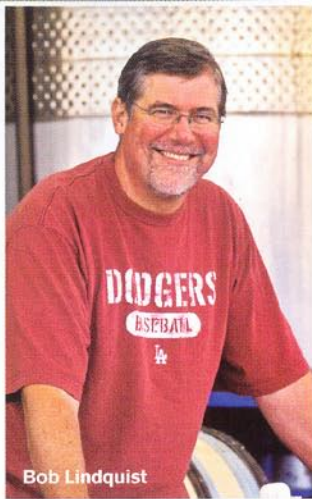


ARTISAN WINERIES OF THE YEAR

100 BEST WINES OF 2005



Bob Lindquist



QUPE

93 | Qupé \$18
2004 Santa Barbara County Bien Nacido Cuvée A 50-50 blend of chardonnay and viognier, this wine has a southern Mediterranean feel to its flavors. That may come from the combination of grapefruit pith and white narcissus up front, then a fresh nuttiness in the end. Each successive taste brings a different food to mind, from prosciutto with melon to trout with fennel and a dash of Pernod to singe the skin. Bob Lindquist's great white wines—and their unusually sensible prices—continue to put most of his competition to shame. Stock up. (750 cases)
Qupé Wine Cellars, Santa Maria, CA

Recently I had lunch with Qupé winemaker Bob Lindquist at *La Terza*, a new Italian restaurant in Los Angeles, and my first thought was: Odd choice of venue. After all, Lindquist's great strength is Rhône-style wines, his quietly beautiful marsannes and viogniers, his masterful syrahs and subtle blends. But as soon as Lindquist opened older vintages of his marsanne and syrah, it started to make sense. Qupé and *La Terza* may not share a regional focus, but they share something else entirely.

Chef/owner Gino Angelini is quietly producing some of the most authentic, unassuming and seductive Italian food in all of Southern California. You taste his agnolotti, for example, and think, Yes, that's what pasta's supposed to taste like. Lindquist has been doing essentially the same thing with wine on the Central Coast for almost 30 years. You taste his wines and think, Yes, that is what wine should be: a precise statement of fruit, light, earth and minerals that builds on the palate with quiet elegance.

Lindquist is perhaps best known for his syrahs, but lately his whites have been making a few quiet statements of their own. His Bien Nacido Cuvée is typically a blend of viognier and chardonnay, two varieties that don't usually find themselves with much to say to each other. In Lindquist's hands, it's a marriage: the viognier gives off a floral scent, and the chardonnay provides the structure.

Meanwhile, the best of Qupé's syrahs to grace our tasting table this year came from Bien Nacido Vineyard, where the ripe 2003 vintage unleashed sheer, unadulterated power. Though it's not altogether in character for Qupé, it still has the smoky, mineral, savory character that Lindquist seems to locate in most every wine he makes—it's just more potent here. —P.J.C.

7 wines tasted, 3 recommended

- 93** '04 Santa Barbara County Bien Nacido Cuvée White \$18 (8/05)
- 92** '03 Santa Maria Valley Bien Nacido Vineyard Syrah \$28 (10/05)
- 90** '04 Santa Ynez Valley Ibarra-Young Vineyard Viognier \$30 (8/05)

Founded: 1982 **Winemaker:** Bob Lindquist **Acres owned:** none **Annual production:** 25,000 cases **Owner:** Bob & Louisa Lindquist **Known for:** Classic Rhône varietals from California's Central Coast **Location:** Los Olivos, CA **Website:** qupe.com

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 100 BEST WINES

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WINTER 2005
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