

## Dear Terroir PLUS Wine Club Member,

What a difference a year makes! We've all witnessed the turn of events our country has taken in 2008. Most folks might say, "not a great year." However, there are always the little things in life to enjoy and cherish and we are often reminded of them when years like 2008 come around. One of those 'little things' for us, is wine. We love making it, we love sharing it, and we love to drink it! So while some people are happy to put the year 2008 behind them, we carried a bit of the old year into the new with the release of a couple of little treasures. Introducing the new *Premier* bottlings, the 2008 Pinot Gris, Naughty Little Hillside and the new 2008 Syrah, Identity Crisis. Once again our Pinot Gris, grown on those, now infamous hillside on our estate, offers a rich creamy character, almost a banana saltwater taffy flavor with a hint of lime and vanilla. Here is one wine you might ask yourself, can it be a Chardonnay? Try it with your favorite seafood, chicken, or pasta and cream sauce dishes. The new Syrah surely has an identity crisis. One look at the bottle and you might not understand it; that is until you pop the cork to discover a Syrah with little color. Now wait a minute, hold on before your imagination runs away with you. This is not a Rosé, nor is it anything like a White Zinfandel. No, this wine is unique in every way. No skin contact with the juice yields a wine with a light coppery complexion. The secondary malolactic fermentation lends a slight buttery character and a hint of nectarine and pomegranate fruit character, topped off with a touch of cinnamon rounds the whole package. This wine is darn near irresistible! Try it with Chinese or Thai cuisines. One last thing, both these wines were just bottled. If you have the patience to hold on to them for a few months you'll begin to see their full potential emerge. If you don't have the patience, open them now, but let them breathe for a few hours before you dive in. The next two bottles in this wine club package need no introduction, they are likely the reason you became involved in our *Terroir* wine program in the first place. After well over a year in barrels, the 2007 Ocean's Ghost Pinot Noir and the 2007 Déjà Vu Pinot Noir are finally here! While both wines taste absolutely delicious now, they will continue to age well in a proper cellar for years to come. Reorders are available for the 2007 Ocean's Ghost Pinot Noir. However the 2007 Déjà Vu Pinot Noir is already sold out. Winemaker notes on all four wines will be available on line at: [babcockwinery.com](http://babcockwinery.com).

Thank you for your continuing support. We hope you enjoy the wines!

Sincerely,

## The Babcocks

Please note the amount your credit card was charged according to your wine club program and where your package was shipped.

	Calif.	West	Central	East	AK & HI
<i>Terroir PLUS</i> Club					
35% Discount	\$125.06	\$129.06	\$135.06	\$137.06	\$149.06
4 Bottle Shipment					

Wines are shipped via United Parcel Service. All California addresses are shipped via UPS Ground. All other states are shipped via UPS 3-Day Select

## Winery Open House - April 18th & 19th

Please join us at the winery on Saturday, April 18, 2009 or Sunday, April 19, 2009 for our annual Open House event held in conjunction with the Santa Barbara County Vintner's Festival. Featured will be wine tastings of all our current release *Premier* wines, as well as samples from our *Terroir Exclusive* portfolio. Also available are barrel samples of the 2007 Nook & Cranny Syrah as well as a new addition to our *Terroir Exclusives* line up, the 2007 Upper Crust Syrah. We will offer our *Terroir Exclusives* and *Terroir Exclusives PLUS* wine club members a one time opportunity to purchase *Futures* of these Syrahs at substantial savings. There is no need to make reservations for the wine tastings. Wine club members taste for free, limited to 4 people. We will host special hours on Saturday, April 18th of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Our Sunday hours will remain the same as always, open 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. We hope to see you at the winery.

**Please Note:** Due to the nature of this event, no persons under the age of 21 years will be admitted on the winery grounds. This includes young children and infants. We thank you for your consideration in this matter.

## Open House V.I.P. Tickets-Saturday, April 18th

As part of our Open House activities we are offering a limited number of V.I.P. tickets for Saturday, April 18th only. As a V.I.P. ticket holder you will step up your wine tasting experience with specially prepared food created by Lori Cordova Catering of Lompoc. Ms. Cordova has worked closely with winemaker Bryan Babcock to bring you a food and wine experience you will not soon forget. Wine Club members price for V.I.P. tickets are \$55.00/couple or \$30.00/person. There is no limit on the number of tickets you can purchase. Reservations are necessary for the V.I.P. experience. To order tickets contact the winery directly at (805) 736-1455. The V.I.P. cellar will be open from noon to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 18th only.

## Our Shipping Policies

Babcock Winery ships via United Parcel Service and will ship to all California addresses using the UPS Ground Service promising delivery within 2 days from ship date. All other states are shipped using UPS 3-Day Select Service. We will guarantee our wines when shipped using our recommended UPS services and will ensure your replacement, or money back should you find the wine to be damaged. This guarantee is only good when you take receipt of the wine upon the first delivery attempt. Babcock Winery & Vineyards can not guarantee our wines if you miss your first delivery attempt, as your package will be returned to the shipper's warehouse until delivery can be accomplished. Please make every effort to have an adult, (21 yrs. of age or older), available to sign for the release of your wine packages on the first day of delivery.

## Shipping Notification Available by Email

Provide us with your email address and we will be happy to send you emails approximately two weeks prior to each wine club shipment. This service provides you information on what wines are being released and when you can expect them to be delivered. It also gives you the opportunity to change your ship date should you require it. If you did not receive an email informing you of this February release, please contact us and ask to be placed on our *Advanced Shipping Notification* email list.



## 2007 PINOT NOIR "OCEAN'S GHOST"

*Estate Grown – Santa Rita Hills*

Every year I try to think of something different to say about this wine. I always start by reading last year's notes just for context. My problem is, every time I read the following, it still sounds so right on:

While a good part of the magic in the Ocean's Ghost section of our ranch consists of the marriage between soil and climate, we match these existential gifts with a radicalism in our farming that is restrained by nothing. I have worked over the years with many vineyards, some of them good, some of them great. In almost every case, at some point along the way I will find myself thinking, "If only the grower would have done this or that, it would be just a little better." And a lot of times it's not that the grower isn't amenable to it. It's just that I am not there on a day to day basis to say, "Okay, NOW!; *now* is when we should leaf pull; *now* is when we should cluster thin." Well, with Ocean's Ghost, it is not unusual for me to start my day there. If something needs tweaking, I drive by the shop and check in with my vineyard manager Rance Minyard. Of course I always find a number of things that need attention, but when it's in the Ghost, Rance knows exactly where to put it on the list of priorities. In fact, half the time he beats me to it. While everything can't be *perfect* all of the time, when you put the words *Optimum Quod Possum*\* on your label, it's good to have at least a few avenues where you can practice your best regardless of the cost. For me, Ocean's Ghost is one of them.

This year's big effort actually took place in the cellar as much as it did in the vineyard. For starters, we decided to carry this wine a full 16 months in barrels so that some of its dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> could exit its way out of those barrels. The problem was that while the CO<sub>2</sub> was leaving, a few infectious critters were arriving. There are a number of pesky little yeast and bacteria that love to grow in the barrels of finished red wines. If you find them quickly enough, you can deal with them. If not, they can take the attractive edge off of a wine. In this case, they were astutely found by our winemaker, Ron Hill. To make a long story short, we looked at this wine and discussed our strategy with it almost everyday for the last month of its stay in barrels. Thank you Ron.

The wine is big, as you might expect, and it's really stunning this year how solid the core of fruit is, even in a wine that is 50%ish new French Oak. While it is rich enough to enjoy now with beef or pork, based on the way the '04 is drinking, this stuff should be singing in about 4 years. Even if you give it just a few months to settle down in the bottle, I think you will be well rewarded. As far as supply goes, if you want to pull the cork on this first bottle, just to get the lay of the land on one of the most earthy, foresty, cherried-out-holly-grail Pinots you have ever tasted, have no fear; you will be able to get more. Unlike the Déjà Vu, with which there is just **no** wine available outside of your Terroir Exclusives bottle, I was able to make an extra 200 cases or so of this wine. I don't know if it will still be available this time next year, but with it only being available to the club and few select restaurants, I suspect we will have a few cases in stock through the summer.

Is it just me, or is this one a little longer in the finish than its predecessors?

Bryan

# Babcock

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WINERY & VINEYARDS

Technical Notes:

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

100% Pinot Noir, Babcock Estate, Santa Rita Hills

VINIFICATION:

16 months barrels age, 50% new French oak

STATISTICS:

pH: 3.50      TA: 6.9 g/L      RESIDUAL SUGAR: Dry      ALCOHOL: 14.3%

BOTTLING DATE: February 2009

RELEASE DATE: February 2009

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 385 cases 750ml

\* *Optimum Quod Possum*: Latin for "As best as I am able."



## 2007 PINOT NOIR “DÉJÀ VU”

*Rabbit Ridge Vineyard, Paso Robles*

**Note: These notes are essentially the same as last. Since this story is a good one, and since it explains the name of this vineyard site, I think I'll tell it again this year. Enjoy the read.**

There I sat, dumbfounded.

It was January of 2005 when one of my employees dropped an email on my desk. Under the caption “PINOT NOIR AVAILABLE” was a photograph. From an impressive elevation, it panned across the top of a vineyard as it looked out over a valley. The soil was dotted with chunky white rocks. I was having a déjà vu with a strong dollop of anxiety. “I’ve been there before,” I thought to myself. “But, *Pinot Noir*, it just doesn’t make any sense?”

I closed my eyes and my mind began to drift back. The last time I had seen soil like that was when I was in Paso Robles about five years ago trying to get a feeling for Cabernet Sauvignon. It was a time when I could still feel the chill of a bad stigma, the result of the terrible Cabernets of Santa Barbara’s past. But it was also a time in which I began obsessing over this notion that some day soon I would be achieving with Cabernet what I was starting to achieve with Pinot Noir. There was this looming potential in the Santa Ynez Valley that was destined to arrive, and when that first brave grower decided to replant the right clone on the right hillside, I wanted to be ready. I needed to find out what made Cabernet tick. So, for months, I drove the back roads of Paso Robles looking at the stuff.

Aside from how hot it got everyday, one thing that struck me was the amount of limestone that you see in the soils as you travel toward the Ocean from town, through a zone the locals refer to as the *West Side*. While driving through this area one morning, something really caught my eye. Up on a ridge a few miles from Highway 101, an almost pure white, south facing limestone hillside had just been planted. “Wow, now that looks cool,” I remember thinking. It was so clean, no doubt having been installed by someone who really knew what he was doing. It was a smaller vineyard, maybe five acres. “In West Side Paso,” I thought, “it has to be Cabernet or maybe Syrah on a dramatic site like that.” Lying there basking in the Templeton Gap, it might even enjoy a cool afternoon breeze every now and then. Bordered by vineyards below, none of which looked quite as compelling, I remember sitting in my car just staring at it.

“Should I drive up there?” I knew they were going to laugh at me. I had this vision of the owner chuckling, “You mean you think we planted the most awesome vineyard in Paso Robles for YOU?” But what did I have to lose? It would only take a few minutes and a pinch of trespassing. I’ve done it before.

Well, as it turns out, it wasn’t the owner who did the chuckling. It was the vineyard manager. Upon arriving, I found some contractors who were putting the finishing touches on a spectacular house that was being built right above the vineyard on the very top of the hill. They gave me the vineyard manager’s number. I called the guy from my cell as I looked out over the vineyard at the vista. The whole thing was riveting. Upon hearing the inevitable, that the house and all the vineyards were the new project of the Rabbit Ridge Winery, I figured it was the last time I would ever set foot on that hill.

Aside from being a bit eerie, when that email hit my desk last January, there was something about it that had me stunned as well. Not only did I have this strong feeling of being there before, not only did it proclaim that those grapes were “now available”, it said that they were *not* Cabernet; they were *not* Syrah.

-more-

# Babcock

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WINERY & VINEYARDS

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Instead, what clung to the hillside in that provocative photo was the most terroir expressive variety on Earth. It was PINOT NOIR. Once my brain cells relaxed enough to allow my eyes to reopen, I read on.

**“We have decided to drop Pinot Noir from our Rabbit Ridge portfolio in favor of pursuing Syrah and other varieties more popular in Paso Robles. We are looking for a good Pinot Noir producer to take the fruit from this special site.”**

Gulp! I went from déjà vu to a panic. “Oh my god, what happens if someone else calls them first!” There was a phone number for the owner. “Erich Russell?” I asked. “That’s me,” he replied. I was thinking about how long it would take to get there if I drove as fast as my tired Montero would go. “Are you going to be there this afternoon?” I asked. “Yes,” he said. “Good. I’ll see you in about 70 minutes.”

It had been five years since I had stood on that limestone drenched hillside. Wow. This time, laced into it was some beautiful, maturing Pinot Noir. I had to pinch myself.

How compelling would it have been five years prior to that moment if I would have known, sitting in my car staring at it, that it was Pinot Noir? The vineyard manager, politely telling me to scram, that would have transcended from embarrassing to painful. It’s freaky enough that this vineyard is actually in my hands to work with now, let alone the fact that it’s Pinot. I mean, what started out as an eerie and perplexing feeling has evolved into a real déjà vu; the age old familiarity of Pinot Noir and limestone. It is one of those things that is old and at the same time, compelling. In a word, classic; like the Grand Cru Pinot Noir vineyards in Burgundy, where the underlying geological plates of limestone break through or get very close to the surface.

With limestone gushing out of its dirt, will Déjà vu ultimately produce wines that resemble great Burgundies? Time will tell. But perhaps even more intriguing to me is this vineyard’s potential to give something totally unique. It’s simply a different place, with a totally different climate than Burgundy. All I can say is that the indication from its first few wines is that Déjà vu’s signature will not only evolve into something individual, but full of rich, sublime fruit as well. This 2007 bottling is STUNNING.

Oh, as it turns out, you *can* get there from here in 70 minutes. I will refrain from commenting on how fast you actually need to drive. Good job Montero.

## Technical Notes:

### VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

100% Pinot Noir, Rabbit Ridge Vineyard, Paso Robles

### VINIFICATION:

17 months barrels age, 50% new French oak

### STATISTICS:

pH: 3.50      TA: 6.8 g/L      RESIDUAL SUGAR: Dry      ALCOHOL: 14.3%

BOTTLING DATE: February 2009

RELEASE DATE: February 2009

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 102 cases 750ml

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$55.00



**2008 PINOT GRIS**  
**“NAUGHTY LITTLE HILLSIDES”**

*Estate Grown – Santa Rita Hills*

Winemaker's Notes:

I put up with these hillsides. Something always seems to be going wrong on at least one of them. From a farming perspective, they are like bucking broncos that don't want to be ridden. But, while being thrown from the tractor does not feel good, one simple taste of the end product justifies why I continue to farm these two incorrigible little pieces of dirt.

While our most crafted Estate Grown Chardonnay may be called *Top Cream*, these hillsides produce, by far, our vineyard's *creamiest* wine. This year's bottling is extraordinary. Off the bottling line today (1-28-09), it smells like a banana saltwater taffy with a hint of lime and vanilla drizzle. It definitely has the tapioca thing going on like last year, and I get just a whisper of an herb that strikes me as spearmint. The mouth is enormous; a super luxurious texture that finishes on the oily side. What can I say, when a wine sort of smells like the cream soda you used to drink when you were a kid, and on the pallet, it's all about the fat, then the word that it all boils down to is CREAMY. And with its long finish, it's creamy *for days*.

Maybe I just need to change my attitude; admit that these high maintenance hillsides are what they are. With a couple more wines like this one, I just might start looking forward to the problems.

Technical Notes:

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

100 % Pinot Gris, Babcock Estate, Sta. Rita Hills

VINIFICATION:

Cool temperature/stainless steel primary fermentation,  
100% Malolactic Fermentation.

ELEVAGE: 4 months sur lees in stainless tank; 20% New French Oak.

FINISHED WINE:

pH: 3.62, TA: 6.5/L, RESIDUAL SUGAR: Dry, ALCOHOL By VOL: 13.8%

BOTTLING DATE: January 27, 2009

RELEASE DATE: March 1st, 2009

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 295 cases 12/750ml



## 2008 SYRAH "IDENTITY CRISIS"

*Santa Barbara County*

### **Winemaker's Notes:**

This wine is having a bit of a meltdown. It doesn't quite know what it wants to be. On the one hand, it is Syrah and it is in a dark bottle. So, if you just grab it off the shelf and don't really study it, you might think it's a red wine; until you get it home and pull the cork. That's when you start looking in the yellow pages for a wine psychologist.

What is it? It's not really a rosé. For starters, it's not really pink. And it doesn't exude pink-wine fruit. No, it's more confusing than that, probably due to the complete malolactic fermentation that we subjected it to. You know, with its slightly coppery hue, it does look like a Blanc de Noir, i.e. a Champagne or sparkling wine made from red grapes . . . except . . . there's no bubbles.

Hmmmm. Remember that hideous genera in winemaking that took off about 20 years ago in response to the glut of Zinfandel that was out there? White Zin it was called. The wines were (and still are) sterile, bleached out, thin and sweet. If they had any fruitiness, it was largely due to blending in something aromatic, like Muscat. A couple of the bigger wineries got real good at making them devoid of all color.

Oh my gosh! Is this wine a *White Syrah*!?

Well, not really; it's bone dry, and it has these buttery tones laced into its delicate, perplexing nectarine/pomegranate fruit. And there is a hint of cinnamon, and a lovely soft texture on the palate, and it's all really quite beautiful; but when was the last time you smelled something like this in a Syrah?

I had a buddy in college. He was at McGeorge in Sacramento studying law while I was at Davis studying wine. We'd get together once a week or so and we would both study alcoholic beverages of some sort, but when it came to wine, he would say to me, "Why don't you stop thinking about it and just drink it?"

I think with this wine I'll do just that.

Cheers, Bryan

### **Technical Notes:**

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

100% Syrah, Estelle Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley

VINIFICATION:

Stainless Steel Fermentation; 100% Malolactic Fermentation

pH: 3.57; TA: 6.7 g/L; RESIDUAL SUGAR: Dry; ALCOHOL BY VOL.: 13.5 %

BOTTLING DATE: January 2009

RELEASE DATE: March, 2009

PRODUCTION: 1,013 cases 12/750ml