



SPRING 2017 CIDER CLUB RELEASE

Thanks for being part of our cider club! I hope you enjoy these selections, and find them to show you new ways of experiencing the mysteries of the fermented apple. All of these are ready to drink now. Don't hold onto them! Take out a couple of glasses (I prefer white wine shape, stem or stemless) and share with friends and family. I wouldn't wait for a "special occasion." Every day is special.

The notion of cider terroir—that is, the specific growing conditions that make an agricultural product unique to its place—intrigues me, and I think you can get a taste of Sonoma County terroir with this club release. I've offered my tasting notes here, but everyone's palate is different and I'd love to know your experience. I've included a copy of an organoleptic chart created by Darlene Hayes, presenter of the Cider Sense and Wonderful World of Ciders workshops, to offer you guidance if you need it. Enjoy!

—Ellen Cavalli, Tilted Shed cider club den mother (ellen@tiltedshed.com, @tiltedshed on social media)

2015 WICKSON · NEW RELEASE! CLUB EXCLUSIVE!

A limited single-variety cider. Wickson is one of our favorite apples, a powerful punch of acidity, sugar, and astringency in a tiny package. Wickson was bred by famed pomologist Albert Etter in 1944 in Humboldt County, reportedly a cross between Esopus Spitzenberg and Newtown Pippin. Organically grown Wickson from our home orchard and our next-door neighbor's orchard in west Sonoma County from the 2015 harvest. A mix of wild yeast and inoculated yeast fermentations, aged and then bottle-conditioned using organic cane sugar to achieve the natural effervescence. An elegant, lean cider, with notes of pink grapefruit, rosehip, and flint. Serve in a white wine glass at 50°F to 55°F. Ready to drink now. Only 6 cases. 8% ABV

2015/2016 TOPWORK

To topwork means to graft a scion of one variety onto the limbs or trunk of an established apple tree. It's a fitting metaphor for this blend of ciders from two different harvests. 100% organic fresh-pressed heirloom and tannic cider apples from the 2015 and 2016 harvests, including Gravenstein and Nehou from west Sonoma County, Autumn Rambour from southern Mendocino County, and Transcendent Crabapple from Tilted Shed's own cider orchard in Sebastopol. Unfiltered, unfinned, unpasteurized, minimal sulfites. Straw gold, moderately effervescent, properly dry. Aromatics of orchard floor. Notes of ripe melon, dried pineapple, kiwi, and white pepper. Good tannic grip, bright acidity, with long elegant finish. Chill lightly. Serve in a white wine glass, 55°F to 60°F. Versatile cider; pair with pizza, roast chicken, oysters, and anything pork. 84 cases. 8% ABV

2015 GRAVIVA

Pronounced "Gra-VEE-va" as in "Viva la Grav(enstein)!" Blend of 100% organic fresh-pressed Sonoma County heirloom and traditional cider apples. 50% Gravenstein; 50% blend of other organic heirloom and tannic cider apples varieties, including Rome, Golden Delicious, Nehou, and Muscat de Bernay. Pressed during from the 2015 harvest. Unfiltered, unfinned, minimal sulfites, backsweetened with a touch of organic cane sugar. Notes of over-ripe apple, apricot, and damp earth. Balance of acidity and tannin with a touch of sweetness, medium body, with a long, savory, funky finish. Residual sugar less than 1%. Serve at 50° to 55°F in a white wine glass. Pair with triple crème and aged cheeses, charcuterie plate, pork, crab, salmon. 8% ABV From the August 2016 issue of *Wine Spectator*: "This golden-hued, savory cider is moderately effervescent and showcases ripe apple and baked apricot flavors that are rich and creamy, with high acid contrasting with straw, lanolin and loam notes on the finish."

2014 LOST ORCHARD

Blend of rare, feral English, French, and Old American tannic and heirloom cider apples, including Nehou, Muscat de Bernay, Porter's Perfection, Yarlinton Mill, Foxwhelp, Tremlett's Bitter, and Roxbury Russet. Organically grown in Sonoma County. Pressed during the 2014 harvest, fermented to dryness, blended, aged, and bottle conditioned in 2015 using organic cane sugar as dosage. A dry, earthy, dense, savory, contemplative cider more reminiscent of wild meadow than of apples. Hazy, golden hue. Unfined, unfiltered, unpasteurized, minimal sulfites. Naturally sparkling. Dry, tannic, savory, herbal, citrusy, with long finish. Chill well prior to opening, and pour carefully off the lees. Serve at 55°F in a white wine glass. Pair with well-aged cheese, pork, Dungeness crab, lamb, roasts, hearty seasonal fare. Only 40 cases. 8% ABV

2015 SMOKED

An unorthodox blend that marries the natural complements of apples and wood smoking. Fresh-pressed Sonoma County organic heirloom and tannic cider apples, including Golden Delicious, Jonathan, and Porter's Perfection, from the 2015 harvest. Fermented to dryness in small batches, then blended with a batch of cider infused with wood-smoked apples. Unfined, unfiltered, unpasteurized, minimal sulfites. Straw gold, lightly effervescent, dry, tannic, tart, and bright, with notes of baked apples and clove, and mellow smoky finish. Like drinking a brut champagne near a bonfire. Pair with aged and funky washed-rind cheeses, pork, charcuterie, grilled meats, and seafood. Use care in serving with any smoked foods, as that can diminish the smokiness of the cider. Serve in a white wine glass at 55°F to heighten the aromatics. 8% ABV

2014 BARRED ROCK

A blend of 100% fresh-pressed organic Sonoma County-grown late-season heirloom apples, including Rome and Newtown Pippin, from the 2014 harvest. Fermented to dryness in the New England style with organic raisins, molasses, and brown sugar, then aged in Heaven Hill Kentucky rye whiskey barrels for four months. Unfined, unfiltered, unpasteurized, minimal sulfites. Aroma of vanilla bean and light smoke. Bright acidic backbone. Mouth-filling notes of creme brûlée and caramel apple. This cider should mellow as it ages over the next two years, developing a creamier mouthfeel with lingering vanilla finish. Serve at 60°F in a white wine glass. The warmer, the richer. Pair with rich creamy cheeses and fruit-based desserts, or just on its own. 9% ABV



SPRING 2017 CIDER CLUB ALLOCATIONS

I'm glad you chose to order one or more of these rare, allocated single-variety ciders. It's important to understand that not every apple variety can stand alone as a cider. They can be fine, but they may not be extraordinary. An apple needs to have a good balance of the magic ingredients, as it were--just enough sugars, phenolics, tannins, and acidity to make a compelling statement. The three selections, I believe, will offer you insight into what makes these two varieties—Wickson and Kingston Black—so special. I encourage you to taste the 2013 Wickson along with the 2015 Wickson in the standard club release, and contemplate what is so different about them. There are distinct variations! Same with these two single-orchard Kingston Blacks. It's more subtle than with the Wicksons, but I think them may offer tantalizing clues into cider terroir and the potential of Sonoma County as a dynamic cider region. —Ellen

2013 WICKSON

An extremely limited single-variety cider. Wickson is one of our favorite apples, a powerful punch of acidity, sugar, and astringency in a tiny package. Wickson was bred by famed pomologist Albert Etter in 1944 in Humboldt County, reportedly a cross between Esopus Spitzenberg and Newtown Pippin. Organically grown Wickson from one tree in our next-door neighbor's orchard in west Sonoma County from the 2013 harvest. A mix of wild yeast and inoculated yeast fermentations. Bottle-conditioned using organic cane sugar to achieve the natural effervescence. Voluptuous, vivacious cider with expressive notes of pineapple and dried mango. Ready to drink now. Serve in a white wine glass at 50°F to 55°F. Only 3 cases. 8%ABV

***Taste the 2013 and 2015 Wicksons side by side. What is different? What is similar? If you're like us, you'll find there to be considerable variation between the two ciders, though on face value they should be quite similar. Why is that? Of interest: 2013 Wickson was pressed and fermented at our old cidery off Highway 116 in Forestville. The apples were from one tree in one certified organic orchard (our next-door neighbors). 185 pounds. In comparison, the 2015 Wickson was pressed and fermented at our new cidery in Windsor. 195 pounds from our neighbor's orchard, and 25 pounds from us. Fermentations for both were a mix of wild yeast (for about two-thirds of the cider) and inoculated (for the remainder). 2013 was an OK year in terms of precipitation and chill hours; we were technically in drought and experiencing warmer winter conditions, but nothing on the scale of the fall of 2014 through spring of 2015. Those were peak times of extremely parched conditions and warmth. We admittedly didn't irrigate our young trees as we should have, and our neighbor's orchard is dry-farmed. It was a tough year for humans and apples (and all living things). Might that have affected these ciders?

2015 KINGSTON BLACK RO

Kingston Black is an English bittersharp that hails from 1820s Somerset. It's a legendary vintage cider apple, famous for its balance of tannin and acidity as a single-variety cider. In 2015, we isolated the Kingston Black from two 30-year-old cider orchards--one ("VO") high on Sonoma Mountain, and one ("RO") a feral cider orchard in alluvial soils near the Russian River--and fermented separately to explore cider terroir. This RO single-variety, autumn-gold cider is expansive and slightly rowdy, with notes of clove, orange, black tea, resin, and wood. Bottled still (uncarbonated). Serve in a white wine glass at 50°F to 55°F. Ready to drink now. Only 2 cases. 9% ABV

2015 KINGSTON BLACK VO

See above. This VO single-variety, autumn-gold cider is round and subtle, straddling the line between sweet citrus and bitter pith on the finish. Bottled still (uncarbonated). Serve in a white wine glass at 50°F to 55°F. Ready to drink now. Only 2 cases. 9% ABV