is the last grape harvested at Dark Horse. Mourvèdre comprises less than one percent of Dark Horse’s overall production, so we very much appreciate that in most years Paul makes the two-hour roundtrip drive to personally deliver his tiny Mourvèdre harvest to Navarro. It probably makes no economic sense for Paul to farm a third of an acre—never mind delivering the grapes personally—or for Navarro to produce three or four barrels of wine. In these times when we’re all concerned about a nasty virus, it’s nice to remember the friendships that are behind each wine and look forward to the day when we can all shake hands again. Supple tannins and earthy black fruits with undertones of black olive and tree bark intermingle in this perfumed wine. Gold Medal winner. Best of Class.

Harvested Oct. 9, 2017
Sugars at harvest 24.0° Brix
Bottled Aug. 15, 2018
Cases produced 104
Alcohol 13.8%
Titratable acidity 5.8 g/L
pH 3.72
Price (750 ml) $29.00

Heath Dolan is the second generation managing the family farm. We appreciate that the vines are farmed biodynamically; perhaps we’re romantics, but wines from vines grown in healthy soils seem more complete.