



  
**SPRING MOUNTAIN**  
 VINEYARD  
 ST. HELENA *Napa Valley* CALIFORNIA



NEWSLETTER

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**At the Vineyard**

Do you ever dream about owning your own vineyard and winery? To raise money for 2006 Auction Napa Valley, we offered an "Ultimate Vintner Weekend" that included a never-before-offered stay at Villa Miravalle, a 10 year Cabernet Sauvignon magnum vertical, royal treatment from the top of the mountain to the bottom, full access to our extensive vineyards and wines and several congenial wine paired meals.



BJ Pilotte blends her wine

Successful bidders BJ and Frank Pilotte of Palm Beach, Florida arrived in late November with friends, Ron and Cheryl Warner, who jumped in to help with the complex task of making a personal blend from the many choice barrels of 2005 Bordeaux varietals in the Spring Mountain cave. With the winemaking team of Jac Cole

and Leigh Meyering and vineyard manager Ron Rosenbrand assisting, they tasted, blended, discussed, voted and even re-blended their way to the perfect Pilotte Blend! After a few more months of polishing in the barrel, we will bottle and hand-label their blend.

Balzer Visits Spring Mountain Vineyard: Celebrated wine writer and educator, Robert Lawrence Balzer returned to the winery to experience crush, Spring Mountain style, in October. Often called the "dean of American wine writers," Robert was instrumental in the success of many California wineries. He has authored 11 books on wine, and has been teaching wine classes in Southern California for decades. On this trip, he brought his flock of devoted, wine loving students with him. Robert held court in the Villa Miravalle during a tasting of Spring Mountain's wines. His voice is still strong and opinionated at age 94.



Robert Lawrence Balzer, a testament to wine and longevity!

**Spring Mountain Olive Oil Available!**

We have a new vintage of estate grown virgin olive oil pressed and settling in the cellar. It is a lovely pale green-gold color that tastes rich and slightly peppery. Once it settles, it will be hand bottled and labeled with founder Tiburcio Parrott's original 1885 artwork. Our crew picked 1.2 tons of olives in early December that yielded a mere 48 gallons of oil. Since olive trees are an alternate bearing crop, 2006 was a light crop compared to last year. The new oil is destined for the winery kitchen and for an exclusive group of wine club members who will receive a complimentary bottle in March.

We have a limited quantity of delicious, hand bottled olive oil for sale. Bottles are 375 ml and sell for \$20 each.

## Harvest Review

By Ron Rosenbrand

Farmers like to look at harvest as the culmination of an entire growing season, or vintage, as we say in the business. The 2006 vintage began with the 2<sup>nd</sup> wettest rainfall year in St. Helena's recorded history! Our vineyards received a whopping 70 inches of rainfall for the 2005-2006 year. While this is quite a lot of rain, it is always welcome because it recharges our ground water supply.

Budbreak occurred on the late side, near the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of April. Warm springtime temperatures allowed rapid shoot growth and helped the vines catch up. Bloom and veraison were also on the late side and confirmed that harvest would be late as well. Summer temperatures mimicked 2005 with an average June and a blistering hot July where we suffered some losses due to sunburn, especially in the Cabernet. Thirteen days in July were near or above 100 degrees, with one back to back weekend of 113 and 110 degrees. August and September were extremely pleasant with below normal temperatures. Normal heat in October was just what we needed to finally ripen the crop. Rain caused some minor problems in early October and again in early November, with small amounts of Botrytis growth. The sorting table worked great to help us discard all affected clusters.

Harvest 2006 began on September 20<sup>th</sup> with Sauvignon Blanc as usual. A healthy increase in yield was due to vineyard maturation, a new trellis system and a cyclical up year for the Sauvignon Blanc. Pinot Noir was the next to be harvested and it jumped a whopping 370% over last year. It had been producing at 1 ton per acre for the last 4 years due to a severe lack of water. We remedied this beginning in 2004 by installing water storage tanks and a pumping system to get the water up to the Pinot Noir at 1550 feet of elevation.

In the 2005 growing season, the Pinot Noir grew robust and sized up nicely, but still yielded only a small crop because clusters for the current season are formed in July of the prior year. In 2006, with ample water for irrigation and excellent pruning, the vines took off. Cluster counts were up, berry size was up and the vineyard yielded 3.79 tons per acre. We will definitely produce more Pinot Noir than in the past.

Merlot and Petit Verdot tonnage was the same as 2005 – a very large crop year. Cabernet Sauvignon was down 17%, Cabernet Franc was down 25% and Syrah was down 40% from 2005. As you may remember, the 2005 vintage was

very fruitful and produced an abundance of wine in Napa Valley. The cyclical pattern of up and down years sometimes continues for 2 years in a row for an upswing or drop. The 2006 harvest ended on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

Post-harvest notes from winemaker Jac Cole:

Now that our 2006 vintage wines are in the barrel, topped up and bunged, we can start to talk about the particular beauty these wines have to offer. 2006 was a challenge only from the standpoint that we needed an abundance of patience to wait for the flavors and tannin balances to develop while trying not to be rushed by the dates on the calendar or the rain clouds in the sky. We were rewarded with grapes of great concentration and evolved, supple tannins. It's still a bit early to start ballyhooing the vintage, but I am comfortable saying that 2006 will stand well in the company of the last three or four vintages which have produced some of our most outstanding wines.

## At the Table

### Signature Chicken

Here is a delicious and versatile recipe that you can prepare quickly for your family or for a large party. Chicken is low fat and a healthful choice, but it can be bland if not richly seasoned. At Spring Mountain Vineyard, we boost flavor with plenty of herbs, chicken stock and other aromatics. Parchment paper holds in the moisture during baking.

Serves 4

Preparation and cooking time: about 1 hour

Ingredients:

2 Tbsp olive oil  
2 whole boneless chicken breasts, split with skin on (four pieces)  
1 onion, coarsely chopped  
4 cloves garlic crushed  
2 medium tomatoes, chopped  
1-2 cups low sodium chicken broth  
1 Tbsp dried oregano  
salt and pepper to taste  
parchment or wax paper

Instructions:

Heat an ovenproof sauté pan over high heat. Add olive oil, then chicken breasts skin side down. While browning on skin side, season raw side with salt, pepper, a crushed garlic clove and generously cover with oregano. You really can't use too much oregano. When thoroughly browned, carefully turn breasts without disturbing skin. Add chopped onion and tomatoes around breasts and briefly shake veggies in the oil to coat. Add enough stock to come halfway up chicken. Bring just to a boil, then

remove from burner. Place parchment over chicken and tuck the edges into pan. Bake in hot 375 degree oven for 35 to 40 minutes so the pan juices thicken and reduce to sauce consistency. Add more broth if pan gets too dry. Remove from oven and carefully remove paper.

Serve directly from the pan on a buffet or sliced diagonally, sauced and arranged with pan veggies.

Recipe can be modified to suit whatever you have on hand. Substitute thyme for the oregano. Substitute roasted red peppers for the tomatoes. Substitute chicken thighs for breasts. For reduced fat, use skinless cuts. Just follow the basic technique and put your own signature on it!

"Signature Chicken" is complimented by our newly released 2003 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon.



## New Releases

### 2003 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon



As a pure expression of mountain grapes the 2003 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon is redolent with notes of blackberry, cherry, dark chocolate, and red currants laced with exotic spices and hints of cigar box. The palate greets you with a lush rendering of the same ripe red fruit and dark cocoa. Balanced with a long, firm finish, this Cabernet develops multiple layers on the palate while fully coating the mouth.

Full bodied and effusively flavorful this Cabernet Sauvignon is both supple and elegant, promising youthful delight and maturing beauty. Decant to release the abundant flavors and aromas of this youthful and vibrant cabernet. \$50

### 2004 Syrah



With warm, south-eastern facing slopes, this small five acre vineyard block of Syrah has once again captured the unique Spring Mountain terroir. Spices, black licorice and pepper are braided with floral overtones of white flowers and lush roses. The palate is complex with flavors of roasted meats, blackberry jam, layers of chocolate and toast. Its full-bodied structure is soft and

supple, making this chewy Syrah a delight to drink now or to cellar for the next five to eight years. The 2004 Syrah will be released on February 1, 2007. \$50

A discount of 10% applies to orders of 6 or more bottles. Call 1-877-769-4637 (1-800-SMWINES), email [info@springmtn.com](mailto:info@springmtn.com), or visit our web site to place an order. A 20% discount is extended to Wine Club Members.

## One Great Idea Inspires Another... Win a magnum of Elivette!

OTBN otherwise known as Open That Bottle Night is an important annual event for wine lovers worldwide. Dorothy Gaiter and John Brecher, who write about wine for the Wall Street Journal started this annual GREAT reason to open a sacred bottle of wine. Too often, people wait to open a special bottle only to discover that either the wine is past its peak, or the special occasion they saved it for never materialized. Remember poor Miles and his 1961 Cheval Blanc in Sideways?

In the spirit of OTBN, we created a CONTEST for you! Here is how it works:

In 200 words or less, describe your best Spring Mountain Vineyard wine experience. It can take place on this year's OTBN on February 24<sup>th</sup> or it can describe an 'Ah Ha' moment when a SMV wine made a lasting impression on you. It can be sentimental, fun, funny or even embarrassing.

So...sit down with a glass of SMV Cabernet Sauvignon and share your wine memories! The winner will receive a magnum of 2002 Elivette and their experience will be published in the April newsletter. (Don't worry, we can and will change names to protect the innocent if requested!) The additional top 5 experiences will be posted on our web site and each author will receive a bottle of 2002 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon.

Send your story to Valli Ferrell before March 10, 2007  
Email: [valli@springmtn.com](mailto:valli@springmtn.com)  
Mail: Spring Mountain Vineyard  
2805 Spring Mountain Rd, St. Helena, CA 94574

## People Are Talking

Robb Report Magazine again placed Elivette among its "finest wines" for holiday giving. "Patience has its rewards. Spring Mountain Vineyard reminds us of this simple axiom with each release of Elivette, a reserve-level Meritage blend of consistently outstanding quality."

More praise comes to the 2002 Elivette from the Wine Enthusiast, who awarded the wine with 92 Points! "A very fine Cabernet Sauvignon-based wine... overall impression is of high quality."

Gerald Asher at Gourmet magazine touted the 2002 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon as the wine to pair with your Christmas dinner... "smoother than most others and generally better tempered."

Santé magazine highlighted Spring Mountain's hands-on harvest experience, "Touch the Terroir" where sommeliers from around the US got down and dirty in the vineyard during crush 2006.

## SMV Events

- January 20: "**Artisan Food & Art Festival**," Copia, Napa, CA, [www.copia.org](http://www.copia.org)
- January 27: "**Just Imagine Auction**," St. Helena, CA
- January 28: "**d' Vine Affair**," Union League Club, Chicago, IL
- February 24: "**Open That Bottle Night!**" Chez vous (your house), Planet Earth
- March 10: Deadline to enter your best SMV story!
- March 20: "**Family Winemakers Tasting**," Pasadena, CA, [www.familywinemakers.org](http://www.familywinemakers.org)
- April 14: "**UNLVino**," Paris Las Vegas Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV
- April 27-28: "**I' Ete du Vin 2007**," Nashville, TN, [info@nashvillewineauction.com](mailto:info@nashvillewineauction.com).
- May 5: "**Guardsmen Wine Auction**," St. Francis Hotel, San Francisco, CA
- June 10: "**Afternoon Delight**," Club members and auction attendees, SMV, St. Helena, CA
- September 15: "**Fête Elivette**," SMV, St. Helena, CA

Come visit us! Daily tours and tasting by appointment. You may contact the winery toll free at 877-769-4637, locally at 707-967-4188 or email [office@springmtn.com](mailto:office@springmtn.com) to make your appointment. Or take a vineyard tour online: [www.springmountainvineyard.com](http://www.springmountainvineyard.com).



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