



Wine Club Tasting Notes

May 2008

2006 Snoqualmie Sauvignon Blanc Columbia Valley, WA

Old habits die hard. For me, seemingly, old hippie habits die harder. Even though I gave up the vegetarian lifestyle, pot smoking and bathing in streams while traipsing all over the USA in my trusty old green Ford Explorer, a few things stuck with me. Generally speaking, I don't purchase any food product without reading the label, don't eat fast food and purchase organic whenever possible. (Well, does eating a Zesto Burger occasionally count as junk?) When it comes to purchasing wine, I definitely pay attention to wineries that practice organic viticulture and sustainable agriculture. Let's face it, do you really want to drink wine from a vineyard which has been doused in pesticides? Thought not. Fortunately, there has been a growing trend in Oregon and Washington for wineries to become certified organic, biodynamic and sustainable. This month, I'm happy to bring you a lovely little Sauvignon Blanc from Snoqualmie, a winery devoted to practicing organic and sustainable agriculture.

The first question undoubtedly is "What is sustainability?" Sustainability aims to promote practices that are environmentally responsible, socially equitable and economically viable in all aspects of agriculture, winemaking and development. A critical goal of Snoqualmie's sustainability and organics program, and these movements in general, is to reduce their "ecological footprint" – or the impact their actions have on their natural surroundings. The folks at Snoqualmie believe that taking good care of their vineyards and local environment are essential steps towards making the best wines possible. This commitment to doing right by the local community and environment forms the core of their sustainability program. Keep in mind, though, sustainable is not the same as organic. While organic practices are specific to agriculture and are highly regulated by the USDA, sustainable practices apply not only to agriculture, but to packaging, fuel and waste management, and employee safety, among other things. (Do you have a warm fuzzy feeling yet?) Most importantly for you, gentle wine drinker, Snoqualmie manages to make some kick-ass wine in the process.

When it comes to Sauvignon Blanc I typically reach for ones from France, Chile, South Africa and New Zealand. I'm not going to make any apologies – many, many Sauvignon Blancs from the US pale in comparison to the juice these countries are putting out. However, when I taste one from the home-land that possesses the qualities I enjoy, I'm all over it. This particular example shows bold and bright aromas followed by a rich mouthful of citrus and melon which linger on the palate. This is a very crisp

and refreshing Sauvignon Blanc that will pair well with a variety of foods, such as seared sea scallops, smoked salmon and pasta with cream sauce. Actually, I'm sitting here typing and simply enjoying a glass...