



WILDHURST
VINEYARDS

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December 2008

The Big Freeze

The final grapes of the year were processed through the cellar on October 30 and, believe it or not, they were Sauvignon Blanc. They were beautifully riddled with botrytis (known as the “noble rot”) and full of the flavors that inevitably follow its presence. What a great luscious wine it will make.

I like the quality of wine in this vintage, but a strange one it was. It all started with the unusually cold spring that at one point required some areas to frost protect 21 consecutive days and well over 30 accumulative days. About April 20 it dipped to 27-28 degrees for three consecutive days and the damage was devastating. Hardest hit for Wildhurst were Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. Some of our blocks sustained up to 40% loss of crop. Chardonnay showed the worst damage of all. Also significantly affected was our

Merlot. Almost all the vineyards had some sign of how devastating frost can be.

Throughout the early months it appeared that the season was running late and the lack of degree days was certainly the culprit. As we moved through the summer it appeared that harvest was going to be delayed. However, next thing you know, sugars are rising and just like that, harvest was on and not one bit late. It didn't take long for the scenario to unfold.

The frost damage was much worse than first anticipated and the lack of fruit was allowing the vine to mature the crop at an accelerated pace. One by one each and every vineyard was picking out significantly short of normal tonnage. On the average, depending on the area and variety, crop loads were 20% to 40% less than normal. The entire North Coast appellation has

felt the effects, with Lake and Mendocino counties feeling it the most. In some cases not only the shoots and buds were lost, but entire spurs were frozen. This is a very unusual occurrence and one I hope we never have to experience again. One thing for sure, it will take at least a couple of years to recover from the damage sustained in some vineyards. It's been a stark reminder of how difficult and unpredictable farming can be.

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🍷 Featured Wines for December 🍷

🍷 **2006 Cabernet Sauvignon, Lake County, Plunkett Creek** - A bit rustic and rough-hewn, but gives way to a rich, smoky core of currant and blackberry. Crisply tannic, it offers plenty of intensity and flavor deep into the finish. Composed of 100% Cabernet Sauvignon harvested from the Holdenried Ranch. Fermented 100% in stainless with 100% malolactic; 100% barrel-aged for 16 months in oak; 13.8% alcohol.

Retail: \$ 22 Aging potential: 4-6 years Cases produced: 185

🍷 **2006 Merlot, Lake County, Plunkett Creek** - Soft and round with good depth to the plum and currant tones; earthy and rich, followed by smoky green olive. Wraps up with great structure of very rich tannins. Composed of 100% Merlot harvested from the Holdenried Ranch. Fermented 100% in stainless with 100% malolactic; 100% barrel-aged for 16 months in 100% American oak; 14.5% alcohol.

Retail: \$ 22 Aging potential: 4-6 years Cases produced: 172

🍷 **2007 Chardonnay, Lake County, Plunkett Creek** - Smooth, rich and creamy with good focus. Very complex style with layers of vanilla, fig and citrus. Very lively wine that turns supple and delicate on the finish. Composed of 100% Chardonnay harvested from the Holdenried Ranch. Fermented 100% in oak; 100% barrel-aged for 10 months in 100% American oak; 14.1% alcohol.

Retail: \$ 20 Aging potential: 3-5 years Cases produced: 174

**Wine Club Members: Please pick up your wines within the next 30 days.
TASTING ROOM OPEN DAILY 10-5**

Extra Holiday Savings!

Wine Club members benefit with the December release of 3 Plunkett Creek wines with a special 30% discount (regularly 15% off the retail price) and no increase in shipping costs! Enjoy these savings with a larger discount and greater value.

WINE CLUB RELEASE PARTY

**Saturday, December 13
4-7 p.m.**

Wildhurst Tasting Room

Serving light appetizers and the new releases, including the new Port.

Wine Club Members:

Here's your opportunity to taste the new releases and pick up the featured wines.

Wine, Women, Wildhurst

Over 100 women attended the sixth in a series of "Girls Just Wanna Have Wine" special events held in the Wildhurst Tasting Room on November 7. Adhering to the night's theme, most of them were wearing gaudy Christmas and holiday-themed sweaters. For a \$5 charge, the women enjoyed Wildhurst wines and gourmet foods, including Greek olives, specialty breads, cheeses and stuffed grape leaves. Gourmet chocolates complemented the wines.

Half of the evening's proceeds and additional contributions enabled the Wildhurst staff to donate over \$200 to Operation Tango Mike, a local organization that supports military troops overseas.



Displaying their "tacky Christmas sweaters" are, left to right: Amy Williams, Susan Rigby, Rebecca Dierssen, Michele Dibble, Carmen Huber, and Ann Vonwal.

New Release

Non Vintage Port, Lake County

Tawny appearance, chocolate and smoky caramel. Turns ripe and savory on the finish without giving up its firm structure. Composed of 100% Zinfandel harvested from the Holdenried Ranch. Fermented 100% in stainless; 100% barrel-aged for 7 years in 100% American oak; 19.85% alcohol and 10.2% residual sugar.

Retail: \$42 (750 ml)

Aging potential: Unlimited

Cases produced: 136



Mexican Fiesta Harvest Party

The annual Harvest Party, held under the oaks on the Holdenried Ranch, was another delightful autumn day "in the country." Guests enjoyed authentic Mexican food, prepared and served by the staff of Jimmy's Deli and Taqueria of Lakeport, and pourings of Wildhurst wines.

The dessert competition, always a popular feature of the event, received special help from Ron and Cheryn Chips. Taking on the difficult task of sampling and judging all the delicious entries were Annette Hopkins, Bruce Allard, and Jose Escalante.



Dessert competition winners, pictured left to right: Tom Smythe, the "Bobby Crocker award" for his Walnut Cheesecake; Laura McAndrews for her Grandma Petunia's Apple Crisp; Debra Watson, the "Betty Crocker award" for her Brown Butter Blueberry Tart; and Annette Higday, the "Best of Show" winner for her beautiful and tasty Poached Pears & Frangipane Tarts.



Wine Club members enjoying the afternoon festivities, pictured left to right: Nancy Cary Smith, Bobbi Towne, John Maley, Neil Towne, and Vicky Maley.



Wine servers, pictured left to right: Pablo Ramirez, Bryan van Lingen, and Ryen Goering.

Special Events

Friday, February 13

VALENTINE'S EVE WINEMAKER DINNER

ROB ROY GOLF CLUB, COBB

Wine Club members and guests are invited; call the Tasting Room, 707-279-4302, for information and reservations. (Note: the dinner is on the evening before Valentine's Day.)

Saturday, February 14

3RD ANNUAL WINE & CHOCOLATE

Benefit for the Lake Family Resource Center Domestic Violence Family Shelter, Mt. Konocti Growers, Noon-4 p.m. \$35 advance, \$40 at the door. Featuring 30 wineries and gourmet chocolates, silent auction, wine store, antique car show; wine country picnic lunch for \$10. Call 707-262-1611 for information and tickets.

Friday, April 3

"GIRLS JUST WANNA HAVE WINE"

Girlfriends night out, 5-8 p.m., Wildhurst Vineyards Tasting Room. Details at 707-279-4302.

News from the Tasting Room

Here we are with Christmas just a few weeks away and if you're like most of us, you still have a never-ending list of things to complete. If you start with Wildhurst, you'll save yourself a lot of time. Once again, the Tasting Room is filled with fabulous goodies, from holiday linens to candles, with everything in between. As always, we can fill your gift baskets with local gourmet foods, dried pears, walnuts and, of course, local wine!

Something we can't seem to keep around very long are decorative signs by The Painted Word. Displayed on the new Vineyard Collection are sayings like, "Que Syrah, Syrah," "Do you know the way to Cabernet," and the ever-popular, "Girls just wanna have wine," as well as humorous quotes and heart-felt sentiments. For the giver of unique gifts, we have a hand-blown wine decanter that fits right on the wine bottle. It allows your wine to breathe gently and release its full flavor and aroma as you pour.

Simply put, we have great wine, great gifts and a great staff to help you with all your shopping needs. Hope to see you soon!

Cheers!

Valerie Ramirez
Tasting Room Manager



Wine Club Members:
Please keep us up to date with any email address changes. Wildhurst Vineyards will be communicating more via emails, sending you notifications of case sales and special events.



Wine Serving Guide

At this time of year our staff often fields the question, "How much wine do I need to buy to serve my guests?" Here's an easy guide for you to follow, so you can plan your purchases and your servings.

<i>Number of Guests</i>	<i>Bottles of Wine</i>
2 guests	1-2
6 guests	3
8 guests	3-4
10 guests	4-5
12 guests	5-6

Education Pavilion at Clear Lake State Park

Sharing the wonders of nature with children has been a principal goal in the fundraising efforts of the Clear Lake State Park Interpretive Association to build an outdoor education pavilion adjacent to the park's visitor center. Groundbreaking for the pavilion was part of "A Wild Affair in your Park" on Saturday, Oct. 4. Construction of the pavilion is underway and is expected to be completed in the spring, possibly in time for the annual Heron Festival and Wildflower Breakfast in late April.

Wildhurst owner Myron Holdenried represented his grandparents, Fred and Nellie Dorn, who donated the property that became the state park

over 60 years ago. Wildhurst and its customers have supported the pavilion project through donations from case sales.



Myron Holdenried, third from right, joined dignitaries and donors in breaking ground for the new education pavilion at Clear Lake State Park.

The Big Freeze

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On the upside, it was a good harvest. We have great wines in the cellar, and I'm excited to be currently working on the Sauvignon Blanc blend. We also have some surprises coming your way. One is a delightful wine that will certainly be a first for Wildhurst...a dry Muscat. Yes, bone dry and serious as they come. This wine was made from my favorite clone of the Muscat variety. Myron grafted some vines two years ago at the Home Ranch to Riesling and Muscat. He asked if I were partial to any clones and immediately I requested the Orange Muscat clone. It's terpenes that give Muscats their distinct flavor, and this clone is loaded with them. It's a very intense wine and one I can't wait to share with you all.

It's back to the cellar for me. Although harvest is complete, the most demanding work is still ahead. I hope you all have the best holiday season this year. Remember to bring all your holiday company to the Tasting Room to meet Valerie and her great staff. May this New Year bring you the very best!

Mark Burch
Wildhurst Vineyards Winemaker



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

❧ *Happy Holidays from the Wildhurst Family* ❧

We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Thank you for your support this past year. We look forward to sharing many more good times and good wines with you in 2009!

Myron and Marilyn Holdenried and the Wildhurst Family

