



Wine Club Tasting Notes

June 2008

Jed Steele's Shooting Star "Black Bubbles" Syrah Lake County, CA

This is probably one of the coolest sparkling wines from California I've ever had. Period. It's made by Jed Steele, who is one of California's best winemakers. In fact, I'll argue with anyone who challenges me on this point until I'm blue in the face. Sometimes, when encountering a truly great entity, it's best to let them tell it in their own words... "Now entering my fifth decade as part of the California wine business, I made the decision in 1991 to put my winemaking skills and philosophy, which had slowly developed over the years, into my own label. A winemaker's creativity can be limited, as directed by legal edict, in many of the world's winemaking areas, if he or she is confined to work with the grapes of only one vineyard, one region, one appellation. During my time as a winemaker, I have blended thousands of tons and millions of gallons of wine from the best vineyards California has to offer, ranging from Mendocino to Santa Barbara counties. I have come to realize that the ultimate creation can only be achieved if one goes BEYOND THE TERROIR." -Jed Steele. He is the MAN.

Now for the skinny on the wine. The first thing I'd like to mention is sparkling Syrah is not common in California. The Aussie's are really the first people to put sparkling Shiraz on the map, so to speak, and Jed's son Quincy discovered this while he was working for d'Arenberg (one of Australia's rock-star wineries). Fortunately for everyone, he brought this Down Undah tradition back to California and created a deliciously different sparkler for all of us to enjoy. With that being said, you, Gentle Wine Clubber, should feel privileged to have such a rare, cutting edge wine from California.

Sometimes simple words are best. ("Brevity is the soul of wit." – Lord Polonius, *Hamlet*.) Therefore, the simplest, yet best word I can use to describe this wine is 'yummy'! But seriously, the second word/descriptor which comes to mind is 'blackberries'. Work with me here – this dry, sparkling wine tastes like the smell of standing in a blackberry patch in the dead of summer. AND, most importantly, this is the type of bubbly that will

go really well with a perfectly grilled steak. Bubbles and steak and summertime and life is good...