

Ceritas

SPRING 2011 ISSUE

Dear Friends,

When you're a winemaker and you work with only two grape varieties, it stands to reason that you'd be a little bit fussy about the sources of your fruit. Until 2009, we made chardonnay from only one vineyard site—the famous Porter-Bass vineyard on the Sonoma Coast. The way that vineyard is situated, nestled into hillsides under the coastal fog, has seemed to us like a magical place to grow grapes since we made our first wine there in 2005.

In the Spring of 2009, because of a rare opportunity, we had our first serious conversation about the prospect of making chardonnay from another vineyard site. We were approached by Kent Ritchie, who owns the Ritchie vineyard in the Russian River Valley, and who has supplied superior grapes for years to great winemakers like Mark Aubert and David Ramey. Kent had tasted a bottle of our Porter-Bass chardonnay, and thought that the mineral-focused style of our winemaking would suit the fruit from his vineyard very well.

It isn't every year that fruit from one of the most venerable vineyards in California is available, and in the end we decided to take Kent up on his offer.

In a stroke of amazing luck, as some of you probably know, 2009 turned out to be an extraordinary vintage for Sonoma wines. Temperatures were beautiful and moderate throughout virtually the entire growing season, the vineyard experienced no rot whatsoever, and in September we harvested some of the best-looking, most vibrant and delicious chardonnay grapes we had ever seen.

We made a total of 125 cases of Ceritas Chardonnay Ritchie Vineyard, and we couldn't be happier with the results. Our Porter-Bass chardonnays have always been immediately seductive—lush and generous more or less right out of the gate, while maintaining our hallmark acidity and minerality. The 2009 Ceritas Ritchie is a laser beam of taut precision, the marine sediments in the soil there showing off an abundance of Chablis-like smells and flavors. These things are sometimes hard to pinpoint, but in addition to lemon peel and narcissus, we swear we smell seashells in the wine.

Because of the structure and acidity of this wine, our best guess is that it is going to improve substantially for a number of years, aging gracefully alongside its cousins from the Porter-Bass vineyard made down the

road. Together, we think the two 2009 Ceritas chardonnays demonstrate in spades the principle to which we're so dedicated: a specific sense of place, of climate, of the soil from which the wines are made.

NEWS

On the news front, it has been an interesting year. As many may already know, John was the assistant winemaker at Copain Wines for nearly 6 years departing in 2009. The freedom has allowed us to continue to focus on Ceritas and other winemaking projects. Needless to say, we are very excited about the future and the new beginnings and new wines to come.

On a more personal note, we have decided to get married this June, celebrating with good friends and family at the Porter-Bass Vineyard. Thank you for everyone who has reached out to us over the years, supported our dreams and been a friend in the wine world. We are truly grateful for your presence in our life.

ALLOCATIONS

Allocations will be honored for 14 days after the release. From this point forward, any remaining wine will be sold on a first come, first serve basis.

We hope you enjoy it. Thank you for your continued support. Be well.

Gratefully,
John Raytek & Phoebe Bass

Coming....

2009 Porter-Bass Vineyard Chardonnay and 2009 Escarpa Vineyard Pinot Noir will be released the first part of August. Please be on the lookout for news of the release. Shipping will take place in November.