

LEGENDS OF STAG HOLLOW

As heard through the grapevine...

(May, 2017) Volume 20.1

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Connecting with Stag Hollow

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Greetings from the Hollow,

We invite you to toast sunny and warm days ahead (hopefully) while at one of six upcoming tastings hosted by Jill, Mark, and friends at Stag Hollow's ridge-top tasting room.

Memorial-Day Holiday Tastings

Pre- and Post-Memorial Day Weekend

(Private tastings--mailing list customers)

May 20 (Saturday, Noon to 5 PM)

→→May 21 (Sunday) & June 3 (Saturday)←←

Noon to 4 PM

Memorial Day Weekend

(Public tastings)

May 27 & 28 (Saturday & Sunday)

11 AM to 5 PM

May 29 (Monday--Memorial Day)

Noon to 4 PM

All tastings are \$10 and reimbursed with purchase \$75 or more per person. Map, directions, or other information about Stag Hollow and its wines can be accessed at **Staghollow.com**. Too busy around Memorial Day Weekend? Consider visiting us **Saturday, June 3**, or email or call for an appointment. Our upcoming events are a good time to stock up with high quality, excellent-valued wines for your spring, summer, and early fall entertaining, dining, and festivities.

Wines Featured at the Six Holiday Tasting Events

- **Futures Tasting and Purchase:** 2016 Tempranillo and 2015 Reserve pinot noir
- **New Releases:** 2014 Dolcetto D' Yamhill Superiore, 2015 Tempranillo, 2013 Yamhill-Carlton pinot noir, and 2015 dry Muscat (!)
- **Mini Vertical of Reserve pinot noirs from warm vintages:** 2006, 2012, and 2015
- **Recent Releases:** 2010 Yamhill Villages pinot noir, Field Blend Oregon Special Selection II (red)

Fresh bakery bread and a gourmet selection of cheeses will be served.

Winemaker's Preamble

The other day Jill saddled onto our tractor and headed out to mow Brix's pawball-playing field, a moderately flat and scenic spot that overlooks the Coast Range near the tasting room. On second glance, something seemed amiss with Jill's mowing. She was mowing in all sorts of different directions; was the linear part of her brain misfiring? Upon closer inspection, she had meticulously

mowed around all the patches of Camas lily, leaving little undisturbed "islands" so that this native prairie species could set seed. Well, kudos to Jill for conserving a species that was a diet mainstay of the Native Americans in the Willamette Valley for 1000s of years. Over the last ~30 years, we left the field below the tasting room uncultivated with hopes of nature converting it to native prairie habitat, as we await a possible planting of grapes. Jill just nudged us one step closer to native prairie-land! (see Jill's post of lilies in bloom at Stag Hollow on Facebook; link above).

Speaking of Brix, he has a new passion: voraciously barking at and chasing turkey vultures, as though they are an eminent threat. Egad, let's not be delusional here. Labs are hard-wired to be obsessive-compulsive; but, these vultures must think this guy is a nut-case as they effortlessly glide from above, sporting a wry smile. Brix, seriously, you need to re-assess life's priorities...

I would be remiss without mentioning the record-breaking precipitation for the first half of the water year (October-March). October, February, and March were all recording breaking, or near record-breaking months for precipitation, leaving us about 155% above average through mid-May. It's been consistently cold too, well below normal. Consequently, vine growth is stunted. We're about 2-3 weeks behind "normal," and more than 5 weeks behind last year, an extraordinarily early year. Stay tuned, a late-season harvest well into October is looming.

We recently celebrated daughter Nyssa's 22nd birthday, with a splendid dinner that was accompanied by our Stag Hollow 1996 *Vendange Sélection* pinot noir, a vintage when Nyssa was just a year old. It's been a ~decade since we've tasted this wine. Wow! What a surprise! It was terrific!

Team Stag Hollow is seeking runners--of any skill or age--to participate in the Oregon Wine ½ marathon on September 3rd, which finishes in Carlton, OR. If interested, contact Mark or Jill for Team entry information. Race info: <http://destinationraces.com/runoregon/>

Futures offering on 2016 Estate Tempranillo

Our 2016 vintage Tempranillo has all the tell-tale signs of becoming a classic Tempranillo, showing depth, complexity, and aging potential. Being an early-harvest vintage we picked Tempranillo early, though after pinot noir, on September 28th at 24 Brix. Timing was perfect;

not only for flavor, but for weather. Once October arrived the rains settled in for good, raining nearly every day.

After crushing and destemming the Tempranillo grapes, they were fermented in two lots using separate yeasts. One yeast tends to complement big-mid palate mouthfeel, smooth tannins, and spicy finish, while the other—a Rioja selection—tends to enhance varietal characteristics and phenolic structure (depth and aging). The grapes were fermented for 14 days and then were transferred to 2-year old French oak and 4-year old Oregon oak barrels to age on the yeast lees (cells) for 6 months. This aging process on the lees is known as *sur lie*, a chancy practice that typically enhances complexity and mouth feel. Of note, the *sur lie* method is a fixture of Stag Hollow winemaking; every red wine crafted by Stag Hollow from 1994 through 2016 has been produced this way.

In April, the 2016 Tempranillo was racked off the lees into 4-year old French and Oregon oak barrels, and one new Hungarian barrel (same oak species as in France). Once racked, a wine sample of equal size was drawn from each barrel, blended together, and bottled (barrel sample) for our pouring at the Memorial Day holiday tastings. Reap big savings on this wine by purchasing it on futures by the case at \$252 (\$21/btl) and ½ case at \$135 (\$22.50/btl).

Last call for 2015 Vendange Sélection and Reserve Pinot Noir Futures

The 2015 vintage was a hot one, setting records for the most days at or above 90 degrees. With this kind of warmth, the pinots offer big intense fruit with plenty of structure and depth, yet surprisingly balanced for such a year.

Last November we poured samples and sold futures of the 2015 Stag Hollow *Vendange Sélection* and *Reserve* pinot noirs. Both wines were a big hit with customers, as evidenced by a high volume of futures sales. For those who missed the tasting last fall, you have one more opportunity to purchase futures of both wines. During the upcoming tastings, the 2015 *Reserve* will be poured **in a mini-flight of reserves that includes only warm vintages (2006 and 2012)**. Futures price for the 2015 *Reserve* or *Vendange Sélection* is \$198 @ 1/2 case (\$33/btl) and \$360 @ full/dual-mixed case(\$30/btl).

New Releases

2015 Estate Tempranillo

This wine had its debut a few weeks ago at the annual Yamhill-Carlton AVA tasting hosted by Anne Amie Winery and attended by over 500 people. The 2015 Tempranillo, paired with our 2014 *Reserve* pinot noir and 2014 Dolcetto, ended up being our most popular wine and inspired a lot of conversation, since Stag Hollow is the only winery in this AVA producing estate-grown Tempranillo. One question kept recurring, which was phrased in a high-pitched quizzical yet skeptical way: you can ripen Tempranillo here [northern OR]? Indeed, but only with a fanatical winegrower.

The 2015 Tempranillo is the first retail offering from Stag Hollow, seeing as the 2014 Stag Hollow Tempranillo sold out long ago during its futures sales in November 2015. We marvel at the 2015 Tempranillo's layers of complexity while retaining structure. It should be labeled as a *reserva* or *gran reserva*; even so, simply Stag Hollow Tempranillo works just fine for us. (\$30.00/btl; 25.50/btl at 15% case or mixed case price).

2014 Dolcetto

Last night we opened our new 2014 Dolcetto D'Yamhill *Superiore* (e.g., our highest quality designation), which we are releasing during the upcoming six tastings. Whoa, the '14 is a hefty dolcetto, akin to our rich-styled 2006 and 2009 dolcetto. Jill remarked: "this dolcetto has the structure and length of a Barolo!" Well, 2014 is an extraordinary vintage; it sure is for dolcetto.

Last fall, our 2014 Dolcetto D'Yamhill debuted on the wine list of the Purple Café, Seattle area's top wine bar (4 locations). The listing included a three-dolcetto flight that paired us with dolcetto from Washington and Italy's Piedmont. Since then, this wine has gained a following, and we're down to our final 15 cases. The 2014 Dolcetto D'Yamhill is priced at \$22/btl (\$18.70/btl in mixed or solo cases); 2014 *Superiore* is priced at \$24/btl (\$20.40 case price).

2013 Yamhill-Carlton Pinot Noir

Being patient here. Remember the 2007 pinot noirs? It took considerable time for that delightful vintage to show its hidden treasures, and it was worth the wait. Now, we are finally ready to release our first pinot noir from the slow-maturing 2013 vintage, the *Yamhill-Carlton*. This wine was originally selected to be our reserve from 2013, the best wine from the vintage; but, with the 2013s being a lighter style vintage (though flavorful and complex analogous to a Burgundy style of the 80's prior to rapid climate change) and is being released between the bolder 2012, 2014, and 2015 vintages, left little doubt to release our vintage's reserve as *Yamhill-Carlton*. Because this wine is sold only at our tasting room, we can offer a special release price of \$22/btl (reg. @ \$25) and \$18.70/btl at case price (66 cases produced).

2015 Muscat

Our dry muscat is back after a two-year break during which we changed trellis systems in the muscat ottonel block (no changes to our other variety, early muscat). In 2015, this versatile blend of two muscats weighed-in at a refreshing 11.8% alcohol while retaining concentrated, perfumed aromas and flavors of orange, citrus, and pears. Our 2015 muscat is an ideal accompaniment to a broad array of foods, including ones that are a challenging match ranging from summer garden salads to Asian noodles in a spicy peanut sauce. The 2015 muscat is priced at \$16.50/btl and \$14.00/btl at case price.

See you at the vineyard. Cheers, Jill and Mark

