

SARAH'S VINEYARD WINE CLUB NEWSLETTER



Winter Recipe Pairing



We make Creamed Chestnut Soup a few times a year in Fall and Winter as comfort food; it's an easy soup and tastes good. It's also fun because chestnuts aren't as common in the US as they are in Europe, so it has a bit of mystery if you have guests over. Serve it with a nice fresh baguette to wipe your bowl clean. It goes great with Pinot Noir – this quarter's 2021 Rancho La Viña Pinot Noir would be perfect, or if you prefer a white

then the 2020 Madonna Blanc works well. We love hearing about what you're creating in your kitchens to pair with your favorite SV wines. Enjoy!

Member Appreciation Week



We love our fantastic wine club members. We are so thankful to you for continuing to support our winegrowing efforts. To show our appreciation, we have some great specials planned just for you during our next Member Appreciation Week. Be sure to check your emails in March for details about when we will be sharing these member exclusive offerings.

Sarah's Vineyard Events



After all the rain we've been having, we look forward to warmer days ahead for events at the winery. Be sure to check our events page on the website soon for what we have planned for 2023. We look forward to seeing you all here this year!

Latest Press



We are excited to announce that our Fall Wine Club release wines were all recognized by Wine Enthusiast: 90 Points for the 2019 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon, 91 Points for the 2020 Estate Chardonnay, and 92 Points for our 2020 Estate Pinot Noir! While the great reviews are appreciated, what truly matters is that our members love our wines. Thank you as always for your support! If you've already enjoyed your estate fall wines and would like

to purchase more, they are available at the SarahsVineyard.com online shop or by contacting us at the Tasting Room.

92 POINTS	2020 SARAH'S VINEYARD ESTATE PINOT NOIR
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"Jammy aromas of stewed berry, roasted fennel and myrtle show on the ripe nose of this bottling. The tense palate picks up a more mineral-forward angle, with crushed rock and turned soil playing alongside concentrated cherry, woodspice and sagebrush flavors."

– Matt Kettmann | *Wine Enthusiast*, February/March 2023

Friends,

My love affair with Rhône varietals, the many different grapes grown in the Rhône wine region of France, started back in 2002 with a humble half ton of Roussanne grapes we bought from our neighbor George Besson Jr. My old winemaker buddy Dave liked lesser-known grape varieties, and somehow scouted out this single row of Roussanne grapes hiding along one edge of the rambling Besson Vineyard a few hundred yards east of us. Well, it made a great wine, so the next year we planted some Roussanne and Viognier to see how well they would grow at our Estate.

As it turns out, our area is a really good climate for these varieties; just warm enough to ripen them up if you leave them hanging long enough on the vine. Sometimes we don't harvest Grenache until Halloween, which is inconveniently late in the harvest season, but it makes a really great wine. I remember one year we picked the Grenache the first week of November, with literal icicles hanging off the irrigation lines - true story!

By 2006, I was completely over the moon about all the different grapes of the Rhône. Grenache is well known, and Syrah; but most people had never heard of Mourvèdre, Picpoul, Cinsault or any of the other 30-odd varieties grown in that warm area near Provence. I was determined to make a red wine and a white wine, blended "in the style" of my favorite Rhône area, the Chateauneuf-du-Pape.

I visited the quaint and lovely little town of Chateauneuf-du-Pape in 2008, taking a break from cooking school for a weekend and meeting some old French friends there for some wine tasting. What a glorious little town, with a thousand years of history and lots of good restaurants. And powerful, earthy wines.

As time went on, my naturally curious mind kept demanding more and more of these funny varieties be planted. Now we have quite a long list of Rhône grapes that we grow and make wine with: Viognier, Roussanne, Grenache Blanc, Picpoul Blanc, Clairette Blanche, Grenache Noir, Mourvèdre, Syrah, and Counoise - 9 in all, and that's enough for me. From this long list we make four wines every year; a Viognier, a Syrah, our white blend Madonna Blanc, and our red blend Madonna Rouge. This shipment has our latest vintage of the Madonna blends, and we're confident you'll like them.

We are also really excited to share our first Pinot Noir from a new vineyard source in Santa Rita Hills. Rancho La Viña is a small vineyard that an old buddy now manages. He reached out a couple years ago and invited us to work with them. They give us a lot of love, and they are a small grower that really takes pride in their work. Best of all, the grapes are fantastic, and our 2021 and 2022 vintages are truly excellent wines. Cheers!



Tim Slater
Winemaker / Proprietor

MEMBERS' WINTER RELEASES



2020 Madame Blanc, Estate

The S.V. Madame Blanc is our take on the traditional white wines of the southern Rhône Valley. It is named for local Mount Madonna and is a marriage of California soils and climate to a classically styled blend of estate-grown, Rhône varieties. In the vineyard, we worked hard to limit vigor to help the vines focus on fruit production. With no threat of harvest time precipitation, we safely let the fruit hang well into the fall for full phenolic ripeness. We hand-harvested and whole cluster pressed the fruit from the home ranch on multiple pick dates in late September and early October. The wine was fermented in stainless steel and transferred to neutral oak barrels for maturation after dryness for seven months, with stirring of the lees every two weeks. To create our estate Madame Blanc, we actually make 4 individual wines, then blend them carefully to make the best wine we can. In the 2020 vintage, the final cépage was 53% Roussanne, 21% Grenache Blanc, 21% Clairette Blanche, and 5% Picpoul Blanc. The '20 Madame Blanc displays bright citrus aromas and flavors of Meyer lemon and lime, as well as pastry - think key lime pie. The wine is bright with balanced acidity and a creaminess on the palate. The 2020 Estate Madame Blanc would pair well with a roasted beet salad with goat cheese or a citrusy chicken piccata.

Only 193 cases were produced | Tasting Room List Price \$32



2021 Pinot Noir, Rancho La Viña, Sta. Rita Hills

This is the fourth release for Sarah's Vineyard with fruit sourced from the Santa Rita Hills, and our first release from the Rancho La Viña vineyard. Located in Santa Barbara County, the Sta. Rita Hills is part of the larger Santa Ynez Valley AVA. The hills of the district run east to west, which allows cool ocean breezes from the nearby Pacific Ocean to enter the valley, providing fairly cool microclimates - perfect for growing top-flight Pinot Noir. Dense morning fog gives way to sunny afternoons, and loamy soils make Rancho La Viña and incredible cool climate growing site. In addition to 34.5 acres of top-quality Pinot Noir wine grapes, a variety of other crops are also grown on the ranch, which includes 126 acres of the best walnuts in California. We are excited to have been invited to work with this small, quality grower that really takes pride in their work - and feel that this vintage is a truly excellent wine. The wine spent eleven months aging in French oak barrels, one third being new wood, which added polish and length. The '21 Sarah's Vineyard Rancho La Viña Pinot Noir has a vast bright red fruit presence of cherry, raspberry, and crushed pomegranate. Along with the freshly picked red fruit aromas and flavors are notes of chocolate and a hint of violets. On the palate, all these elements are complemented by baking spice and a hint of vanilla with smooth, silky tannins. This Pinot Noir pairs wonderfully with the enclosed recipe from Tim for Creamed Chestnut Soup.

Only 236 cases were produced | Tasting Room List Price \$52



2019 Madame, Estate

The Sarah's Vineyard 2019 Estate Madame reflects its southern Rhône heritage through a blend of the region's traditional red varieties: 64% Grenache, 20% Mourvèdre, 12% Syrah, and 4% Counoise. Yields at harvest in our Rhône blocks were about average. We hand harvested the fruit at the end of September and the beginning of October. After destemming the whole berries, we fermented at low temperatures in small lot vats. Hand punch downs were used prior to pressing to French oak barrels for eighteen months aging in primarily neutral cooperage to preserve the exceptional, complex fruit character of the blend. The '19 Madame displays a rich dark fruit presence full of dark cherry, blackberry, blueberry and raspberry along with savory notes of pepper, anise, clove and cocoa powder. The estate Madame will complement a rib eye steak with herb butter or grilled portobello mushroom perfectly.

Only 221 cases were produced | Tasting Room List Price \$38



WINE CLUB SHIPMENT CONTENTS



Sarah's Wine Club

- 2020 Madame Blanc, Estate
- 2021 Pinot Noir, Rancho La Viña, Sta. Rita Hills
- 2019 Madame, Estate

All-Red Wine Club

- 2021 Pinot Noir, Rancho La Viña, Sta. Rita Hills
- 2019 Madame, Estate

All-White Wine Club

- 2020 Madame Blanc, Estate
- 2019 Chardonnay, Tondré Grapefield, Santa Lucia Highlands

Pinot Noir Only Wine Club

- 2021 Pinot Noir, Rancho La Viña, Sta. Rita Hills