Post Fermentation Choices for Red Wine Production

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“The winemaker is a warrior. He has to fight the vagaries of nature, storms, insects, disease, rot, hail and bad luck. This is why every bottle is worthy of respect and every glass must be drunk with the honor it deserves. That soil, that man, that fight, are embodied in your glass”

Anonymous but supplied to me Kathrine Brink of Grapevine, Texas.
Post Fermentation Choices

Go Over choices

• What do we want to make?
• Do we have the knowledge/experience?
• Know our limits?
• Enhance / Suppress / Eliminate?
• Sur Lie aging of reds?
• Tannins?
• Extended maceration?
• Finesse?
Post Fermentation Choices

Decisions after fermentation

• 2000 decisions
• Winemakers need to be flexible
• Have a goal in mind
• Have past experience with the fruit
Post Fermentation Choices

Have knowledge of what can be done!

- Know style ahead of time
- Work with vineyard to achieve fruit
  - Canopy
  - growing season
  - condition of vines
  - soils
  - flavor

- Square peg - round hole situation?
Post Fermentation Choices

Know your limits!

• Make a Napa valley wine style?

• What has developed during fermentation?
  • Color
  • Mouthfeel
  • Aromas
  • Tannins

– No manhandling
Do we want to enhance characters

- Taste blind
- Pick apart qualities
- What should be brought forward
- What trials / actions are needed to do this?
- Rack with air / ML / Blend
- Oak - New or Old - toast - chips?
- Cold stabilize first - soften - then oak?
- Warm to drive off Carbon Dioxide?
Post Fermentation Choices

Suppress any Characteristics?

•Suppressing one - may bring out another!
  – H2S - fruit. Always do copper trial.

•Gelatin fining
•PVPP
•Isinglass
•Egg whites
•Sparkloid
•etc.
Post Fermentation Choices

Eliminate a Characteristic?

- Some are fruit formed! (Methoxy pyrazines) (Oak chips in ferm)
- Above reason to work in vineyard
- May need to use other finesse
- Blending
- Concentrate
- Blend down
- Blend whites into reds - often reduce green character.
Post Fermentation Choices

Sur lie aging of reds

- Rack onto white wine lees
- Stir every two weeks / or as needed.

- Broadens palate, lengthens mid-palate
  Toasty aroma, yeast autolysis - creamy.
- This may or may not be desirable
Post Fermentation Choices

How are the tannins?

• Assess tannin profile early on
• How will will manage them?
• Predict evolvement of the tannins and interact with them to move them in desired direction.
• Seed tannins? Mature grape skin tannins?
• React as soon as possible to tannin management.
Extended Maceration

• Great tool when fruit is ripe and clean
• Color somewhat reduced but considered more stable - therefore end result is the same on color.
• Nice extraction and palate depth of extracted, soft, velvet tannins
• Has risk - Picea and other spoilage yeast
• Low SO2 levels
• Keep tank closed with CO2 on top
Post Fermentation Choices

Wrap up:

- Know your vineyard and fruit
- Enhance the fruit in areas of positive
- Work in vineyard to insure success
- Manage canopy to get desired fruit
- Growing year

- As can be seen it is not just a post fermentation issue - it starts in the raw material and how it is grown
Work with your wineries fruit from year to year keeping records and mental notes on how each block performs in each year with the growing season variations. Record past results of the wines evolution and reaction to certain winemaking adjustments. From experience you will soon zero in on your land, vineyard, cellar and market to get the most out of your efforts.
Post Fermentation Choices

Thanks for your time!

Questions:

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Go Ohio Wines!