



31 E MAIN ST,
SUITE #216,
WALLA WALLA,
WA 99362

Spring greetings Rotiesians,

Buds are breaking, all of our bottling is complete, and the world around us is warming. Now that we are all thawing out, it's time take on this year's challenges. This year we have some exciting changes ahead: Starting with the 2015 vintage, the Northern Blend will be 100% Rocks District fruit, a second wine club shipment in Fall, a new format at the Walla Walla tasting room, and a sparkling, new website.

Just recently, we unburied the hybrid head of each Syrah vine that is six inches off the ground, cut back to two buds on four canes which will result in about eight clusters per plant. This is our first step of the growing season on our estate. Fortunately, all the vines look to be in good shape after such a brutal winter. The area around our Rocks vineyard reached -8 degrees F, but with the wind machines running, we were able to prevent the temperatures from dropping below 0.

THE 2015 RED WINES ARE TRULY BEAUTIFUL. IT WILL BE FUN TO SEE IF WE CAN BEAT THE 94 AND 93 POINTS THAT WE SCORED ON THE 2014 NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN BLENDS.

Luckily for all Washington state fruit, the cold hardiness scale was the lowest I have ever seen. Meaning bud damage occurred this year at much cooler temperatures than years past. The late Fall and early Winter gradually cooled from the 30's to 20's to the teens, creating an extremely hardy dormancy. Here is the link to Washington State University's cold hardiness chart, if you would like to learn more, as I find it fascinating and a key to how Washington State will fare with the 2017 harvest. <http://wine.wsu.edu/research-extension/weather/cold-hardiness/> Basically 10% bud damage in Syrah occurred at -6 degrees F in 2017, whereas in 2016 the same model showed 10% bud damage at +4 degrees F. This not only will help our vineyards, but will protect the state's stone fruit and vinifera from catastrophic bud damage. Alright, enough geeking out...

The 2015 red wines are truly beautiful. It will be fun to see if we can beat the 94 and 93 points that we scored on the 2014 Northern and Southern Blends. From 2015 onward, the Northern Blend will be 100% Rocks District fruit. This wine will be more savory and typify the best area to grow Rhône wines in North America. The Syrah is grown off a hybrid head training system with the fruit zone 16" off the ground. This concentrates the energy straight from the rocky soil to the fruit zone, creating an intense savory component. For the Southern Blend, we have been working with the same vineyards for the past 6-10 years, so now have our vineyard practices in place. The work started 3-4 years ago is paying off in the finished product. The Grenache brings the bright red fruits, raspberry, and red currants to the forefront, the Mourvèdre builds structure from tannins, and the Syrah creates lift in the body. This is the most fun wine to blend, as each component adds a different layer to the trinity. The 2016 Southern White, due to heat during the growing season, is more opulent and is sure to pop on the porch this Summer. Much like the last vintage, we barrel fermented the Viognier for richness, then blended Roussanne and Marsanne to bring the ripping acidity.

For Better or worse we are selling out of our special release wines Little g, Dre, and Homage and we want our Rotiesians to receive these wines before anyone else! So, next is a change that I want to share with you in my main correspondence of the year, as it affects you and your future allocations. We made 250 cases each of Homage and Little g and 150 cases of Dre in the 2015 vintage.

Since we produce such limited quantities of the special release wines, we do not have enough to supply both our tasting rooms and all our club members. To ensure Rotiesians get top priority, we are adding a Fall allocation beginning this year. We will ship two bottles each of these three wines to you when released in late September.

If there is a wine you prefer, then you can shift to three bottles each of just two wines, or if you really like one, just choose 6 bottles of the wine you particularly enjoy– we want you to have a choice. If you would like more than 6 bottles, we will do our best to accommodate. More details to follow, but we want you to be aware well in advance of the fall shipment. As club members, you'll get the same great deal as always– Rotiesian pricing of \$45/bottle, as opposed to \$65 retail.

**FOR BETTER OR WORSE
WE ARE SELLING OUT OF
OUR SPECIAL RELEASE
WINES, LITTLE G, DRE,
AND HOMAGE, AND WE
WANT OUR ROTIESIANS
TO RECEIVE THESE WINES
BEFORE ANYONE ELSE!**

We really enjoy taking our time with tastings. A seated small-group tasting allows us to give in-depth descriptions of new wines, get to know new customers or to catch up with old friends. In a crowded tasting room this can prove especially hard, so beginning mid-May, the Walla Walla tasting room will be open by appointment only, seven days a week. It'll give our club members and guests the best possible experience while visiting Rotie on the East side. Keeping it convenient, reservations may be made online, over the phone, or by email.

We are improving each year in all aspects of the winery– our passion does not wane. I look forward to seeing you all at Rotiesian club events in SoDo or Walla Walla this spring.

Respectfully,



Sean Boyd

