

SHANE

CRAFTED IN SEBASTOPOL, CA

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For me, deciding what to include in a release letter is never easy. Some customers look for technical data, others prefer a vintage recap, and many just want juicy tasting notes.

This year I've decided to forgo the standard winemaker spiel and instead reflect on my appreciation for those who have supported me for the past two years.

Clearly the last year has presented challenges for everyone. I have seen business associates cease their operations, had customers lose their jobs, and witnessed the closure of great restaurants. These events test us all – especially new companies like Shane Wines. However, given the economic difficulties many have encountered, nothing amazes me more than the support of my customers.

In my view, success in the wine business is entirely dependent on the support and satisfaction of a winery's customers. Consumers have many choices in the wine world. The fact that people choose to continue to support my brand during hard times is deeply gratifying.

Your support allowed Shane Wines to grow in 2009. I expanded my distribution outside of California – most notably Minneapolis and Washington DC. I was on the road as much as possible and each stop gave me the chance to connect with loyal customers and meet new ones. The opportunity to talk and share a drink with fellow wine lovers is a constant reminder of why I entered this business.

Thank you for your support and I wish you and your families all the best.



NEWS AND UPDATES

- TWO RELEASES IN 2010. LOOK FOR A SECOND RELEASE THIS JUNE. THE RELEASE WILL BE TWO BENNETT VALLEY SINGLE VINEYARDS: JEMROSE AND JUDGE. BOTH ARE UNCTUOUS AND UNIQUE ONE-HUNDRED PERCENT WHOLE CLUSTER SYRAHS.
- FAN OF SHANE? BECOME A FAN OF SHANE WINE CELLARS ON FACEBOOK. GET MORE INSIDER INFO AND PICS!
- INTERESTED IN PINOT? CHECK OUT MY PINOT NOIR PROJECT AT WWW.SPELLWINERY.COM
- VISITING SONOMA COUNTY? LET ME KNOW IF YOU WANT TO TASTE SOME BARRELS AT THE WINERY.
- DO YOU TWITTER? FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER: WWW.TWITTER.COM/SHANEWINES
- WANT TO HOST A SHANE WINES EVENT? CONTACT ME TO DISCUSS THE DETAILS.



THE WINES

THE UNKNOWN, 2008 SYRAH

NORTH COAST
500 CASES PRODUCED

The third installment of the Unknown does not disappoint. I introduced the Unknown in 2006 - my inaugural vintage. In 2007, I created the Villain to complement the Unknown. This year I decided to combine the two cuvees. The current version is composed of five different vineyards, eight different clones, and blends elements of Sonoma and Mendocino Counties - the Unknown is a villainously styled syrah.

As with the last two vintages, Kick Ranch is the core of the Unknown. Kick's mineral laden fruit components from the 877, 470, and Hermitage clones are unmistakable in the 2008. Further Sonoma County accents come from two Bennett Valley stalwart vineyards Jemrose

and a new vineyard for Shane, Judge. From Jemrose, the 174 and 470 clones provide depth and nuanced spice elements. From Judge, the 877, Estrella River, and 174 clones lend excellent structure, exotic fruit, and layers of texture.

Mendocino highlights come from Alder Springs (clones 99, 383, 174, and 470) and Broken Leg (clone Shiraz 1). Both vineyards were fermented with a significant percentage of whole cluster and their spice, game, and forest floor elements as well as firm tannins shine throughout the Unknown.

Fermented with seventy-five percent whole cluster, aged in twenty-five percent new French oak for ten months, and bottled without fining or filtration, the Unknown melds new world and old world flavors impeccably. It is the most balanced and complete Unknown to date.

MY NOTES

There is no lack of color here. It's like liquid onyx in the glass. Exotic and intense perfume of blueberries, violets, blackberries, lilies, boysenberry, and dark chocolate layered over wet stone. Cracked black peppercorn, graphite, plum, tar, bacon fat, mineral, and anise lace the mid-palate. The tannins are more refined than in previous years. They support a juicy core and provide excellent structure. Minimal oak impact - the wine is pure syrah.

MA FILLE, 2009 ROSÉ

SONOMA COUNTY
225 CASES PRODUCED

As always, the Ma Fille is dedicated to my daughter Stella. Composed of the saignée of Syrah (eighty-percent) and a touch of Grenache (twenty-percent), the 2009 Ma Fille embodies all that is desirable in rosé. It is a wine centered on its acidity and focused on balance. I make this wine to be a delight to drink and the 2009 easily accomplish my goal. In my view, rosés need be pretty, delicate, and elegant. The Ma Fille is all these things and more.

MY NOTES

The Ma Fille exhibits gorgeous neon pink and ruby accented color. The first impression is an extremely vibrant and effusive nose of watermelon, passion fruit, papaya, citrus, and pomegranate. The acidity is focused and zippy. The Ma Fille packs impressive depth for a rosé - especially one with sub-fourteen percent alcohol. This is a wine of well-defined edges, refreshing flavors, and a juicy finish.

A LOOK BACK

Recently, I have been asked several times how the 2006 syrahs are evolving. So, I decided to revisit the wines and see how they are progressing. It was a fun and rewarding trip down memory lane. Many of you know 2006 was my first vintage so these wines have a very special place in my heart.

I tasted each bottle over five days. All three wines have developed quite nicely. I think they were at their best on day two but they were still very lively on day five. I suggest a hearty decant (four to six hours) if you plan on drinking them in one evening. There is a lot of time remaining for these wines to evolve. I am confident these wines will last until 2016. My notes and impressions are as follows.

VALENTI RANCH

2006 SYRAH, ANDERSON VALLEY

The integration of the whole cluster elements and dark berries is amazing. The wine exudes white pepper, forest floor, green olive, brine, blackberries, and grilled meats. The tannins are beginning to soften but they are still quite firm. I love the graphite, sandalwood, and crushed berry tones that highlight the mouth. This is a classic cool climate version of syrah.

THE UNKNOWN

2006 SYRAH, SONOMA COUNTY

This is still as fresh as when it was bottled. The fruit components are fantastic. I am struck with wild berry, boysenberry, raspberries, crème de cassis, violets, and allspice.

The mid-palate has flushed out considerably in the past year. I love the textured and harmonious tannins. The wine finishes strong and maintains a lot of vibrancy. Not as tightly knit as the Valenti or Jemrose.

JEMROSE VINEYARD

2006 SYRAH, BENNETT VALLEY

Holy Northern Rhône! This wine keeps getting better and better. I am very, very happy with the fusion of old and new world accents in this wine. The nose is full of currant, plum, white pepper, red fruits, and chocolate covered cherries. The supple mid-palate is enveloped with venison, cured meats, mineral, and dark chocolate. The tannins are slowly settling down and continue to lend mighty structure.