

The Grapemakers

2014 marks the 10th anniversary of the release of *Sideways*, the movie that is almost single handedly responsible for the overnight obsession with Pinot. However, decades before *Sideways* captivated audiences with the beauty and uniqueness of the Pinot Noir grape there were a handful of growers in the Russian River Valley who had already discovered the varietal's allure.

In 1956, Charles and Helen Bacigalupi purchased 121 acres on Westside Road, a few miles south of Healdsburg. In a simple beginning, Charles began to care for the 16 acres of existing vineyards which included Zinfandel, Mission, Golden Chaslis and Muscat. Charles became friends with Paul Heck through his dentist practice when Paul would bring the family in for regular checkups. The two would occasionally chat about grapes and wine, sharing insight and advice. Envisioning the demand for premium wine grapes, Paul encouraged Charles to plant Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. In 1964, Charles began his plantings with six acres of each varietal. Eventually he obtained Pinot Noir budwood from Karl Wentz, which became the first well documented plantings of Pinot Noir in the Russian River Valley.



1982 Bacigalupi Pinot Noir produced by Belvedere Winery (left). New 2012 Bacigalupi Pinot Noir silk screened label (right).

Charles remembers Wentz telling him the stock had come from France via the family's old vineyard in Livermore. Charles and his son, John worked alongside each other, perfecting their viticulture techniques and expanding the vineyards. Today the family farms approximately 40 acres of Pinot Noir, comprised of several different clones and sourcing these grapes to countless wineries that use the family's last name as a vineyard designation. One of the first producers to do this as a partnership with the Bacigalupi's was Belvedere winery located directly next door to the vineyards. The winery started what they called *the grapemaker series* and wines were presented only under the name of the vineyard proprietors.

The partnership lasted from 1979-1984 and Belvedere also added a Chardonnay from the vineyard. Today, nearly 30 years later, the family is going back to their roots and producing their first release of Pinot Noir under a new label by taking inspiration from their old label. Working together with their winemaker Ashley Herzberg, the wine has already received high scores from Robert Parker and will soon be seen in Williams-Sonoma's Connoisseur Club. Wines included in this club are considered to be of the highest quality. We hope you are as excited to taste this new wine as we are to share it with you!

Darched: The drought of 2014



Goddard ranch reservoir nearly depleted. Photo taken in January 2014.

With several years of below average rainfall, California is currently in one of the worst droughts since record-keeping began in the mid-19th century. With much of the state affected by the lack of rain, there is much concern with the state's agricultural health, and here in wine country we are without a doubt feeling the pressure. So how will this affect our vineyards and the future of the 2014 vintage? With the vines slowly making the transition from dormancy to bud break we will take many approaches to regulate our water use at the same time keeping quality in mind.

Vineyards along with almost all crops require a certain amount of water, especially during crucial growing stages and warm summer months. Vines can demand up to 100 gallons of water and in some circumstances can even compete with the soil for water. Always being stewards of the land and farming

with sustainable methods we are making efforts to reduce the amount of water used without negatively impacting the quality of the grapes or the wines they will eventually produce. One key technique to conserve water in the vineyards occurs during irrigation. Irrigation not only keeps the vine hydrated, it plays a significant role in influencing fruit flavors

and quality. Instead of using overhead sprinklers which tend to not target the intended area we use precision drip irrigation that delivers a measured amount to each vine right to the root zone. When you do irrigate to charge the soil, it needs to be done at night, more frequently and for shorter periods of time. We only irrigate during the night.

Vineyard manager John Bacigalupi has also been slowly implementing the practice of dry farming; relying solely on natural precipitation to water the vines. Wine grapes have a long history of being dry farmed, especially in Europe. Although it is not a new technique it can be site-specific and dependent on annual rainfall, climate, soil type and grape variety. The economics of dry farming are a key consideration in relation to grape yields and prices. Dry farmed vineyards tend to produce wines that have more intense flavor profiles but a smaller crop size overall. We have mostly all traditional deep rooted rootstock (these can include St. George, 1103P, 110R, 140RU), which have very aggressive root systems making ground water more accessible. Traditional spacing is also key, giving each individual vine more ground to explore for water.

John has also been sub soiling some of our Pinot and Chardonnay vineyards. This process involves using rippers to open up and lift the soil to allow more moisture. "We do a lot of compaction with tractors etc. which can create an environment where the soil is very tight, and the rain just runs off of it. Sub soiling helps to alleviate this." John has said this is a very traditional technique that a lot of old timers use, but is still very effective still today.

The following is a quote from John about the coming harvest, "2014 may very well be an even better year than 2013. In 2013 we received most of our rainfall in December. January - March we had virtually nothing, leaving us with a very dry spring and virtually an empty soil profile. In 2014 we will receive most of our rain in the spring - more of a late rain, so we will be getting rain just before the vine bud out and starting the season with a full soil profile."

By looking at lessons from the past and implementing new techniques, we hope to play a significant role in preserving our vineyards as well as being good stewards of the land.

Glazed Lemon Pound Cake Recipe

Courtesy of Martha Stewart



Lemon pound cakes aren't just for lemon lovers. Lemon zest, juice, and glaze give you triple the lemon for a crowd-pleasing pound cake.

- ❖ **PREP:** 30 mins **TOTAL TIME:** 3 hours
- ❖ **YIELD:** Makes 2 loaves
- ❖ 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened, plus more for pan
- ❖ 3 cups all-purpose flour (spooned and leveled), plus more for pan
- ❖ 3/4 cup low-fat buttermilk
- ❖ Zest of 2 lemons, finely grated
- ❖ 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice (about 2 lemons)
- ❖ 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- ❖ 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- ❖ 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- ❖ 2 cups sugar
- ❖ 5 large eggs
- ❖ Lemon Glaze:
 - 2 cups confectioners' sugar
 - 3 to 4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Cook's Note

The batter can also be baked in a 12-cup buttered and floured nonstick Bundt pan; the cooking and cooling times are the same.

- ❖ **Step 1:** Preheat oven to 350 degrees, with rack in lowest position. Butter and flour two 4 1/2-by-8-inch (6-cup) loaf pans.
- ❖ **Step 2:** In a small bowl (or liquid measuring cup), combine buttermilk with lemon zest and juice. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, salt, baking powder, and baking soda.
- ❖ **Step 3:** With an electric mixer, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- ❖ **Step 4:** With mixer on low, add flour mixture in three parts alternately with the buttermilk mixture in two, beginning and ending with flour; beat just until smooth (do not overmix).
- ❖ **Step 5:** Divide batter evenly between pans; smooth tops. Bake until a toothpick inserted in centers comes out clean, 50 to 60 minutes (tent with foil if browning too quickly). Cool 15 minutes in pan. Turn out cakes onto a rack; cool completely before glazing.
- ❖ **Step 6:** Set rack with cakes over a baking sheet lined with waxed paper. Pour glaze over cakes, letting it run down the sides; let dry, about 30 minutes.
- ❖ **Lemon Glaze:** Place confectioners' sugar in a medium bowl or liquid measuring cup; stir in lemon juice (glaze should be thick, yet pourable). Add more sugar or lemon juice, as necessary, to achieve desired consistency.

2013 Rosé of Pinot Noir ~ now available



Our first vintage of Rosé was such a success we decided to do it again! This Rosé is made from a blend of two styles: one was made from Clone 777, which we hand-picked at night and brought in cold. We destemmed and gently crushed the grapes and let them sit on the skins for 8 hours until pressing. This juice then went to barrels and was fermented for three weeks. The other Rosé was made from our Pinot Noir harvest. These were hand-picked, brought in cold, destemmed and put into a tank. After 24 hours, a saignée (French for “bleed off”) was done to concentrate the flavors. This Rosé was then fermented separately for 3.5 weeks until dry, at which point the two Rosés were blended together.

A gorgeous pink-red color welcomes you, followed by strawberry, a touch of white peach, guava and green apple on the nose. This wine is the ultimate summer drinking wine. Drink now and enjoy! Only 80 cases produced.

Upcoming Events

Spring Pinot & Paella Release Party | Saturday, April 19th from 1:00-4:00 p.m.



Join us for our Pinot & Paella spring release party. Savor our delicious, made from scratch paella paired with our new release; the 2012 Bacigalupi Pinot Noir. We will also have a caricature artist on hand for the day! RSVP by April 7th.

\$20/ members (2 per membership) & \$30/ guests.

Passport to Pinot | May 24-25th 2015 from 11:00 – 4:00 p.m.



Join us along with 30+ amazing producers of the Russian River Valley at the annual Passport to Pinot weekend. This world-class tasting experience will have you traveling through vineyards and redwoods along the Russian River, discovering hidden gems and exclusive experiences at participating wineries. \$55 per person.

Bacigalupi Vineyard Designate Tasting | June 21st 2014 from 1:00-4:00 p.m.



Join the Bacigalupi family as they welcome some of California’s most renowned wineries pouring their vineyard designated wines. This unique experience gives guests the opportunity to taste one vineyard’s characteristics through many wines. Enjoy a varietal food pairing and live music. Complimentary logo glass included. All proceeds to benefit The Guardsmen. \$75/ members (2 per membership) \$90/ guests.

**50th Anniversary Vineyard Dinner~ Relive the 1976 Paris Tasting
Saturday, August 9th beginning at 4:00 p.m.**

50th Anniversary
Paris Tasting
Vineyard Dinner



Relive the historic 1976 Paris Tasting that helped to catapult California wines into the worldwide spotlight. Enjoy a decadent multi course dinner in the original vineyard that sourced fruit to Chateau Montelena, which this year is celebrating its 50th harvest. Our family matriarch Helen Bacigalupi will be sharing her stories from this significant event in wine history. Tickets are extremely limited.

***For more information or to purchase tickets call 707-473-0115 or email tastingroom@johntylerswines.com**