

# AHLGREN VINEYARD

Founded 1976

## WINE CLUB NEWS

Fall 2007

*The latest Wine Club tasting selections are:*

**2006 AHLGREN Chardonnay  
Monterey, Ventana**

**2003 AHLGREN Cabernet Franc  
Santa Cruz Mountains, Bates' Ranch**

**2004 AHLGREN Cabernet Sauvignon  
Santa Cruz Mountains, Bates' Ranch**

**2006 AHLGREN Chardonnay  
Monterey, Ventana**

*Since 2003, we have been telling you how much we like these unfiltered Ventana Chardonnays. Here we go again! We think that this may be our favorite of all time, challenged only by the 1977, the last bottle of which we drank on Val's birthday in May when the wine, not the woman, was 30 years old. Clearly, we do not expect to be around in 2036 when this 2006 reaches thirty, so if you will be around for another 30 years, maybe this wine will still be alive and kicking. Cliché Warning! "Only time will tell." In the meantime, enjoy it now.*

*This wine shows typical tropical Ventana Chardonnay bouquet with hints of butterscotch and pineapple. The wine is well balanced and quite complex. It is rich, yet crisp and dry with a long creamy finish. A terrific aperitif. We are certain that not filtering has allowed the beauties of this wine to come through especially well.*

*This is the fourth in the series of Chardonnays we have bottled without filtration, beginning in 2003. As time approaches for bottling, the procedure is to fine with bentonite. Fining with bentonite, a natural clay product, assures that any unstable proteins are pulled out so that protein flocculent*

*will not develop should the wine get warm. In the past, after fining, we filtered to remove any possibly remaining malolactic bacteria to insure that the wine was completely stable with no potential for malo-lactic activity in the bottle.*

*With these unfiltered Chardonnays, tests for malolactic fermentation indicated completion, all the malic acid had converted to lactic acid, and that the wine was stable and could be bottled without filtration. Additionally, it clarified so well after fining, the bentonite settling naturally in the barrel and left behind when the wine was racked off in preparation for bottling, that we realized we could bottle without filtration, preserving the lovely qualities we thought might otherwise be diminished. You may notice that while there might be a very slight bit of haze, you also have the benefit of the special qualities of heightened bouquet and flavor that we especially like in these unfiltered Chardonnays.*

*Serve lightly chilled. Fermented in French oak. Aged on the lees.*

*Unfiltered. 181 cases produced.*

*\$25.00 per bottle*

*Club Member price per bottle-10%*

*\$22.50*

*Club Member 12 bottle price-15%*

*\$21.25*

**2003 AHLGREN Cabernet Franc  
Santa Cruz Mountains, Bates Ranch**

*Cabernet Franc from the Santa Cruz Mountains, Bates' Ranch, has surprising depth and body. The blend of 90% Cab Franc with 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, also from Bates' Ranch, enhances the structure without compromising the soft fruit of the Cab Franc.*

*This 2003 Ahlgren, Santa Cruz Mountains, Bates' Ranch Cabernet Franc has a rich and fruity bouquet reminiscent of berries: soft, aromatic, dusty. The fruit flavors are also rich, showing depth, complexity, silkiness, and elegance. Aged in American oak barrels.*

*Unfined and unfiltered. 140 cases produced.*

	<i>\$26.00 per bottle</i>
<i>Club Member price per bottle - 10%</i>	<i>\$23.40</i>
<i>Club Member 12 bottle price - 15%</i>	<i>\$22.10</i>

**2004 AHLGREN Cabernet Sauvignon  
Santa Cruz Mountains, Bates' Ranch**

*The Ahlgren Santa Cruz Mountains, Bates' Ranch Cabernets continue to impress. The 2004 is reminiscent of the 2003, which received a Gold Medal at the Santa Cruz wine judging, but is somewhat richer, deeper, a bit more intense, and definitely delicious. The only problem the Ahlgrens have with these wines is making enough of them*

*The wine clearly displays classic Bates' Ranch characteristics: Aromatic, bold, dusty and briery bouquet; Rich, complex, mouth filling, full-bodied Cabernet flavors. Big fruit balances tannins and acids. Exceptional vintage. Unfined and Unfiltered. 225 cases produced.*

	<i>\$35.00 per bottle</i>
<i>Club Member price per bottle - 10%</i>	<i>\$31.90</i>
<i>Club Member 12 bottle price - 15%</i>	<i>\$29.79</i>

**THE RANT ON DECANT CONTINUES:** (This is a repeat of a repeat for the benefit of the new Wine Club Members.) We keep hearing from Wine Club Members who are subjected to our continuing admonitions promoting decanting, and they report delight and surprise with the results of their decanting experiences (**Send us your decanting stories!**) that duplicate ours: wines are elevated to a new level of quality, resulting in new and added pleasure to the palate. So, we say again, please do yourselves the favor of decanting. If you do not have a handy decanter, but you do have a steady hand or a funnel, simply decant into a clean wine bottle, a pitcher, or even a Mason jar. If you cannot decant, at least pull the corks and put the reds in a place where they can gently come up to room temperature.

We are reminded every time we open a bottle of red wine, taste, and then decant, and then taste again, that all reds, and most especially Pinot Noirs, respond dramatically to decanting.

So, be advised: These red wines will reward you well, if you make certain the temperature is about 65° or, roughly room temperature. Heed not our advice on warming and airing, and you will still have a very satisfying experience, but something even finer awaits you in these well-structured red wines. Young or old, they have been closed away in the bottle for many months or many years. Give 'em air!

**SOMETHING NEW!** Wine Club Members and winery visitors enjoy access to some older or very limited AHLGREN wines, such as those we feature at Library Wine Sales (never often enough) and occasionally, when dug out of the dark recesses of the winery at unpredictable times. So, we have initiated a listing of the **White Board Wines** in the winery. Two current gems are the 2000 AHLGREN Nebbiolo, Santa Cruz Mountains and 375s of the 2000 AHLGREN Cabernet Sauvignon, Bates' Ranch. Both of these wines have developed a lovely sophistication with a bit of bottle age, and are tasting remarkably fine.

Dexter, ruminating over the inventory list, came upon some 30 cases of the Nebbiolo and brought a case back to the winery from the warehouse for us to evaluate. We discovered that it had become extraordinary. We have been pouring some at the regular Saturday tastings, and it is receiving a warm reception. Since Dan Martin has pulled out the Nebbiolo vines, this is definitely a rare and historic wine. So, if you are interested in purchasing some, see our list of **Additional Wines Available** below.

**ADDITIONAL WINES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE:** We have begun holding back some wines to have them available for sale at the winery and for Wine Club members, rather than just selling them out through restaurants and stores, leaving ourselves the first to run out. So, you will find a nice selection of slightly older vintages, limited quantities, some unavailable elsewhere.

**2001 AHLGREN Syrah Ventana**

Special price on this lovely Syrah: \$15 per bottle, or \$180 per case.

(No additional discounts on this wine)

Other wines available: (750 ml unless otherwise noted.)

<b>2004 AHLGREN Pinot Noir, Santa Cruz Mountains</b>	\$35.00
<b>2003 AHLGREN Merlot, Bates</b>	\$26.00
<b>2001 AHLGREN Cab. Sauv. Bates' (6 bottle limit)</b>	\$45.00
<b>2001 AHLGREN Cab. Sauv. Bates', Reserve (3 bottle limit)</b>	\$65.00
<b>2000 AHLGREN Cab. Sauv. Bates' 375 ml.</b>	\$25.00
<b>2000 AHLGREN Nebbiolo, Santa Cruz Mts.</b>	\$40.00

**Note:** See enclosed Price List for complete listing of wines currently available at the winery.

**VINTAGE 2007:** Winemakers anticipated an early harvest, but that did not develop. All the grapes came on in just fine, and then a cold spell and a bit of rain came along. At the end, we were anxiously waiting for the Bates' Cabernet to complete ripening, which it finally did to the relief of the Bates' family and ours. So, all the wines are now made and safely in the barrels, aging one day at a time.

**ADVENTURES AT AHLGREN VINEYARD:** *We are seeing evidence that a weasel is visiting us. Some years ago, Val discovered that the cats were playing with what was subsequently identified as an immature long tailed weasel, a cute little creature, long and lean, brown and white, with a handsome little black mask. In the far north, these animals turn white in winter and their name becomes "Ermine." A very small carnivore, they are predators of gophers, making them especially valuable in the garden and the vineyard. We were very surprised to learn that they are quite common in the Bay Area, since we had never seen one before or talked to anyone else who had. Lucky us, having one, at least one, at work for us. We suspect there are more.*

*Birds including pigeons and smaller birds too, are enthusiastically gorging on the Madrone berries. The Toyon berries are still ripening. Band-tailed pigeons were flocking in the trees yesterday, They winter in this area, and the berries attract them to Ahlgren Vineyard. For the first time, we are seeing Ringed Turtle-Doves in flocks. They are very pale in color, and at first, we thought they were bigger than the Band-Tailed, which turned out not to be true. This pigeon is said to have descended from escapees from domesticity, and none of the bird books we have seem to know where they originated. Robins and Cedar Waxwings will be arriving in a month or so, just in time for the toyon berries to be at their peak.*

*There is a place on the pressure pump, part of the water system, where a small drop of water always sits. Lately, flocks of lesser gold finches along with house sparrows and at least one cold, fluffed up brown towhee have been gathering there for a sip. There is a lot of flitting and fluttering, some king-of-the mountain jousting and other antics, making for some delightful bird watching from the porch. As the various birds come to spend the winter or to pass through on their way further south, any day can offer sight of a new visitor.*

*So far, little rain. Things are quite dry. No wonder that little drop of water entices so many avian visitors! Let us keep our collective fingers crossed, hoping for a bounteous rainy season to start soon.*

**REGARDING OUT OF STATE SHIPPING:** *We have made great headway and now have permits to ship to a growing number of states. The shipping situation changes almost daily, so if you have friends or family who would enjoy the delights and benefits of becoming an Ahlgren Wine Club member, have them give us a call to discuss the possibilities of shipping to them.*

**ORDERING AHLGREN WINES:** *As a Wine Club Member, your credit card information is on file here, so you can simply fax or email us your orders, or just give us a call. No need to worry about online security. We always enjoy talking with you. Just let us know what you want shipped. We can run the charge using your credit card number on file here, and the wine will be on its way.*

*Or, to fax an order, you can use the enclosed order form, or download the order form from the web site, fill it in, and fax it on to us.*

*Tell a friend! They can download the order form and/or the Wine Club Application directly from the web page, or they can give us a call.*

*To contact us directly:*

*Long distance: 1-800-338-6071; fax 1-831-338-9111.*

*Local phone: 831-338-6071; email [ahlgren@ahlgrenvineyard.com](mailto:ahlgren@ahlgrenvineyard.com).*

*Unless excessively hot or cold weather indicates otherwise, we generally ship at the beginning of each week so that wines reach you before the weekend.*

**AVOID MISSING YOUR WINE CLUB SHIPMENT.** *If you have missed a shipment, it is because your credit card did not clear. We send the postcards to alert you to update all info, but sometimes credit card charges will not go through for all the various reasons such things happen. Please be certain to call us, email, or fax us, keeping us up to date on all of your info so we can ship to you without delays.*

**PICK UP AT THE WINERY:** *Some members, for whom it is convenient, choose to pick up their Wine Club wines at the winery on a Saturday afternoon during our tasting hours. This makes for an opportunity to avoid shipping charges, to taste, talk, and enjoy the always gorgeous views. Due to very limited storage space here at the winery, if wine is not picked up before the next shipment is ready, we will ship the previous box on to you. We will give you a call before doing so, however. But please pick up promptly to avoid the cost of shipping.*

**GIFT SHOPPING:** *It may seem difficult to think of gifts or ways to say thank you these days when so many of us have more than we need of everything, but*

*Ahlgren wines never fail to delight and are appropriate for almost any occasion. Don't forget how easy and convenient it is to send wine for the holidays or special celebrations! We are finding a number of folks are selecting Ahlgren wines as business and wedding gifts.*

*Also, we have gift certificates available in any amount. Give us a call for the most convenient of gift shopping: 800-338-6071 or 831-338-6071.*

**TASTINGS AND SALES: SATURDAYS 12-4 AT THE WINERY:** *It is great time to visit, pick up your Wine Club packages, and taste some current releases. We look forward to seeing you.*

*That's all for now.*

*SALUD! CHEERS! À VOTRE SANTÈ! PAX!*

*Dexter and Val*