



March 2016

Dear Wine Club Member:

We are very excited to present you with our latest wine release:

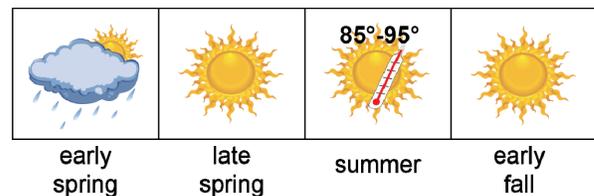
2013 Montemaggiore Nobile

As you probably recall, Nobile is Montemaggiore's own special blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah, combining the depth and structure of Cabernet with the soft black fruit of Syrah. The exact blend varies from year to year, but the 2013 comprises 57% Cabernet Sauvignon and 43% Syrah. We are especially excited about this vintage because the growing season was picture-perfect for Montemaggiore, and most of California's north coast. As a result, the 2013 wines taste wonderful right now with expressive flavors and a smooth texture, yet also have the natural tannin and acidity for long-term aging.

Great vintages at Montemaggiore follow our four fundamental rules:

- Rule # 1 : Lots of rain in the early spring to saturate the soils and fill our ponds
- Rule # 2 : Warm sunny days later in the spring to bring an uniform bud-break and even pollination
- Rule # 3 : Mild summer days with highs in the 80s and 90s to ripen the grapes steadily, with cool nights to maintain acidity
- Rule # 4 : Warm and dry in the early fall so that rains don't swell the grapes and dilute flavors

Great Vintage



2013 followed these rules fairly closely, although we did have a bit of inconsequential rain a few weeks before harvest. The long, moderate growing season produced grapes with balanced acidity, ripe tannins, and reasonable sugar levels. The vintage was so good that we bottled a Reserve wine that will be released to Club members this fall (we've only bottled a reserve two other times in the last 15 years)

The Vineyards. The grapes for the 2013 Nobile (and indeed all our red wines) come from our estate vineyards on a mountainside 750ft high above Dry Creek Valley. The steep 30% terraced slope of Cabernet vines yields grapes tending towards bold black fruit and tobacco flavors. The Syrah component comes from the Hilltop area, contributing blackberry, spices, and smoothness (especially when young).

If you follow our blog, you know that mountainside vineyards produce great wines because their lean soil, steep slope, and high elevation mean that the vines are stressed and the climate is cooler. This in turn leads to small grapes and slow ripening—which means that the wines have deep intensity, rich complexity, and great ageability.

As with all our estate wines, the grapes for this wine were biodynamically and organically farmed. After eleven years of farming in this natural and chemical-free way, Vincent truly appreciates additional strength, vitality and a unique sense of place which biodynamics brings to Montemaggiore wines.

The Growing Season. The 2013 growing season was early, even, and excellent! Given the second year of drought, our rains ended early—the extra sunshine caused the vines to break their winter dormancy and bud out a

few weeks earlier than usual. A warm, dry spring brought strong growth and consistent bud break. The vines bloomed evenly and pollination was fairly uniform. With the exception of one heat spike on the cusp of June and July, our summer temperatures were moderate thus the grapes proceeded ripening very evenly.

Harvest started a bit early (at the end of September) and proceeded quickly over the next three weeks. Two brief rains came in mid-September but they had virtually no impact on the grapes, which were in excellent condition: small, uniform, and clean (little damage and no mildew). Yields were average and sugar levels were moderate. Lise especially noticed the ripe tannins of the Cabernet grapes, which would provide a silky mouthfeel to the wines.

The Crush. The first grapes we harvest always come from our Hilltop Syrah block, which were picked two weeks earlier than usual in 2013, on September 19. The Cabernet was picked on two separate days, with the top four terraces of vines harvested on October 2, and the lower five harvested a week and a half later.

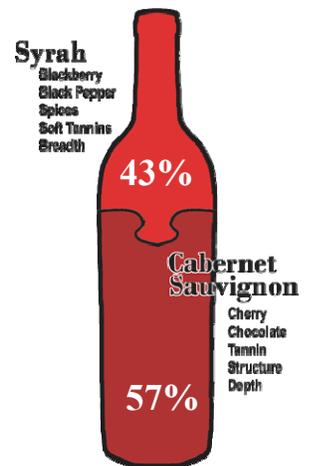
We hand-harvested the grapes early in the morning starting at 4am so that they come into the winery naturally chilled. In prior years, we've waited until sunrise because our steep slopes can be dangerous in the dark. But given low-cost and low-power LED lighting, we now have a several large lights attached to our tractor—and our small crew of pickers use individual “miner’s” lights. Thus we don’t have to expend energy on mechanically cooling the grapes.

The grape bunches were carefully destemmed, sorted by hand and then fermented in a combination of large bins and stainless steel tanks. The upper and lower Cabernets underwent a short cold soak (which is why we want cold grapes to start), followed by a 16- and 10-day fermentation respectively. The Hilltop Syrah underwent a short cold soak and 12-day fermentation. After a gentle pressing in a stainless steel basket press in order to limit astringency, the different lots were barreled down separately.

Aging the Wine. The Cabernet and Syrah were aged in 100% French oak barrels for 18 months. 56% of the barrels were new, and came from three different coopers: Taransaud, Francois Frere, and Ermitage. This is a little more new oak than usual, but we felt that the vintage could handle it. Cabernet (and Cabernet blends) really benefits from new oak, which plumps up the mid-palate and softens naturally assertive tannins. In addition, the wood flavors of vanilla and coconut complement Cabernet’s natural flavors of black cherry and tobacco.

Twelve months into barrel aging, Lise started trying different blends of different lots of Cabernet and Syrah, ultimately deciding on 25% of upper Cabernet, 32% of lower Cabernet, 43% of Hilltop Syrah. The blended wine aged another six months in barrel, and in April of 2015 a total of 225 cases were bottled. The bottled wine was allowed to rest for a year before release, creating subtle new flavors while enhancing the wine’s multi-layered complexity.

Tasting Notes. The 2013 Nobile features enticing aromas of brambly blackberry, black cherry and espresso along with hints of cocoa and dried herbs. On the palate, its structure is classic mouth-filling Cabernet, balancing power and elegance with a smooth and luscious finish. It’s more powerful and less savory than our 2011 Nobile for example, which was a much cooler vintage. This wine carries the hallmarks of Montemaggiore: rich and mouth-filling yet elegant, with well-integrated oak and a long smooth finish. It’s ready to drink now for those who prefer youthful, fruit-oriented wines, but could be cellared for up to 15 years if you prefer mellow, integrated flavors.



We hope you enjoy all the wines in your Spring Wine Club selection! The next Club Release, the 2013 Paolo’s Reserve, will come in October/November. Salut ,

Vincenzo & Lise

Montemaggiore

NOBILE

CABERNET SAUVIGNON 57% · SYRAH 43%

DRY CREEK VALLEY · SONOMA COUNTY

ESTATE GROWN 2013

Technical Data

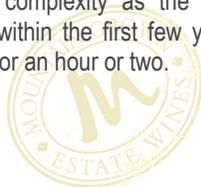
Varietal Blend.....	57% Cabernet Sauvignon 43% Syrah
Average Sugar at Harvest.....	25.1° Brix
Alcohol	14.0%
Cooperage	100% French
Percentage New Oak	56%
Harvest Date	Sep 19 – Oct 11, 2013
Bottling Date.....	Apr 2015
Release Date	Apr 2016
Cases Produced.....	225
Optimum Consumption.....	2017-2027

Tasting Notes

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Nobile pairs well with grilled steak, braised short ribs, grilled sausage, beef and vegetable stew, roasted squash, polenta with grilled portobellos, and aged cheddar.

Montemaggiore Nobile will improve with time in your cellar. In its youth, the wine will flaunt its fruit characteristics, while over time it will gain further complexity as the various elements integrate. If opened within the first few years of release, we suggest decanting for an hour or two.



Vineyard Profile

Located on a mountainside high above Dry Creek Valley, the rocky soils of our estate Cabernet and Syrah vineyards produce intensely flavored grapes at naturally low yields. Using biodynamic practices and organic materials, we farm our all our vineyards without chemical fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides.

Vintage Summary

2013 was an outstanding vintage for Montemaggiore. The grapevines broke their winter dormancy early with a dry spring, which was followed by moderate summer temperatures, and a relatively dry harvest. The long growing season resulted in grapes with balanced acidity, ripe tannins, and reasonable sugar levels—all leading to a classic vintage. 2013 was so high quality that Montemaggiore produced a Reserve wine, which had only happened twice in the prior ten years.

Winemaking Notes

The Cabernet and Syrah were hand-harvested, and each was fermented separately to bring out its strengths: the structured complexity of the Cabernet and spicy berry flavors of the Syrah. Two different lots of Cabernet underwent short cold soaks with a 14-day fermentation while the Syrah underwent a short cold soak with a fermentation of 13 days. After a gentle pressing in a stainless steel basket press in order to limit astringency, the wine aged in French oak barrels. The wine was blended in August 2014, and bottled after barrel aging for 19 months.

