

August Briggs Winery
333 Silverado Trail
Calistoga, CA 94515



Fall / Winter 2009 Holiday Newsletter

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August Briggs

15 Years Later - An August Briggs History

It was the mid 90's and the 49ers had won the Super Bowl (the last bit of decent football for us locals), the internet portal Yahoo! was incorporated and Sony released the legendary Playstation game system. It may come as a surprise, but also in that year, 1995, there was a hard-working winemaker beginning to step out on his own. August 'Joe' Briggs had dreamed of making his own wine for years while working as a winemaker and consultant for other wineries, ranging from mom and pop operations to one of the largest in the industry, producing millions of cases a year. He began small that autumn, making 3 wines, while leasing space wherever he could find it. It is hard to believe, now 15 years later, we make 16 wines at our own winery with fruit from 18 spectacular vineyards.

As the holiday season is now upon us, we like to reflect back on these 15 great years. We fondly remember all the hard work and highs and lows that it took to get to where we are now and want you to savor with us the tastes and delights of these superb wines. We always hear about saving ABW wines for that 'special' occasion or serving an August Briggs wine with someone who will 'appreciate it' rather than gulp it down. Well folks...now is that time. We hope you, like us, will have the time to relax, reflect upon the meaning of the holidays and share with us in spirit and in drink our true love...making and enjoying our wine.

Best Wishes from Joe, Sally & the rest of the Briggs Family & Staff

About The Vintage

The excellent 2007 growing season produced rich and intense wines with dense textures and more extract than normal. Due to the moderate temperatures during the fall, and lack of heat spikes, we had time to wait for maturity on all of our varietals. There was little sunburn, dehydration or collapsing of the fruit, which made the grapes exceptional. Upon tasting, the characteristics that come to mind are big, powerful and packed with fruit and body. Most of these are bigger wines when compared to earlier vintages and will age well. The tannins in all the reds are a bit plusher and sweeter than previous years. On a final note, one 2008 vintage release, the Russian River Chardonnay, is a miniscule production which will be typical for all of the future '08 releases. The damaging spring frosts have cut our production of some wines by 75%. Take note...do not wait on the 2008 wines...they are delicious yet extremely limited and they will sell out fast!

Due to the small production levels of all of the new wines we have limited the purchase amounts so that it is equitable for all customers. Take note of these in the wine listing section. If you would like more than allocated, please give us a phone call or email us your wish. They are sold on a first come, first served basis. Please contact Matthew or any staff member at (707) 942-4912 or via email at matt@augustbriggswines.com. Now on to the wines!

2008 Russian River Chardonnay

The 2008 August Briggs Russian River Chardonnay is our thirteenth release of this very cool climate chardonnay. The Lazy W Ranch is a family-owned vineyard located on Westside Road, west of the city of Healdsburg, sitting just off the Russian River and planted on rocky, former river bottom. A light crop, coupled with a long growing season, allowed these 30-year-old vines to produce another classic Russian River Chardonnay.

The wine is golden in color, displaying aromas of ripe pear, caramel, citrus, butter, and toasty vanilla oak, with flavors of ripe melon, apple, apricot, and sweet cream. This wine is well-balanced with a firm mineral quality, allowing for future bottle aging. The grapes for this wine were harvested at 24.0 brix, whole-cluster pressed, cold settled, inoculated with yeast and racked to barrels for fermentation. Barrels used were 100% French with 35% being new Damsy (M+Allier) and 65% being a mix of 2-year-old barrels from the previous vintage. After completion of fermentation, the wine was inoculated with a malo-lactic culture, stirred weekly and sur-leeed aged 10 months. **203 cases produced.** (4 bottle limit)

2007 'Page-Nord Vineyard' Napa Valley Syrah

The 2007 August Briggs Napa Valley Syrah is our sixth vintage produced from the world class Page-Nord Vineyard (and only the second time we have vineyard designated the wine). This beautiful vineyard site is located just south of the town of Yountville in the middle of the Napa Valley. With cool foggy mornings and warm afternoons, the vineyard produces grapes of intense color with distinctive favors. Dark ruby in color, this syrah is loaded with ripe fruit favors.

Displaying aromas of blackberry, cocoa, and toasty oak, this wine shows flavors of raspberry, black cherry, dark chocolate and spice, which combine with a balanced, full-bodied finish. Being smooth and silky in the mouth, it still has a structure that will age for years to come. A vintage to remember! Grapes were picked at 25.5 brix with a total acid of 0.55 g/100ml & a pH of 3.70, destemmed into small, open-topped fermenters and punched down twice daily by hand. After completion of fermentation the wine was drained, pressed, and inoculated with a malo-lactic culture. Completion of malo-lactic fermentation proceeded while aging in 40% new Demptos French oak and 60% two & three year old barrels. Barrel aging lasted 15 months prior to bottling. The wine was bottled without filtration. **Only 148 cases produced.** (2 bottle limit)

2007 Napa Valley Petite Sirah

The 2007 August Briggs Napa Valley Petite Sirah is our fifth vintage from the Frediani family's vineyard, located right next to the winery here in Calistoga. Here in the northern part of Napa Valley, this young vineyard gains greater flavor complexity each year; at present, big, exuberant, youthful fruit flavors dominate the wines.

This wine is inky and opaque purple with aromas of blueberry pie, mocha, and toasty oak. The intense blueberry flavors come in multiple waves on the palate; typical Petite Sirah tannins are present, but evenly distributed throughout the tasting experience. This wine will develop nicely over the next few years, gaining complexity as it ages. The grapes for this wine were picked at 26.5 brix with a total acid of 0.50 g/100ml and a pH of 3.70. The fruit was then destemmed into a small open-topped fermenter and punched down daily by hand. The wine was aged for 16 months in 25% new Demptos American oak barrels and 75% two and three year old American barrels. The wine was bottled without fining or filtration. **296 cases produced.** (6 bottle limit)

2007 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

"I believe in working only with mountain Cabernet; quality vineyards at higher elevation give Cabernet unparalleled structure and intensity", says Joe. Our 2007 August Briggs Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of two very special mountain vineyards on opposite sides of the valley: the first is the famed Stagecoach vineyard on the rocky, volcanic soils of Atlas Peak; and the second is the Corbett vineyard located on a rocky hillside just north of the town of St. Helena in the Spring Mountain appellation. Both of these vineyards are located approximately 1,000 feet above the Napa Valley floor.

This full-bodied wine is big and smooth with a pleasing structure. It has a dense red color with aromas of black cherry, cocoa, earth (dust) and smoky oak. The wine is thick and juicy on the palate with intense flavors of ripe berries, chocolate, and cassis. The finish is long and firm. With all its upfront fruit, this is a wine that can be enjoyed now. However, if cellared, it will continue to improve for over 10 years. This Cab pairs well with savory dishes, like braised lamb. After a two day cold soak, a combination of punchdowns and pumpovers were employed during fermentation to gain maximum extraction from the skins without the harsh tannins. The wine was barrel aged for 20 months: 25% new & 25% 2-3 year old American and 50% 2-3 year old French. **226 cases** (3 bottle limit)

2007 'Monte Rosso Vineyard' Sonoma Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

The Monte Rosso vineyard is so named for its rich, red volcanic soils; it was recognized as a great vineyard site and first planted in the 1880's. Nestled in the majestic Mayacamas Mountain range, 1,000 feet above the Sonoma Valley floor, this steep and rugged mountain vineyard has a desirable western exposure that produces intense, flavorful wines.

The 2007 August Briggs "Monte Rosso Vineyard" Cabernet Sauvignon has a dark ruby color with complex aromas of blackberry, black cherry, and smoky oak. On the palate, fruit flavors of mixed dark berries, plum, chocolate, and vanilla integrate nicely. Balanced, well-integrated tannins ensure that this wine will age for years to come. Enjoy this vintage to the fullest; few are better than the 2007. This wine is big and drinkable now, but will mellow and soften with time. Drink thru 2015. With all our Cabernets, before destemming and crushing, the grapes were

hand sorted to allow only pristine fruit to pass through. After a two-day cold soak, the must was inoculated with yeast and allowed to warm. A combination of punchdowns and pumpovers were employed to gently attain the maximum extraction from the skins. At dryness the must was gently pressed, the wine inoculated with malolactic culture and put to barrel. The wine was barrel aged for 20 months (25% new American oak, 50% 2-3 year old French Oak, 25% 2-3 year-old American Oak) prior to bottling in April 2009. **294 cases.** (6 bottle limit)

2007 'Two Moon Vineyard' Dry Creek Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

Dry Creek Valley might seem to be an odd place to produce mountain Cabernet. Stan Simpson's remote 'Two Moon Vineyard,' while within the Dry Creek appellation, is located on a steep slope in the mountains far above and miles west of the valley floor. This vineyard is especially appealing because of its razor thin soils and high altitude. These factors lead to small crop levels of high intensity, small-berried fruit with substantial tannins.

Typical of this vineyard, the 2007 August Briggs 'Two Moon Vineyard' Cabernet Sauvignon is a big, powerful wine. Upfront there are dense fruit flavors of blackberry and plum, leading to a juicy, earthy, ground cocoa finish. Drink now for a BIG cab experience, but patience will show how it softens and ages for the long haul. Best between 2010 thru 2018. After harvest, a two-day cold soak helped to gain optimum flavor and color extraction; gentle cap punchdowns and pumpovers during fermentation completed maximum extraction and imparted the pure Cabernet "essence" these grapes always have. When the wine achieved dryness, the must was gently pressed and put to barrel to go through malolactic fermentation. The wine was barrel aged for 20 months (25% new American Oak, 50% 2-3 year old French Oak, 25% 2-3 year-old American Oak) prior to bottling. **244 cases.** (6 bottle limit)

Holiday Cabernet Sauvignon Gift Packs and Gift Ideas

We think there is no better way to spread the holiday cheer than with a memorable August Briggs wine present. This year we have put together a selection of our Cabernets as gift packs to make holiday shopping a bit easier on your time and your pocketbook. These are a great gift idea for your family, friends, and especially for that certain someone who has everything! This is a great corporate gift idea for your customers and co-workers. Better yet, why not even treat yourself...after this year you probably deserve something special.

'Two Moon Vineyard' Vertical Gift - one each of the '04, '05, '06 vintages with a gift pack box - \$195.00

We opened up the cellar for this mini-vertical. Perfect now! Comes with a wooden box (shipped separately). Only 1 per customer!

2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Gift Pack- one each of Napa Valley, 'Monte Rosso, and 'Two Moon' - \$129.00

A great gift idea especially for that special Cabernet lover! You save over 20% off retail price with this package.

If you prefer something else, we can arrange a special personalized wine gift and holiday card. This is so easy for you and memorable for them. We can specialize in assembling any gift whether they like a Zin or a Syrah. Just call or email with your wishes and we will take care of the rest. Please call for holiday shipping dates & delivery.

Holiday Season Events

August Briggs Winemaker Dinner at Colterra Restaurant, Niwot, CO December 10, 2009 6:30 PM

Colorado and greater Denver/Boulder residents please come join our own August 'Joe' Briggs for a spectacular pre-holiday wining and dining feast. Joe will be pouring four of our latest releases as he pairs it with Colterra's award winning chef/owner Bradford Heap's, four-course menu. Chef Heap has designed a menu that highlights his French and Italian training while matching the ripe California style of August Briggs wines. The dinner begins at 6:30 on Thursday, December 10, 2009. The dinner is \$65.00 per person and excludes tax / gratuity. For more information or reservations please call Colterra directly at (303) 652-0777 or go to www.Colterra.com.

Holiday Calistoga Wellness Package

August Briggs has partnered with a group of Calistoga hotels and restaurants to offer an all-inclusive package for a wonderful retreat to Calistoga. Starting at \$269, the package includes a 2-day, 1-night stay double occupancy, breakfast and dinner for 2, a spa treatment for 2, and a VIP tour/tasting at August Briggs and one other Calistoga winery. For more info go to www.calistogavisitors.com