

JAFFURS



A BOTTLING OF ITS OWN: 2020 LARNER VINEYARD GRENACHE

For those members in our Anthology Club, you might notice a new wine in this shipment: our first ever Larner Vineyard Grenache. Larner has been one of our most valued sites over the years, producing a standout Syrah, and an important piece of our multi-vineyard Santa Barbara County Grenache. In 2020, our Grenache, and particularly the Grenache at Larner Vineyard, was exceptional.

2020 was a tough year by every standard. Of course, we all know the global challenges the year brought, but for our purposes here, let's focus on the winegrowing vintage in Santa Barbara County. What began as a relatively innocuous growing season (with average dates for bud break, a long spring, and moderate temperatures through summer) turned into a scorching hot ripening season. With three separate heat waves late in summer and into fall topping 100 degrees for several days at a time, we had our work cut out for us both in the vineyard and in the winery... except when it came to Grenache.

Grenache, the heat-loving varietal that it is, rode through the temperature spikes without a hitch. Color in the skins was terrific, with no sign of dehydration in the berries. We were able to harvest Larner Grenache at optimal ripeness, with bright acidity and beautiful flavor development. After the wine was fermented 100% whole-cluster and moved into barrels, we tracked its progress with high-expectations, and were not disappointed. *(continued on page 3)*

SUSHI AND SYRAH

Arigato Sushi has been Santa Barbara's go-to destination for exceptional sushi and Japanese cuisine since the mid-1980's. Since 2011, a special labeling of Jaffurs Syrah has been featured as the restaurant's house wine. That bottling came about as a project between friends Dave Yates, the winery's first general manager, and Bill Kaneko, Arigato's owner and chef.

For many years skeptics (including club coordinator Nancy and myself) have questioned the compatibility of pairing Syrah with sushi or other Japanese dishes. Believing there was a chance to find harmony between these two worlds, we decided that a little research was needed to see if this myth was a truth or a bust. With help from our winemaker Stephen Searle and cellar master Marrissa, we found some wonderful dishes that complemented our noble Rhône varietal—Syrah.

Starting with the Spicy Vegetable Gyoza and its savory spinach sauce, we found a nice accompaniment to the peppery notes of the Syrah. The pepperiness also balanced wonderfully with the earthiness of the Grilled Portobello Nigiri and the Magic Mushroom roll (shiitake, maitake, enoki, shimeji, and eringi mushrooms!).

A few dishes truly stood out as successfully marrying the blackberry jamlike character of the wine with the nuances of their ingredients. The Arigato Syrah paired exceptionally well with the richness of the Grilled Miyazaki Wagyu beef and the sweet savory flavors of the Unagi (freshwater eel).

Lastly, the Syrah's velvety mouthfeel and dark fruit flavor harmoniously matched the silky texture and sweetness



^ Take it from the top

2019 Arigato Syrah paired with small plates:
1) spicy vegetable gyozas; 2) Magic Mushroom roll;
3) grilled portabella nigiri (left) with Unagi nigiri (right);
and 4) grilled Miyazaki Wagyu beef.



of the Pan-seared Hotategai Scallops. The combination of Japanese cuisine and Rhône wine is a pairing that most have avoided; however, after this excursion, we invite you to join us in this culinary adventure! 🌸

— Jeremiah Cortes & Nancy Vergara

< **Tasting Team:** Marrissa Schoonover, cellar master; Jeremiah Cortes, tasting room associate; Nancy Vergara, wine club coordinator; and Stephen Searle, winemaker.

MEET JASON CARTER

Jaffurs' New General Manager and International Man of Mystery!



Allow me to introduce Jason Carter, our newest employee into the Jaffurs family. Many of you have already had the pleasure of meeting Jason at some of our events. Although he and I have known each other for years, it was only early this year that I asked Jason to officially join the Jaffurs team. He comes with a wealth of experience as general manager for various brands in the Paso Robles and Santa Rita Hills AVAs.

Aside from his familiarity with all things enological on the Central Coast, it turns out that Jason has an international ace up his sleeve. Through his years in the industry, and his significant time living abroad, Jason has established many contacts across the globe. Once we started exploring those connections, it became obvious that there is a place

for Jaffurs in the international market. Our combination of Old World winemaking techniques with New World winegrowing practices really struck a chord. Jaffurs is now being sold in four international locations: Puerto Rico, Canada, Japan, and Germany! The German market has shown partiality to our Late Harvest Viognier dessert wine, the Japanese market loves our Viognier, and everyone loves our Syrah. It's an exciting time for Jaffurs and wine lovers all over the world. 🌿 — Dan Green

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In fact, the 2020 Larner Grenache was so impressive we decided to select three top barrels (half of the lot), hold them an additional eight months, and bottle them unfiltered with a single-vineyard designation. We blended in 10% Larner Syrah to add a bit of texture and mid-palate weight. Reminiscent of a top Châteauneuf-du-Pape, this complex Grenache shows herbes de Provence and fresh cut red fruit, finishing with a graphite minerality. Still a very young wine and quite tightly wound, it will benefit from at least a couple years bottle age and should develop beautifully for a decade or longer. 🌿 — Stephen Searle



2022 – NEW RELEASES

THIRD QUARTER

2021 Viognier, Bien Nacido Vineyard Santa Maria Valley AVA Jeb Dunnuck 93 points / Vinous 92 points

Just a great example of the variety, the 2021 Viognier Bien Nacido Vineyard is all varietal and spent 6 months in a combination of neutral French oak and stainless steel. It has bright citrus and tart peach fruits to go with a medium-bodied, vibrant, fresh, yet still classic Viognier style on the palate that brings both richness and freshness. It's one of the best examples of the variety from California. — *Jeb Dunnuck*

The 2021 Viognier Bien Nacido Vineyard is gorgeous. Apricot, ginger, spice and chamomile all grace this super expressive Viognier. The 2021 is deeply flavorful and rich, but not at all heavy. Terrific. Drinking window 2022-2026. — *Antonio Galloni*

2020 Petite Sirah, Thompson Vineyard Alisos Canyon AVA Wine Enthusiast 93 points / Jeb Dunnuck 93 points

Petite Sirah is still a rare grape in Santa Barbara County, but each vintage this bottling makes one wonder why. Soft tones of blueberry compote mix with pepper, crushed rock, and dark woodspice on the nose. There's an oaky kick to the palate, where baked blueberry and black-plum-juice flavors are lifted by baking spice. — *Matt Kettmann*

This cuvée always delivers, and the 2020 Petite Sirah Thompson Vineyard is no exception, with tons of smoky black fruits and chocolate notes, full-bodied richness, a round, lush, powerful texture, and a great finish. If you have an itch for powerful, unctuous, yet balanced Petite Sirah, this will scratch it. — *Jeb Dunnuck*

2019 Syrah, Bien Nacido Vineyard Santa Maria Valley AVA Jeb Dunnuck 95+ points / Vinous 94 points

Black fruits, smoked meats, chocolate, pepper, and liquid violet notes all emerge from the 2019 Syrah Bien Nacido Vineyard, a richer, medium to full-bodied, expansive, yet still focused, elegant Syrah that has tons to love. Based on 99% Syrah and 1% Viognier that was 54% destemmed and co-fermented, aged 22 months in 27% new French oak, it will benefit from a year in bottle and drink brilliantly for a decade. Maturity 2023-2033. — *Jeb Dunnuck*

The 2019 Syrah Bien Nacido Vineyard is powerful and elegant at the same time. Blue/purplish fruit, lavender, spice, menthol, licorice, and chocolate give the 2019 notable depth and intensity. The 54% whole clusters are nearly buried by the sheer intensity of the fruit. This powerhouse Syrah is beautifully done. Drinking window 2024-2034. — *Antonio Galloni*



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to learn about winemaker dinners, club members only events, and Santa Barbara wine country happenings as they are added to our calendar.

FOURTH QUARTER

2020 Syrah Santa Barbara County Vinous 92 points

The 2020 Syrah (Santa Barbara County) is dark, plush and super expressive right out of the gate. Black cherry, plum, mocha, licorice, cloves, and incense are pushed forward. A touch of whole clusters, plus dollops of Petite Sirah and Grenache add layers of nuance. Vineyard sites are Bien Nacido, Larner, Thompson, and Kimsey. In 2020, the appellation Syrah is a winner. Don't miss it. Drinking window 2024-2034. — *Antonio Galloni*

2020 Grenache, Larner Vineyard Ballard Canyon AVA Wine Enthusiast 91 points Cellar Selection

Dark berry, wet earth, and tarry-funk aromas show on the nose of this single-vineyard expression. The palate is more of a pure expression of black cherry that is lifted by light cola and loamy earth tones. Sticky tannins ensure a long life. Drink 2023-2033. — *Matt Kettmann*

2019 Syrah, Kimsey Vineyard Ballard Canyon AVA Jeb Dunnuck 93 points / Vinous 93 points

All destemmed and aged in 29% new French oak, the 2019 Syrah Kimsey Vineyard offers more meaty blue fruits, leather, and ground pepper, with some Hermitage-like graphite and scorched earth nuances. It's ripe, medium-bodied, and concentrated, with ripe tannins and good acidity. It needs a few years, but it's a beautiful wine. Maturity after 2024. — *Jeb Dunnuck*

The 2019 Syrah Kimsey Vineyard is packed with dark cherry/plum fruit, cedar, tobacco, incense and dried herbs. All the fruit is destemmed, and yet the Kimsey has tons of savory/earthy intensity running through it. This powerhouse Syrah will need a few years to be at its best, but it is so promising. Drinking window 2024-2034. — *Antonio Galloni*

2019 Syrah, Upslope Santa Barbara County Jeb Dunnuck 98+ points / Vinous 95 points

The 2019 Syrah Upslope is 98% Syrah and 2% Viognier. It sports a deep purple hue to go with a brilliant bouquet of crème de cassis, spring flowers, crushed stone, graphite, and pepper. Deep, pure, beautifully balanced, and medium to full-bodied, it has incredible purity of fruit, flawless balance, and a great, great finish. This Côte Rôtie look-alike has tons of character, and while it's brilliant today, it will be better with 2-3 years of bottle age and keep for 10-15. It's pure California class! Maturity 2024-2040. — *Jeb Dunnuck*

Aromas of violet, blueberry, and asphalt lean toward restraint on the nose. The 2019 Upslope is a blend of Bien Nacido, Larner and Kimsey, a combination that works so well. Powerful and ample, tremendous palate presence the Upslope sure delivers the goods. Inky red fruit, iron, dried herbs, lavender, licorice and crushed flowers are some of the many notes that build into the deep, resonant finish. Drinking window 2024-2034. — *Antonio Galloni*