

CONNOISSEURS' GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA WINE



TRULY JULY 2006

YOU HAVE LONG SINCE RECOGNIZED THAT SYRAH IS ON ITS WAY TOWARDS BECOMING THE NUMBER TWO COLLECTIBLE IN CALIFORNIA...

It might not always be discernible, but there is always method to our madness, and this Issue, with its juxtaposition of three varieties linked to each other in real and media-created ways, is international. Syrah has rushed into prominence in the last two decades, and the spotlights it has stolen belong to Merlot and, to a lesser extent, to Petite Sirah...

Let's take Syrah and Petite Sirah first, because, as the father of Petite Sirah, Syrah would be a bit of a bad sport to elbow aside its progeny... there has developed a cult following for this brawny, inky... more highly structured version of Syrah. We go back to Petite Sirah every couple of years to shake the tree and see if anything new is coming down the pike. Invariably, we find a few wines that we like a lot...

SILKWOOD Stanislaus County 2002

✿ 89

Doing a fine job of delivering Petite Sirah character within a ripe but measured bottling from the Central Valley, Silkwood shows that quality is not a foreign idea in that part of the world. This wine smells of black pepper spice and ripe blackberries with the vaguest hint of jam, and its sense of depth and solidity without excess tannin or overdone ripeness continues on the palate... tightened by finishing tannins and will drink well for several years.

