

SINE QUANON

Dear **E**xpert of **T**aste ~

"A man who works with his hands is a laborer; a man who works with his hands and his brain is a craftsman; but a man who works with his hands and his brain and his heart is an artist." -Louis Nizer

I don't know what group I'd fall into ~ mainly the first one most likely ~ but folks have lumped me in with all sorts of bizarre stuff. I do think I am reasonably creative (I being **M**anfred of course), and at times THAT is misinterpreted by some, so to clarify my stance I want to share something I have recently read about creative folks...

The following is an excerpt from Creativity by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi:

"Creative individuals are often considered odd - or even arrogant, selfish, and ruthless. It is important to keep in mind that these are not traits of creative people, but traits that the rest of us attribute to them on the basis of our perceptions. When we meet a person who focuses all of his attention on physics or music and ignores us and forgets our names, we call that person "arrogant" even though he may be extremely humble and friendly if he could only spare attention from his pursuit. If that person is so taken with his domain that he fails to take our wishes into account we call him "insensitive" or "selfish" even though such attitudes are far from his mind. Similarly, if he pursues his work regardless of other people's plans, we call him "ruthless."

Yet it is practically impossible to learn a domain deeply enough to make a change in it without dedicating all of one's attention to it and thereby appearing to be arrogant, selfish, and ruthless to those who believe they have a right to the creative person's attention.

In fact, creative people are neither single-minded, specialized, nor selfish. Indeed, they seem to be the opposite: They love to make connections with adjacent areas of knowledge. They tend to be - in principle - caring and sensitive. Yet the demands of their role inevitably push them toward specialization and selfishness. Of the many paradoxes of creativity, this is perhaps the most difficult to avoid."

Let me acknowledge that it **I**S kind of arrogant to write that after saying I consider myself reasonably creative, but I guess I'll have to live with that now.

Finally let me add another thought by another brilliant man - "art isn't in the tools, material, or equipment we use. It's in the way you see the world." -Rick Rubin

With that in mind I think that ART is what we should continue to talk about...and boy do we have some treats to reveal and offer to you. Be sure to tighten your suspenders and pay lots of attention. With this letter we are offering up the particularly beautiful wines wrought from our beloved **ELEVEN CONFESSIONS VINEYARD** from the **GREAT 2021** vintage and our annual **WHITE** winner from 2022.

Let me start by quickly talking about the year and then we can dig into each wine. 2021 had near "dream" conditions as far as I am concerned. Mild temperatures throughout the growing season. Nothing extreme, nothing outlandish, nothing weird, nothing off-the-cuff. All sunny, but mannered and well behaved. Maybe that'll sound "boring" to someone, but God knows not to me. The vines can't do their job with constant disturbance, but this year they were able to methodically get to the finishing line.

Now on to the wines themselves, I'll start with:

2021 Syrah Eleven Confessions Vineyard

Everything about this beauty is what it should be. That sounds rather cocky, but that's how I feel...and **E**laine does too. The assemblage is 85.0% Syrah, 9.7% Grenache, 1.3% Petite Sirah and 4.0% WHITES (Muskat and Viognier). 77% of the fruit was destemmed and 23% was left to ferment whole cluster (WITH the stems). That wine aggregation was left in barrels for +/- 38.5 months, with 52% of those barrels being brand new, and the rest between 1 to 4 years old, ALL in French oak. I am sure this is of no surprise to you when I write that this wine is no wimp, but one could say it is surprising how mellow, how well behaved, how elegant this is... No critic has tasted it yet, but **E** and I have had it several times...just a few days ago most recently. My notes state:

Great, SUPER dark, but brilliant color. There is a very deep nose of graphite, tree sap, stewed ripe red cherries, wet stone, myrrh and exotic flower pedals. It is a lively nose, but not obscene. The palate is super lush and velvety and rather pleasantly giving. There is a delightful, almost playful, vivaciousness here and an alluring, satiny feel. It is very friendly and pleasing, unpretentious and its elegance sneaks up on you. The wine is tightly woven, so that no piece, no fancy description sticks out, but rather makes for a harmonious whole. You don't want to stop drinking it.

If this wine were not to float your boat, then I'd have to give you the sorry news that you just don't like wine. Maybe stick to Matcha Lattes. Or, before you take that route, try the next gem first and surely that will revive you. And if that doesn't do the trick, we have a third Life-Safety-Ring, but after that it's...CALL **911**.

Next up we have the lovely:

2021 Grenache Eleven Confessions Vineyard

This seductive Mama is ultimately not for the faint of heart either, but as I have said for ages ~ perhaps to an annoying degree even ~ when Grenache is proper, it has a wonderfully feminine, gentle side and so even when full bodied it does not appear brutish or bruising. I am joyful to report that's the case here, but more on that in a few paragraphs.

The measurements on this model are:

86.1% Grenache, 8.5% Syrah, 4.4% Petite Sirah and a bit of high notes from 1.0% WHITE (Viognier). Here only 45% of the fruit was destemmed and a whopping 55% was fermented with the stems.

The longer I'm in this profession the better I like "ripe" stems on Grenache.

29% of the barrels here were brand new, but ALL of them were larger Demi-Muids (that's what the French call them). They are 600 Liter vessels versus the 225 or 228 Liter Bordeaux/Burgundy ones. This too spent nearly 39 months in barrel, meditating and self-improving until it was ready to leave the cocoon.

No highfalutin critic has tasted this either, but the toughest one...whom I call **E** has, and the first words out of her mouth were...

"Mmm...that is delicious!!!" And she is no easy push-over, I can promise you that. The color is impressively dark too. Not *as* black as the Syrah, but fairly remarkable for a Grenache. There is a bright nose that is faintly spicy with red peppercorn, orange peel and even some chamomile tea. In the mouth the wine is VERY soft and supple. There is a certain lifted density and flavors of pure red berry potpourri. It feels very pure and unblemished, like fresh fallen snow that hasn't had someone trample through it yet. There are some luxurious leather flavors too. **E** loves it and so do I. It has an extravagantly long finish. Happiness in a bottle, pure succulence.

Don't know what else I could say. If this doesn't get your rev meter jumping then nothing can. And yet...we have even more.

2022 California White Wine Distenta IV

No monkey business here either. 2022 was a good vintage from a quality perspective, but a miserable one from a yields point of view unless you think 1.05 tons per acre or 0.93 lbs. per vine is just fine. If you do, then I can't talk to you anymore. Years and years of drought DO take a toll at some point. Qualitatively nice (thank you... tough Mother Nature), but these are "going-broke" yields.

Luckily, we are dedicated non-giver-uppers, and we have a great group of long-term helpers by our side to keep the ball rolling, even when that ball is smaller than typical.

This is a nifty cuvée of 32.0% Roussanne, 30.0% Gelber Muskateller, 15.0% Chardonnay, 13.0% Petit Manseng and 10.0% Viognier. The vineyard sources, like with every wine we make, are ALL estate vineyards and are made up of 64% Eleven Confessions, 28% Cumulus and 8% The Third Twin. As is typical for us, the grapes are harvested at night and, after sorting, are whole cluster pressed and then the juice goes immediately into barrels. No settling, no cold stabilizing, no nothing. We want it ALL. The wines undergo alcoholic fermentation followed by malolactic fermentation in the same vessels. The lees are then gently stirred for several months and typically (as was the case here) the wines are never racked and thus stay on the original lees until bottling. These sweethearts were in barrel for 22.5 months and they rewarded us **and** you for our patience. The outcome is a real joy. My notes are rather clipped, mostly because we liked the wine so much that exaggerated verbiage felt almost uncouth. **E** and I did taste, and over 2 days too, so we could see how it holds up. My scribbles say: **brilliant, pale golden color and lively, sprite, intoxicating, exotic aromatics. It is quite rich and quite aromatic, perfume-like even. Muskat certainly brings that out in the wine. On day 2 it is even better. Super creamy texture and notes of white flower pedals, mango and acacia, but all beautifully knitted together. Plenty of decant time (2 hours minimum) is highly recommended. Very plush, very long, very sexy, very open minded.**

With all that said, don't let these wines slip away. You only live once. Trust yourself, trust our history and take action.

Place your order, most simply online, but PLEASE don't do it later than January 28, 2025.

After that there is no telling what the scoop will be, but probably nothing too pleasing.

Also don't forget our wines from **NEXT of KYN** and ~~THE THIRD TWIN~~. They have their own aura and are unique and special.

No communications should leave our doors without us telling you how much we appreciate you and how thankful we are to you. You keep us plugging away and working hard from the top down. **THANK YOU VERY MUCH.**

We wish you all the best in 2025,

Elaine & **M**anfred Krankl