

# LOXTON



## BOOMERANG CLUB NEWSLETTER

### SPRING 2022

#### SPRING WINE CLUB RELEASE

##### WINEMAKER'S SELECTION

**2021 ROSÉ, VIN GRIS OF SYRAH (SONOMA VALLEY)**

**2019 GSP, ESTATE (SONOMA VALLEY)**

**2019 ZINFANDEL, SONOMA HILLSIDE VINEYARDS (SONOMA VALLEY)**

**2018 SYRAH, GRIFFIN'S LAIR (PETALUMA GAP)**

**2017 SYRAH, ROSSI RANCH (SONOMA VALLEY)**

**2018 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, MCGRAW VINEYARD (SONOMA VALLEY)**

##### OPTIONS FOR CUSTOM ORDERS

ALL WINES FROM OUR WEBSITE ARE AVAILABLE, BUT THE FOLLOWING ARE PARTICULARLY HIGHLIGHTED

**SONOMA REDS - LOT 16 (SONOMA VALLEY)**

**PETITE SIRAH, ESTATE (SONOMA VALLEY)**

**2017 SYRAH, GRIFFINS LAIR (PETALUMA GAP)**

**2016 PORT (SONOMA VALLEY)**



Next to the picking decision, pruning is the most important decision in determining wine quality

Dear **First Name**,

We are pruning the vineyard as I write this newsletter. It's a little earlier than normal, partly due to logistical reasons and partly due to it being very dry and warm and the vines might wake up early from their Winter sleep. If Malaco and I prune the vineyard it would take us a month and this would lead to uneven bud break so to get the job done in just a few days I ask for help from my vineyard manager Rafael Oseguera and his team. Although some of the bigger wineries have their own crew, it is a common occurrence for vineyards to just use the services of one of the many vineyard managers and their teams. It is their job to juggle multiple crews to farm and maintain the various vineyards that they manage. I'm in awe of these companies as they need to have considerable vineyard experience, be up to date on all the laws and regulations regarding overtime, breaks, bathrooms, shade, water access and regulations regarding worker safety and liability. If that weren't enough, they have to manage many people and be the advisor liaising between the grower and the winery client when sometimes the best interests of both can be on opposite sides. I have decided to introduce the managers for the different vineyards that I work with throughout the newsletter so you can appreciate who makes my job so much easier. Winemakers should know that they are only as good as the grapes they receive!

This is the first club release where you will begin to see the influence of the decision made to dump out most of the 2020 wines due to smoke taint. If this weren't enough, I'm also juggling smaller than normal production in 2021. For many years I've had a steady release schedule with 1 white wine and 5 red wines per offering and some interesting options for those who want a bigger choice. There will be significant gaps in releases, however, as these shortages work their way through the next few club releases. While some producers might purchase wines from other wineries with excess inventory to bridge that gap, it's not something I do as my offerings have always been from wines I've made and from vineyards where I've had input on growing and harvesting.

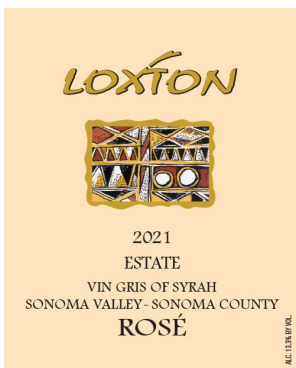
While I have had to move some releases around and the quantities are small, the quality of the '18, '19 and '21 harvests has been excellent and I couldn't be more happy with the new releases. Rose has finally become more mainstream and to celebrate my 21st version I've included it as a delightful Summer wine. The Sencillo (Viognier/Riesling) has been delayed until the Fall. The Hillside Zinfandel is a great wine for Summer as well and the new GSP is probably the richest of that series so far although quantities are very limited. The 2 Syrah wines are very different in style, but not in quality, with the Griffin's Lair being softer and the Rossi being the bigger wine. I'm particularly happy with the '18 Cabernet from the McGraw vineyard. Options include the Estate Petite sirah, Port and the remaining cases of Sonoma Reds Lot 16 offered last Fall as well as any wines remaining from our Winter list. After the hiatus of 2020, it will be great to get the first of our 2021 wines red wines ready for bottling this Summer (if I can just get the bottles!)

Cheers,



Chris Loxton

# 2021 ROSÉ , VIN GRIS OF SYRAH - ESTATE



Appellation: Sonoma Valley

Blend: 100% Syrah

pH: 3.45

Alcohol: 13.5

Closure: Screwcap

Production: 290 cases

Bottled unfined & lightly filtered February 25th

2022

Release Price: \$20

This is the first time I've added Rosé into a wine club standard offering. I've been making one since 2001 and Rosé has come a long way in that time. The intention has always been to make a "serious" Rosé, much the same way as I might make a Chardonnay, but done in well used barrels so as to not have any oak flavor and bottled early to preserve freshness. While I'd been advised by friends not to make a Rosé, I thought that with a good one I'd be able to drink it if I couldn't sell it!

That first one came about when I was working with a Syrah vineyard on Sonoma Mountain. One clone was particularly late to ripen and wetter soils caused bigger berries and I decided to do it as a Rosé. My thinking at the time was that if the berries were diluted then I would need to get more flavor into the juice before fermentation. The grapes were crushed and the juice and skins macerated together overnight to extract as much character as possible before barrel fermentation. The wine had flavor, was well received, but had a much darker color and a bit more tannin than the best French examples.

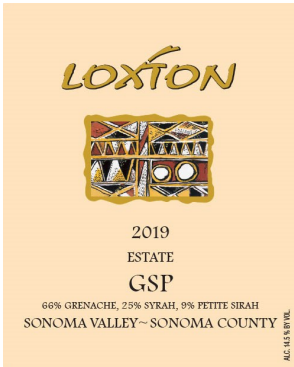
The method has evolved over the years and rather than extract character from grapes that are less intense, I now farm for best flavors and treat the grapes as gently as possible. Grapes destined for our Rosé program are farmed the same way as we do for red wines, just picked a little earlier to achieve lower alcohol levels. The bunches of grapes go directly to press and the juice goes directly to barrel within hours of picking. The result is an attractive pale color, better aromatics and more freshness without sacrificing any of the flavor. Over the past 5 years the Rosé has consistently been my best selling wine through the Summer months.

This version, with its' strawberry and pink grapefruit flavors, will be at its best over the next 12-18 months and will work with many different foods. Rosé is no longer a wine just for Summer!



The Rosé is barrel fermented but uses older barrels that no longer give any oak flavoring

# 2019 GSP - ESTATE



Appellation: Sonoma Valley

Blend: 66% Grenache, 25% Syrah, 9% Petite Sirah

pH: 3.81

Alcohol: 14.5%

Closure: Screwcap

Production: 145 cases

Bottled unfined & lightly filtered August 24th 2020

Release Price: \$35

Rafael Oseguera began managing our Estate vineyard in 2006 when it was owned by Bruce England. I enjoyed working with him when I was buying the fruit and wanted to keep working with him when I leased the property in 2012. While some vineyard managers ask for 100% control over everything done on a property, Rafael is willing to let me to do some of the work which satisfies my desire to keep up a family tradition of growing grapes.

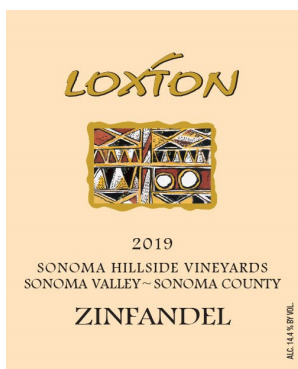
What I respect is that Rafael has worked from the bottom up. One of his first jobs was hoeing weeds for 8 hours a day of back-breaking work, but he quickly worked his way up to being crew leader at the famous Durell vineyard in Sonoma. In the early 2000's he branched out to establish his own vineyard management company and now has 40+ full time workers and manages several hundred acres of premium vineyards in Sonoma and Napa county. As he has done all the different operations in a vineyard he understands what it means for the people who are tasked with doing the work. A good example is with vine training systems that require workers to spend a day picking or pruning with their arms up above head height – interesting theory, but very tiring and hard on the people (and one we don't do here at Loxton!).

Our newest GSP showcases the cherry fruit flavors of the estate Grenache, the color and structure brought by the Petite sirah and the roundness of the Syrah. All grown here on more rocky and drier soils that limit the vigorous nature of Grenache. The GSP has been one of my best selling wines over the past few years and is a wine that seems to go with so many occasions. The good news is that I find this version even a little more concentrated than the last 2. The bad news is that quantities are down 40% below '18 levels. This happened when we had early rains in May at flowering leading to very poor fruit set. Enjoy now and for the next 5 years and this is an excellent wine to have with stews, pork and savory foods.



Rafael has over 30 years experience in vines and now has one of his sons involved as well

# 2019 ZINFANDEL - SONOMA HILLSIDE VINEYARDS



Appellation: Sonoma Valley

Blend: 50% Estate, 50% Rossi Ranch

pH: 3.86

Alcohol: 14.4%

Closure: Screwcap

Production: 146 cases

Bottled unfined & lightly filtered August 24th 2020

Release Price: \$32

Grape vines are susceptible to a disease we know as Eutypa Dieback, called by its more descriptive name “Dead Arm” disease in Australia. It’s a wood rot fungus whose spores are spread into the air by falling raindrops. These spores can get into fresh pruning wounds where the infection spreads into the wood and it slowly dies back. The only solution is to cut back the affected wood past where the infection has spread. In 2005 I lost several years production of Zinfandel when the Stonetree vineyard had to be cut back to knee height and the vines reestablished from a sucker.

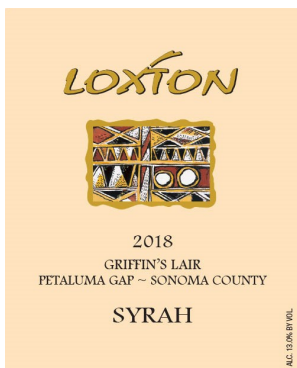
As always, prevention is better than cure so we normally wait as long as possible before pruning so that most spores have already been dispersed by rainfall. Once the sap begins to flow this also helps to clean out the pruning wounds. In addition, it has become more common to paint the pruning cuts with a barrier to prevent the fungus from entering the vine. The most common sealant is somewhat toxic and the vineyard workers must have gloves and eye protection when they apply it. Here we use an organic product that costs more, but it’s a lot safer to apply and it just seems like it’s the right thing to do. Rafael was delighted that I have insisted on its use but told me a funny story on why its not more commonly used. This organic product is clear and can’t really be seen and sometimes vineyard owners aren’t sure that the job they have paid for is actually done. The more toxic product sets to a pink barrier and is easily seen and owners are satisfied their money is well spent. It seems our vineyard managers must also have a keen knowledge of human behavior!

Our new Hillside vineyards Zinfandel combines the best of our estate vineyard and fruit from the Rossi Ranch. Our Estate production was not enough to bottle by itself and it’s lower acid and black fruit flavors has been complemented by the bright raspberry notes from Rossi. This is a wonderfully fruity and medium bodied wine that will be great with grilled foods and is ready now and for the next 4 years.



Once the vines are pruned the crew come back to paint sealer over the pruning cuts

# 2018 SYRAH - GRIFFIN'S LAIR



Appellation: Petaluma Gap, Sonoma County

Blend: 100% Syrah

pH: 3.87

Alcohol: 13.0%

Closure: Screwcap

Production: 93 cases

Bottled unfined & lightly filtered August 26th 2019

Release Price: \$35

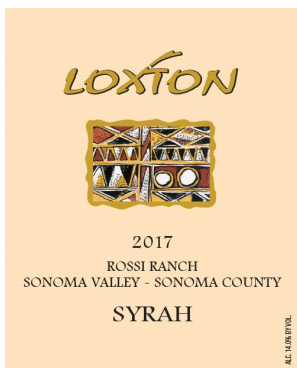
For much of my time with Griffin's Lair I dealt with Glenn Alexander of Bacchus Vineyard Management. Glenn also knows great wines, has an excellent cellar and his wife Melissa is one of the best cooks I know! A native of East Texas, Glenn moved to Sonoma County after 20 years in business and bought a house with 9 acres of old vine Zinfandel in Russian River. He took viticulture classes and interned at a vineyard management company and was soon farming for his neighbors. He then established his own vineyard management company working with some of the best names in the business. In addition to knowing grape growing, Glenn has a very practical knowledge of the economics of running a business. Sometimes winemakers have ideas for growing grapes that would require an unlimited budget and huge numbers of workers, but when costs of farming are greater than revenue, this can't be sustainable! I loved working with Glenn and his a la carte approach to farming as he was more than willing to say "It's fine, we can do that, but here's what it's going to cost". With access to great vineyards and excellent farming, it wasn't too long until he established his own brand "Sanglier Cellars".



Glenn Alexander also farmed the Kick Ranch where I got Syrah and Petite sirah

This is my 10<sup>th</sup> vintage of Griffin's Lair Syrah and unfortunately it will be the last for a while. The area I have been getting, which was predominantly the 877 clone, has been showing symptoms of decline for several years. By the end of harvest 2018 enough vines had been removed to make the section no longer economically viable and it was slated for removal. This is such a pity as the wines have been excellent, but I've seen this in other vineyards as well where the 877 clone has been used. When I taste through the Griffin's Lair wines from these 10 harvests I find a common thread through them all, related to the texture in the wine. They typically have a lower alcohol than my other vineyards as the moderate climate allows full flavor development at low sugars, but this isn't readily apparent as the Griffin's Lair wines have what I call a "thick" texture. There is a richness that also shows in wines from other producers using this fruit, and it leads to a wine that can be enjoyed by itself or is excellent with food. Drink now and for the next 5 years.

# 2017 SYRAH - ROSSI RANCH



Appellation: Sonoma Valley

Blend: 100% Syrah

pH: 3.73

Alcohol: 14.0%

Closure: Screwcap

Production: 124 cases

Bottled unfined & lightly filtered March 18th 2019

Release Price: \$35

Phil Coturri took over the vineyard management of Rossi Ranch following the 2012 harvest. Phil has a larger than life personality and has been growing fabulous organically farmed grapes for many years. His management company, Enterprise, has grown into one of the bigger companies and farms a who's who of great vineyard properties in Sonoma and Napa. Much of Rossi has been replanted while keeping as much as possible of the original plantings from 1910. These changes have resulted in my Rossi Syrah now coming from the Lawndale #7 Block, planted using the Alban "power block" selection. Enterprise has a manager, Nellie Pretzel, dedicated to the Rossi Ranch and this leads to a greater understanding of the unique soils and microclimates of the ranch. Although a poet by training, Phil has been around vineyards for much of his life and operates on the principle that to grow good grapes you must know great wine and has travelled extensively in the Rhone and elsewhere. It seemed almost inevitable that he would be involved in the wine making process and his brand, Winery Sixteen 600, has access to some of the best fruit that he farms.

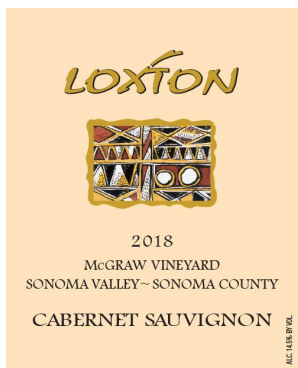


Phil Coturri has won numerous awards for his organic and biodynamic farming methods in Sonoma and Napa Counties

I appreciate the organic nature of his farming and his dedication to grow the best grapes possible. Picking and farming are exemplary, and apart from our estate grapes, this is the cleanest fruit that comes into the winery. As I am half of the sorting team when fruit is delivered, I really appreciate that I have almost nothing to do. Rossi fruit is virtually free of leaves and other debris, what we call "mog", or material other than grapes.

The Rossi Syrah is usually the biggest of my Syrah wines and is kept longer in bottle before release for that reason. It is my last release from 2017 and the extra time has allowed the wine to showcase the meaty and gamey side of the Syrah grape. It will be at its best with more sturdy meals and will continue to do so for another 8+ years for those with cellar space.

# 2018 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, MCGRAW VINEYARD



Appellation: Sonoma Valley

Blend: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

pH: 3.69

Alcohol: 14.5%

Closure: Diam Cork

Production: 146 cases

Bottled unfined & lightly filtered July 6th 2020

Release Price: \$37

Dino Amantite manages the McGraw vineyard. Dino and his mother, Norma, are custodians of the neighboring Pagani Ranch, famous for its old vine Zinfandel grapes. Like me, he is a fourth generation grape grower but has been involved in growing grapes his whole life. He has an old-timers knowledge of the land and its vines and can be found most often on a ATV among the 140 year old vines on the family vineyard. With a large vineyard and a big crew to keep it going, he began looking after the McGraw vineyard in 2014, which seemed like a natural fit as it is his neighbor further west.

As each growing year is unique, it helps to have a long history of farming in the same place. There is a local's knowledge of where the water runs in a wet year, what areas dry out too quickly, where the frost danger is worst and it's a knowledge that takes a lifetime to build. My father would often tell me that by the time he reached 90 he would have seen everything so he'd know what to do about it. It's probably why he was so useful in a consulting role after he retired at 85. I know that Dino's family can say the same thing.

The McGraw cabernet wines have always shown lovely bright fruit that typifies the grape and the region. The excellent tannin structure guarantees a good cellar life as the '08 and '12 wines still demonstrate but they are also wines that can be enjoyed in their youth. I have been making wine from this vineyard since 2003 and this new release from 2018 is one of the best, in part due to an excellent harvest, but also in part due to generations of experience growing grapes. As benefits the farming, it is a more traditional Cabernet, with excellent red fruit, and balanced acid and tannin that disappear when having food. It is ready to enjoy now but will hold for up to 10 more years in a good cellar.



Both Dino and this ancient tractor have plenty of farming experience!

## **SONOMA REDS - LOT 16**

**Sonoma Valley • pH: 3.86 • Alc: 14.1% • 50 cases remain of 249 • Screwcap  
Bottled unfined and lightly filtered, August 9th, 2021 • Release Price: \$20**

Small quantities remain of the Lot 16 Sonoma reds that was released last Fall. Blended mainly with Cabernet and Syrah it has smaller quantities of Zinfandel, Grenache and Viognier and is drinking very well but will also reward some time in the cellar if you have the patience. Case discounts apply.

## **PETITE SIRAH - ESTATE**

**Sonoma Valley • pH: 3.63 • Alc: 14.3% • 68 cases • Screwcap  
Bottled unfined and lightly filtered, • Release Price: \$35**

This is my second estate bottled Petite sirah. The wine gives the color and structure to our GSP blend (and for the Pioneer Cuvee blend in the years we make it). When I make these blends we often have small quantities of Petite sirah left over and here I've combined what we had from the '18 and '19 harvests, together with small quantities of Syrah and Grenache to make a non vintage wine. I have been very happy with how Petite has performed here on the estate and additional plantings were made in 2021 so that we will have enough for a vintage dated wine to be released in most years. This version has incredible color and concentration and is a wine to be enjoyed with sturdy meals or for a place in the cellar to gain some complexity and roundness.

## **2017 SYRAH - GRIFFINS LAIR**

**Petaluma Gap • 100% Syrah • pH: 3.73 • Alc: 14.0% • 35 cases remain  
Screwcap • Bottled unfined and lightly filtered, March 18th 2019 • Release Price:\$35**

This wine was released last year but small quantities remain. The 2017 Griffin's Lair Syrah is one of my favorite vintages in the 10 that I made. A long growing season gave the flavors I want at moderate alcohols and in 2017 everything went right for this vineyard. Proximity to the bay meant that it escaped the extreme heat we saw in early September and early ripening meant that I still had electricity to finish the fermentation process and the wine was safely in barrel before fires cut the power. This is an excellent wine with food or by itself. It shows the savory and spicy side of Syrah with the oak now completely absorbed into the wine.

## **2016 PORT**

**Sonoma Valley • 100% Syrah, Estate • pH: 3.78 • Alc: 18.2% Sugar 8.8% • 125 cases  
Cork Finish • 500mL • Bottled unfined and unfiltered, August 22nd, 2017 • Release Price: \$30**

This is in the "Ruby" port style, showing darker color and more fruit than our 10 year old Tawny offering. It is made with 100% Estate Syrah and fermentation is stopped with pure grape alcohol to leave a wine to have after dinner with chocolate based desserts or by itself. While many Ports are just too sweet, this has enough acid and tannin to keep the finish clean. Good for 4-6 weeks after opening.

**Wine Club Weekend Pickup Days!**  
**Every Weekend in April 11:00-5:00**

Although Sonoma County has begun easing the restrictions that have been in place for the past few years, I have decided that for a number of reasons we will approach this cautiously. The new club releases will once again be available for tasting and pick-up each weekend in April. This will spread out visitation and allow people to relax and enjoy the beautiful scenery while enjoying the new wines. We have found a very positive response when people taste wines made from vineyards they can see and it is part of the farm to table (vineyard to bottle) experience I have been aiming for. To improve the experience we have been upgrading the facilities with landscaping, paving stones and shade cloth and we look forward to your visit!

You can book a tasting on-line or by contacting us at [winery@loxtonwines.com](mailto:winery@loxtonwines.com) or 707-935-7221



Malaco has become expert at laying flagstones!

SHIPPING RATES
Shipping costs have continued to increase. Although I am billed over \$70 to ship a case of wine to the East Coast, I have been subsidizing the cost as a benefit to club members. Once again we will again offer subsidized flat rate shipping:  CA shipping is <b>\$15 per case up to 12</b> NV, AZ, ID, NM, OR and WA shipping is <b>\$20 per case up to 12</b> AK, HI shipping is <b>\$70 per case up to 12</b> All other states, shipping is <b>\$35 per case up to 12</b>
Additional charge will apply if address is incorrect or package is undeliverable resulting in redirection or return

<b>WINE CLUB ORDER FOR:</b>				
PLEASE MAKE ANY CUSTOMIZATIONS OR UPDATES TO YOUR INFO ONLINE, VIA E-MAIL, MAIL OR PHONE BY <b>03/24</b>				
<b>UNFORTUNATELY WE ARE NO LONGER ABLE TO ACCEPT FAXES</b>				
STANDARD ORDERS WILL BE BILLED 03/29 AND SHIPPED 04/04, PICKUPS AVAILABLE STARTING 04/02				
<b>CUSTOM ORDERS WILL BE BILLED AND SHIPPED SHORTLY AFTER THEY ARE RECEIVED</b>				
Standard 6 <input type="checkbox"/>			Custom <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>QTY</b>	<b>PRICE</b>	<b>THE WINES</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1	\$20	2021 ROSÉ, VIN GRIS OF SYRAH		
1	\$35	2019 GSP, ESTATE		
1	\$32	2019 ZINFANDEL, SONOMA HILLSIDE VINEYARDS		
1	\$35	2018 SYRAH, GRIFFINS LAIR		
1	\$35	2017 SYRAH, ROSSI RANCH		
1	\$37	2017 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, MCGRAW VINEYARD		
<b>OPTIONS FOR CUSTOM ORDERS</b>				
0	\$20	SONOMA REDS - LOT 16 *25% CASE DISCOUNT		
0	\$35	NV PETITE SIRAH, ESTATE		
0	\$35	2017 SYRAH, GRIFFINS LAIR		
0	\$30	2016 PORT 500ML		
6	\$194	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		
<b>-\$38.80</b>		LESS 20% WINE CLUB DISCOUNT *SONOMA REDS CASE DISCOUNT IN PLACE OF OTHER DISCOUNTS		
<b>\$155.20</b>		<b>PRE-TAX TOTAL</b>		
CA	Out-of-state	8.5% SALES TAX ON CA ORDERS (LOCAL TAXES APPLY IN MI, MO, NH, OK, TN,VA)		
\$13.19	\$0			
\$168.39	\$155.20	<b>WINE TOTAL WITH TAX</b> (IF APPLICABLE)		
		<b>SHIPPING CHARGES</b> (SEE TABLE ON OPPOSITE PAGE)		
		<b>TOTAL</b>		
<b>MAILING ADDRESS</b>			<b>SHIPPING ADDRESS</b>	
<b>CREDIT CARD INFORMATION</b>				
NEW VISA/MC:			EXP:	
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>				

LOXTON CELLARS  
P.O. Box 70  
GLEN ELLEN, CA 95442



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