

CROIX

On Becoming Us

All ideas have ridiculous beginnings to paraphrase the late philosopher Albert Camus.

Nine years ago a scrap of paper was left on a desk with the simple inscription that read, “croix”, in lower caps with no explanation. It was the beginning of a meandering path of seemingly ridiculous possibilities and the seed of a plan to do something extraordinary.

We have always said, “You have to have a little bit of a pirate in you to work in the wine industry.” With founding Croix Estate, this statement finds truth in the volumes of random, questionable efforts engaged to get to this moment: the opening of our new winery.

The initial concept of Croix was a messy collage of random ideas and wines: shock art labels, uncommon grape varieties, uncommon wine regions, no wine made more than one vintage, and on it went from idea to idea, most of which were done, being done, or being re-conceptualized by hundreds of others in search of the unique within the winemaking community.

There is a common saying in the wine business, “There are no new ideas in the wine industry, just different iterations on the same variety.” We happen to believe this is a lazy-marketer’s concept because it overlooks the value of grit and integrity at the foundation of all great works of art. We cannot count the times we have *not* sat in deep reflection after having tasted yet another average wine. The simple truth is, in our opinion, among the many thousands of wines produced today, profound instances are very rare, and the thread of commonality among the remarkable renditions is always the grit and integrity of effort behind the production.

It was in the winter of 2010, during a blind tasting of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay from multiple wine regions, that a pursuit became obvious and clear for Croix: How do we enter the crowded space of luxury Pinot Noir and Chardonnay producers and consistently produce wines that are profound?

It is tempting to spin the glorious successes we have experienced from day one with producing our first experimental vintages of Pinot Noir (2009) and Chardonnay (2011) to present day. However, the humble truth is this: our first Pinot Noir was heavy, over-extracted and fat handed; our Chardonnay flabby, one dimensional, and over-oaked. In sum, not even close to worthiness of being bottled as Croix Estate. Hence, the long, deliberate, and frustrating path we have taken from a word on a shag of paper to this day.

So, what can you expect from Croix Estate? Winemaking efforts from Owner and Winemaker, Kirk P. Venge, that are nothing short of groundbreaking and phenomenal. Our Pinot Noirs are filled with silky, robust, flavorful goodness; our Chardonnays are ridged with acid and layered with mouthwatering elegant complexity; and, now that our new winery is finally open for visitation, our experience is west-county-cool, one-on-one, and not available to the general public. How does it get any better than this?

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on our wines and seeing you soon at the estate.

Jason

Jason Williams
General Manager & Estate Visionary | Croix Estate