

LODI WINEGRAPE COMMISSION

ADVANCING LODI IN THE WORLD OF WINE

news

WINTER 2009-2010

LODI HAS ARRIVED...IN THE CITY!

Building off the success of August's SF Chef's Food, Wine and our inaugural Treasure Island WineFest, Lodi wineries are eager for the next opportunity to showcase their wines in the City.

The very first, very successful, Treasure Island WineFest was an inspiring grassroots effort by our winery and grower community and Winegrape Commission pulling together to introduce our trove of treasured wines to the greater Bay Area market. With leadership from a committee of enthusiastic winery principals, we were able to gather 43 different wineries for this effort. Producers out of the area with Lodi appellation wines were also in tow.

The afternoon included a Trade & Media hour that was attended by an impressive group of 300 in the industry. Approximately 1,500 guests soon took over the WineFest and enjoyed wine seminars, delectable bites by Wine Valley Catering, an amazing airshow courtesy of the Blue Angels, and lots of delicious Lodi wine!

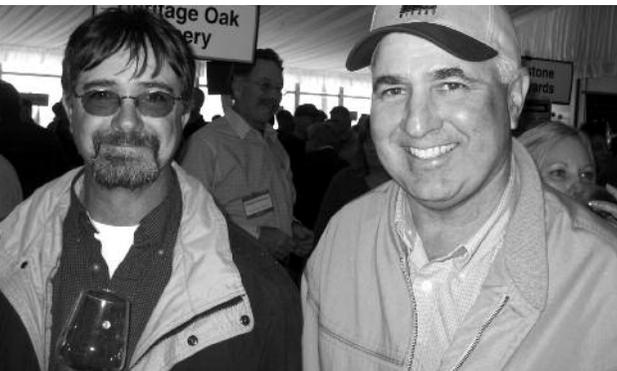
Holding an event in the Bay Area not only provided the opportunity to gain a new consumer base, but a new media and trade resource base as well. We have formed relationships with numerous television and radio stations, newspaper, trade magazines, freelance

writers, etc. Each winery has been encouraged to follow up with members of the trade they interacted with at the event and to work hard at getting placed in Bay Area retail shops, restaurants, and wine bars.

We extend a special thank you to Charlene Lange of LangeTwins Winery- this event was her brainchild. Lodi's Vino Farms was a leading sponsor; we thank John Ledbetter and family for their leadership and volunteerism. The committee of vintners and growers also deserve to be commended! It couldn't have been done without your support!

Mark your calendars for 10.10.10 for the second Treasure Island WineFest! We hope to see you there!

**TREASURE
ISLAND**
WineFest



LODI - "SWEET SPOT" FOR GRAPES "BRIGHT SPOT" FOR WINE

At a recent Turrentine Wine Brokerage breakfast in Lodi Bill Turrentine referred to Lodi as a "sweet spot" in the California wine market. With a large crop buoyed by healthy sales in our price points, it should be a good year for most Lodi growers. Bill's outlook on Lodi's leading varietals:

ZINFANDEL – is considered in balance. White Zin production shifted to the South San Joaquin Valley so many Lodi vineyards have been converted to red wine production for varietal or proprietary wines. Many Lodi appellation Zins are hot in the market.

CABERNET SAUVIGNON – is also balanced, although with a 4-7% growth rate and no new plantings in recent years, it could be short in the not too distant future. Our price range (\$9-\$15 per bottle) is selling well and growing.

CHARDONNAY – contracted growers did well on this variety, but on the open market was a "wipeout", slammed by the recession, bulk Australian imports, and the huge CA crop – 120,000 tons more than estimated. Chardonnay is responsible for 22% of wine sales, so while it is in oversupply now, its 3-7% annual growth will lead to shortages in the future.

PINOT GRIGIO – the second top selling white wine is experiencing large growth in production and sales. California production is displacing the Italian share of the market, but with increased plantings will the price hold?

MERLOT – demand is steady, while the supply has been shrinking, amazingly this variety is short in the market right

now. Lodi quality, style, and price give it a bright future here.

PINOT NOIR – is experiencing rapid growth for California appellation brands. Coastal producers went "Sideways" with this variety and are looking at Lodi and the Delta for their supply.

In general, the rest of the state did not experience the same large yields that Lodi did, so it is hoped that there will be no rerun of the 2005 crop's effect on subsequent years demand. Bulk wine inventories are limited, so the prospects are good.

Quoting a recent study of domestic wine sales, Lodi is a "bright spot" according to Wines and Vines Magazine, a leading wine trade monthly.

The study was conducted by Wine Opinions, a Napa based wine market research firm. It states that "after a prolonged period of recession, it's not a pretty picture for many vintners, but it does include bright spots for North American wineries, including rising sales at wine tasting rooms, and an improved image of California wine regions such as Lodi."

The article goes on to quote Wine Opinions principal John Gillespie "One of the most noteworthy findings was an uptick in the amount of wine California's residents are purchasing from the Lodi region." Furthermore, among trade buyers "Napa sales were reported negative, Paso Robles and Lodi were strongest."

AMERICAN WINE SOCIETY LOVES LODI

For the 10th consecutive year Lodi wines were presented to the 500+ annual conference attendees at the American Wine Society. In 2008 the Society brought their conference to Sacramento and many of them criss-crossed Lodi Wine Country before and after the conference. This year's gathering was in Destin, Florida the first week of November.

For AWS members "The Top Zins of Lodi" is a perennial favorite. Mark Chandler's standing room only presentation including current releases from **Talus, Eola Hills, Oak Ridge, Laurel Glen, Mettler Family, Macchia, M2 and Michael David.**

For a taste of something entirely different Mark's second seminar offering was "The Other Side of Lodi – White Wine Extravaganza". Tasters were amazed and surprised at the range of varieties and flavors currently available in Lodi whites – including **Uvaggio Vermentino, Alta Mesa Verdelho, Bokisch Garnacha Blanca, Vino Con Brio Pinot Grigio, Van Ruiten Pinot Grigio, Harney Lane Albarino, Watts Chardonnay, Peltier Station Viognier, Incognito Viognier and Mokelumne Glen Dreirebe.** Many eyes were opened with these refreshing new offerings from Lodi Wine Country.

EPA AWARDS LODI WINEGRAPE COMMISSION

The US Environmental Protection Agency recently awarded five members of the Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP) including our Winegrape Commission for sustained excellence in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) through our state-wide code of sustainable winegrowing practices.

"These awards demonstrate that innovative pest management practices really do work. EPA is helping growers and other pesticide users make the transition to safer practices and thereby reduce pesticide risk to people and the environment" says Steve Owens, assistant administrator for the Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances.

"The Commission is to be congratulated on yet another award it has received for its leadership in sustainability" says Commission Executive Mark Chandler. "It exemplifies our leadership and the value it adds to building Lodi's reputation in the wine world."

LODI PARTICIPATES IN CALIFORNIA WINE MONTH IN NY AND WDC

Mid-September is harvest time, and what better time to remind our urban dwellers about the joys of rural life, especially California wine? That is the philosophy of the San Francisco based Wine Institute, who sponsored a week full of events on the East Coast, with Exec Mark Chandler on hand representing Lodi. In all, ten CA wine regions participated.

“If it’s Monday, this must be Manhattan” - Mark did an interview for the Wine Spectator website on Lodi’s sustainable wine-growing program. The segment will be posted in early 2010. Later in the day he conducted an in-store sampling of **Mettler Zinfandel** and **Jessie’s Grove Carignane** at the Grande Harvest Wine Shop in the vast Grand Central Station. Even though it was a Monday evening business was brisk, with commuters zipping in and out of the shop to pick up a bottle of wine on their way home. About a case of each wine was sold in the 3 hour time frame.

Tuesday was the “main event” with an afternoon trade tasting on a large balcony overlooking the main terminal at Grand Central Station, where over 230 of the nation’s leading wine media and trade were in attendance. Subsequent stories mentioned the event in the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal. Lodi wines featured included **Gustavo Thrace Sauvignon Blanc**, **Bokisch Albarino**, “**Brazin**” **Zinfandel**, **Klinker Brick Syrah**, **Van Ruiten Zinfandel**, **Michael David Petite- Petit**. All these wines are already in the NY market, so it was easy to answer the question “where can I get this wine?” Later that evening a dinner was hosted at The Modern restaurant in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Wine media in attendance included Wine Spectator, New York Times and the Washington Post, among a number of sommeliers from leading NY restaurants.

Wednesday began early with the California wine contingent on the NBC “Today Show” plaza, where Matt Lauer, Meredith Vierra and Al Roker greeted the group and gleefully accepted a handful of wines (off camera) but a nice shot on camera mentioned California wines and showed the group in their CA Wine Month gear. Then off to catch the train for Washington, DC.

Two tastings were held in the nation’s capital. Wednesday evening was on the House side, Thursday on the Senate. In all over 25 Congress members and 125 staffers familiarized themselves with California wine. Members from both sides of the aisle were equally represented. It is always great to touch base with those who represent us in Washington and remind them of our issues in agriculture and the wine industry.

The trip was a major success – creating a relationship between New Yorkers and California wine, as well as consolidating relationships in Washington. Wine Institute staff did a fine job arranging the events and generating a great deal of media attention for California wine.



DR. CLIFF OHMART MOVES ON

After fourteen years of exemplary service and leadership to the Lodi Winegrape Commission Dr. Cliff Ohmart tendered his resignation effective October 31, 2009.

Cliff converted the desires of our grower community to develop a truly district wide sustainable viticulture program into reality, and along the way generated a powerful reputation for Lodi as an international leader in sustainability. His “Lodi Winegrower’s Workbook” has become an industry standard, and serves as the basis for our now famous “Lodi Rules for Sustainable Viticulture” standards and certification program. These efforts helped Lodi growers improve quality in the field and enhanced Lodi’s credibility as a high quality wine producer throughout the wine industry. For this we all owe Cliff a debt of gratitude.

Dr. Ohmart’s new position is Vice President of Professional Services with SureHarvest, a company home based in Soquel, California. SureHarvest works with growers, grower groups, and agrifood companies interested in developing sustainable programs.

We all wish Cliff well in his new professional endeavors, and we will continue to work with him in his new role. Despite Cliff’s departure, this is no time to falter in our efforts to expand the Lodi Rules program. We have conducted an extensive search to fill the Sustainable Viticulture Director position, and will have an announcement in that regard shortly.

UPCOMING CLASSES OF INTEREST THROUGH THE UC DAVIS EXTENSION:

FEBRUARY 17 Tasting Room Design & Management
FEBRUARY 18 Current Wine and Winegrape Research
FEBRUARY 20-21 Introduction to Sensory Evaluation of Wine
FEBRUARY 23-25 Varietal Winegrape Production Short Course
FEBRUARY 27 Managing the Small Vineyard I

For more information or to enroll please call UC Davis Extension at (800) 752-0881, email extension@ucdavis.edu or visit www.extension.ucdavis.edu/wine.

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

JANUARY 26-29 Unified Wine & Grape Symposium
Sacramento Convention Center, www.unifiedsymposium.org

JANUARY 30 ZAP Wine Festival
San Francisco, www.zinfandel.org

FEBRUARY 2 Grape Day
Hutchins Street Square, Lodi

FEBRUARY 13 & 14 Lodi Wine & Chocolate Weekend
Lodi Wine Country, www.lodiwineandchocolate.com

LODI WINEGRAPE COMMISSION Crush District 11

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