



## 2005 QUPE VIOGNIER

This wine is 100% Viognier from the Ibarra-Young Vineyard in Los Olivos. This is a vineyard that we've leased since 1986 and have been farming it organically since 1999. This is our 17th consecutive bottling of this remarkable wine, stretching back to 1989. The clonal material has been around long enough that it's referred to as the "Ibarra-Young Clone" and has been planted at a number of Central Coast vineyards including Bien Nacido and Zaca Mesa.

We only have 1.25 acres of viognier at Ibarra-Young, which normally give us about 300 cases. Last year, in '04, we only had 190 cases, but this year, in the abundant '05 vintage, we have a whopping 350 cases (topped only by the 1997 vintage). Quality in 2005 was superb.

We harvested on September 16 at 24.0° sugar with great acidity. The grapes were whole cluster pressed, the juice chilled overnight, then racked into 3 year old François Frères Burgundy barrels. 3 year old barrels are pretty much neutral, but still real fresh. The wine was barrel fermented and allowed to go through malo. It was bottled with all it's freshness in January 2006. Often, when I show people this wine they assume it was done in stainless steel because of its freshness, verve and acidity. They assume that I blocked the malo as well. The key here is the site for this varietal, relatively cool climate, and picking at a reasonably low sugar level while the pH is still low and the acid high. Viognier grapes are wonderfully aromatic in the vineyard and many winemakers are seduced by those aromatics and pick too ripe – resulting in high alcohol, flat tasting wines. I like those aromatics too, but I prefer balance, acidity, alcohols under 14% (the '05 is 13.8%) and the minerality that accompanies this style.

This is not a wine to age – although it can. I recently pulled out a 1994 for Yves Cuilleron and François Villard and they were impressed. I like viognier when it's young and fresh... drink this before the 2006 comes along.