

Ser Winery Santa Cruz Mountains



Cabernet Pfeffer “Wirz Vineyard” 2016

[T]hese are ninety-five year-old vines that are being sourced by Ms. Walsh, so the variety must have been around for a while. The vineyard in San Benito is dry-farmed on a soil base of granite and limestone. The wine is nicely cool at 13.3 percent alcohol and was made with one hundred percent whole clusters and indigenous yeasts. The bouquet is deep and complex, offering up notes of dark berries, chicory, a bit of coffee grounds, a discreet touch of botanicals (faintly reminiscent of Canary Islands’ reds), lovely minerality and pepper. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully peppery in personality, with a good core, tangy acids, a fair bit of ripe tannin and excellent focus and grip on the long and complex finish. Again, this is sealed under screwcap but shows absolutely no signs of reduction issues- most impressive. Fine juice and a new world to me!

91 pts- John Gilman, View from the Cellar, July-August 2019

Graciano “John Smith Vineyard” 2015

The vineyard is mostly dry-farmed and the wine was fermented with indigenous yeasts and raised in an older French oak puncheon. The 2015 comes in at fourteen percent octane and offers up a lovely and red fruity bouquet of cherries, a touch of blood orange, beautiful, Rioja-like spice tones (Graciano is after all, one of the best grapes in Rioja, though used a lot less than it used to be), a lovely base of soil and a whiff of bonfire in the upper register. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and beautifully transparent, with a good core, moderate, seamless tannins and lovely length and grip on the complex, light on its feet and very nicely balanced finish. This is sealed under screwcap (as are all of Nicole’s wines), but this one showed absolutely no signs of reduction, nearly four years out from the vintage! Fine, fine juice.

92 pts- John Gilman, View from the Cellar, July-August 2019