

DAN BERGER'S VINTAGE EXPERIENCES

– March 28, 2013; Volume XVII, Issue 7

I visited Parducci Winery this past Wednesday in Mendocino County and was amazed at what the chief operating officer, Tim Thornhill, has done. Not with the wines. Those are the responsibility of Bob Swain, the longtime wine maker and an excellent strategist for a lineup of great value wines. Thornhill's additions to the winery are dramatic and based around the use of water, which is a precious commodity in all wineries. To tell the tale of what Parducci has done...relates to the fact that water, a vital resource for wineries, is a demand item in Mendocino.

After buying the winery in 2004, Thornhill, a tree specialist, had no idea the problems he would face with such issues as waste water disposal. Consultants proposed expensive and impractical solutions. By doing careful analysis of his vines, he reduced irrigation needs, and figured out a way to clean up waste water, saving five million gallons of water per year. And in the process, creating a wildlife sanctuary. Not only are all 240 vineyard acres farmed biodynamically, but the fruit, vegetables and herbs the property grows are given to employees, and the entire property is now more fiscally and environmentally responsible.

And fortunately the wines now coming out of Parducci, some 200,000 cases, are better than ever, most following the style set down decades by John Parducci, now 95 and the patron saint of the project.

Some of our readers may wonder if the reviews... are a lot more hyperbole than truth.

No, they are not.

–DAN BERGER, MARCH 28, 2013

EXCEPTIONAL

2012 Parducci Small Lot Blend Pinot Gris

"Mendocino County: This dramatic white wine delivers wild spice, white peach, and other fascinating aromatics. It is as good as most of the \$20 PGs I have tasted in the last year, and better than most."

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VERY HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

2010 Parducci Reserve Pinot Noir

"Mendocino County: Relatively complex and deep flavors, and a good value. Best in 2-3 more years."

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VERY HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

2010 Parducci Small Lot Blend Merlot

"Mendocino County: Fresh, olive and black cherry aroma, and quite tart."

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BARGAIN OF THE WEEK

2009 Parducci Small Lot Blend Cabernet Sauvignon

"Mendocino County: Dried herbs, tea, and an earthy note that will be part of the wine's complexity in a year or two. A low-oak, crisp red that works nicely with meat dishes. Made in the old Parducci style!"

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WINE OF THE WEEK

2012 Parducci Small Lot Blend Sauvignon Blanc

"Mendocino County: Lemon-lime, Asian pear, and a delicate tropical fruit note mark the dramatic aroma, and the taste is spot-on with dried herbs, tea and spice. And it's dry. "We try to over-deliver on quality," said winery president Gary Glass, and this wine really does. Often seen discounted to less than \$10, an absurd price for such a handsome wine."

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