

CULLER

This is one of my favorite times of the year for winemaking---the beginning of harvest, which I look forward to every year, and the end of bottling, which I would avoid if I could figure out how. It is a little like the New Year---out with the old and in with the new. Fortunately for you, the “old” is the new release of wines---the 2006 Culler Syrahs. In the wine world, old is good! And so are the ‘06 Syrahs. This vintage was a lot like 2005, late and mild, but with more warm weather at the end to give the wines all the elegance of the ‘05’s, but with more extract.

Once again, I have three Syrahs to offer...all from cooler regions in Napa and Sonoma Valleys. The more I work with these vineyards, the more I experience their nuances and the better the wines get.

2006 Culler Syrah, Napa Valley \$35

This wine is once again mostly a blend of two vineyards in Napa Valley, Alexander (60%) and Cortese (30%), with a touch of Sawi Vineyard (10%) added. This wine is typical of past vintages in that it is the biggest of the Syrahs with lots of tannin, extract and deep, rich blueberry, licorice and leather aromas. Only 239 cases made.

2006 Culler Syrah, Griffin’s Lair, Sonoma Coast \$36

Griffin’s Lair lies in a sweet spot for Syrahs...coastal fog, afternoon winds, hillside location. All come together to make an elegant, soft and chewy wine with the ever-present “Griffin tannins” and violet, blueberry and clove aromas. The seamless finish, front to back, makes this a wine that is delicious now and will age well for years. Only 271 cases made.

2006 Culler Syrah, Sawi Vineyard, Sonoma Valley \$39

The Sawi Vineyard is a tiny piece located at 1500 feet elevation, west of the city of Sonoma. If Griffin’s Lair is breezy, then Sawi has gale force winds, with rocky soils and a scant crop of 1 ¾ tons to the acre. This vineyard shows that marginal areas for growing grapes make some of the best wines. The cool climate traits are prominent in the wine---very spicy with white pepper and cloves, berry fruits and a long lingering finish with crisp acidity. Only 101 cases made.

Release letter distribution. I thought I was being “cutting edge” when I finally released my newsletter via email in the spring, until I had many people calling, wondering when I was going to release my Cabs. I later found out that they did not receive the email, for whatever reason. (Because of this mix up, I have a bit of the 2005 Culler La Palette still available and have included it in this release order form.) If you can, please let me know which way you would like to receive your notice, via email (reply to cullerwines@aol.com) or via US mail.

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