

LC EXPERIENCE WINTER 2 0 1 0 ORDER FORM

Included in your February shipment is one bottle of 2008 Sticks and Stones and two bottles of 2008 Problem Child. These wines are bold, bright with fruit, yet show a complexity of tannins, earth, and barrel driven extraction. As always, the 2008 Sticks and Stones is Grenache based, 57%, with a splash of Mourvedre, 29%, and Syrah, 14%. When I am preparing to blend Sticks, I look for solid and aromatically concentrated barrels of Grenache that make your mouth water. On their own, these barrels are delicious but often lack finish and elegance. The introduction of specific Mourvedre barrels adds a subtle, earthy quality along with wonderful finishing tannins. A splash of Syrah softens any acidic feeling and brings about a lush palate. Upon tasting, the 2008 Sticks and Stones starts off with rich aromatics of boysenberry and raspberry that lead to a mouthful of vine fruits with hints of roasted meat and tar. Ready to drink now, but can be held for three to five years.



The 2008 Problem Child weighs in at 70% Zinfandel, 17% Syrah, and 13% Mourvedre. At this point in my life as a winemaker, I have learned to think of producing Zinfandel as a game. A game where YOU NEVER KNOW THE OUTCOME! All wines are made in the vineyard and Zinfandel is no exception. However, working with dry-farmed vineyards (no irrigation) creates so many challenges that I am always making small adjustments to ensure a spectacular crop.

First, there is Zinfandel's infamously long flowering window to consider, a process lasting up to four weeks, which often results in a very unevenly ripening crop. In the quest to narrow the window of ripeness, we make two to four passes through the vineyard to drop inconsistent clusters. When we reach harvest, we have often dropped anywhere between 30 and 60 percent of the original crop. This is only the start; the clusters then begin to desiccate in the Summer and Fall heat and these raisins make it very difficult to know exactly how sweet the clusters are. Sometimes a vineyard of Zinfandel will be harvested at 23% sugar but three days later will climb to 28%. We call this "soak up" and is yet another inconsistency to account for.

Finally, after sorting and destemming the fruit into small fermenters, the game continues with the hopeful completion of fermentation. Herein lies the final problem: yeast can only ferment up to about 17% alcohol, and clusters at 28% sugar place me very close to that line. This is why I like to co-ferment Syrah and Mourvedre with the Zinfandel, they lessen the alcohol potential and bring a balance and flavor profile I look for. Enjoy the Problem Child now and through the next three to five years.

Eat, drink and enjoy,
~Matt



"Men are like a fine wine. They all start out like grapes, and it's our job to stomp on them and keep them in the dark until they mature into something you'd like to have dinner with." ~Anonymous



UPCOMING IN 2010

Zinfandel Festival Weekend - March 19-21

Join the Linne Calodo crew in celebrating the release of our 2008 Zinfandel blends! Revel in the sounds of live, acoustic guitar while visiting our tasting room tucked away in the oak trees. Taste the Outsider, lovely Cherry Red and our infamous Problem Child. Limited releases of library wines will be made available but won't last long!

Harvest Festival Weekend - October 15-17

Release of Two New LC Blends Those of you that have had the chance to visit our tasting room over the past year may have had the opportunity to taste a 'shiner' bottle of one of Matt's new blends; Screwball and Overthinker (LC's very first 100% estate blend!). Both of these Rhone blends are from the fabulous 2007 vintage and have been safely bottle-aging for the last nine months. At about 150 cases each these wines will sell fast, keep an eye out for their release this Spring.



On December 11, 2009 we lost a very dear friend. Bear, our winery and family dog, was 14 years, 8 months old and was the best winery dog and friend to ever live. In 1995 I started an apprenticeship at Justin Winery and two weeks later Bear became my sidekick as a loving puppy. Bear went everywhere with me; he rode on forklifts, trotted beside me in vineyards, worked in cellars and enjoyed the company of guests (especially children) in the tasting room. He soon became known as the keeper of the wine bung, and any of you lucky enough to meet this fantastic dog know rarely could you find him without a bung in his mouth. Bear saw Maureen and I get married, have three children, build buildings, and plant vineyards. He will be deeply missed.
May He Rest In Peace.



RECIPE CORNER

We had these delicious short ribs for our Christmas Dinner. They will pair beautifully with Problem Child.
~ Maureen

Braised Short Ribs with Guava Barbecue Sauce

From *Seriously Simple Holidays*, by Diane Rossen Worthington

5 pounds lean short ribs of beef, preferably boneless; cut into 3- to 4-inch pieces; salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

3 tablespoons canola oil

2 onions, sliced thickly into rings

4 carrots, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch slices

4 garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 cup favorite barbecue sauce

1 1/2 cups guava nectar

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley for garnish

1. Preheat the oven to 450°F. Place the ribs in a large roasting pan and season them evenly on both sides with salt and pepper. Roast the ribs for 25 minutes. Turn them and roast for another 25 minutes, or until the ribs are very brown. Remove the ribs from the pan, blot with paper towels, and set aside. Reduce the oven temperature to 325°F.

2. Meanwhile, in a large nonstick Dutch oven or heavy flameproof casserole, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Cook the onions, stirring to prevent them from burning, for 10 to 12 minutes or until brown and slightly caramelized. Add the carrots and sauté for 3 minutes, or until slightly softened. Add the garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Add the barbecue sauce and nectar, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat.

3. Place the ribs in the pot and spoon some of the vegetables over the ribs. Cover the pot and reduce the heat until the liquid is at a simmer. Transfer to the oven and braise for 2 1/2 hours or until the meat is tender. Bring to room temperature and then cover and refrigerate overnight.

4. Remove the top layer of fat from the sauce and any accumulated fat from the ribs. Gently reheat the ribs over medium heat and bring to a boil. Braise for about 10 minutes, or until the ribs are heated through and the sauce is simmering. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Place in a large serving bowl and garnish with the parsley. Serve immediately.

RECIPE CORNER

In a pinch I substituted Oaxaca cheese for Gruyere in a French Onion Soup recipe I had saved from Gourmet Magazine and stumbled upon the best French Onion Soup I have ever tried. The broth is intensely flavored with caramelized onions, thyme and bay leaves and the Oaxaca cheese is a perfect, albeit unexpected, cheese to melt over the top. ~ Whitney

Franco-Mexican Onion Soup

Adapted from *Gourmet Magazine*

2 pounds sweet onions (like Vidalias) halved lengthwise, then thinly sliced lengthwise

3 sprigs fresh thyme

2 Turkish bay leaves or 1 Californian bay leaf

3/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 cup unsalted butter

2 teaspoons all-purpose flour

3/4 cup dry white wine

4 cups reduced-sodium beef broth

1 1/2 cup water

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

6 one-inch thick diagonal slices of baguette

1/2 pound Oaxaca Cheese

1/4 cup shredded Parmigiano Reggiano

6 (8 to 10 oz) stoneware soup bowls

Cheese plane

1. Before you start, open a bottle of 2008 Sticks and Stones and place in a decanter.

2. Melt butter in a 4 to 5 quart heavy pot. Over medium-low heat, sauté onions, thyme, bay leaves, and salt, stirring frequently, until onions are very soft and deep golden brown - about 45 minutes. Whisk in flour and cook for about 1 minute. Add wine and continue whisking for about 2 minutes. Finally, stir in broth, water and pepper. Simmer, uncovered, for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

3. Meanwhile, put oven rack in middle position and preheat to 350°F. Once preheated, arrange bread in a single layer on a large baking sheet and toast, turning over once, until completely dry, about 15 minutes. Remove croûte from oven and preheat broiler.

4. Put soup bowls in a shallow baking pan. Discard bay leaves and thyme sprigs and divide the soup among bowls; float a croûte in each. Slice enough Oaxaca cheese (about 6 ounces total) with the cheese plane to cover the tops of the bowls. Allow the ends of cheese to hang over the rims of the bowls, then sprinkle with Parmigiano Reggiano.

5. Place the bowls in a broiler 4 to 5 inches from heat and cook until cheese is melted, golden and bubbly; this should only take about 1 to 2 minutes. Eat!