

PRAXIS *Cellars*

Vineyards

The fruit for the Praxis wines is sourced from all over California in order to maintain quality at a relatively reasonable price. The vineyards are also located where Bill believes the varietal will best express its own characteristics – the right soils and climates for the vines. Almost all of the wines are from a single vineyard; all of them are 100% of the varietal.

Sauvignon Blanc: A Sonoma County appellation, this wine is blended from two-thirds Dry Creek Valley and one-third Russian River Valley fruit. The Dry Creek grapes bring more tropical fruit aromas to the wine, while the cooler Russian River climate elevates the crisp, green apple characteristics of the varietal.

Viognier: This is our second vintage of Viognier from the same vineyard in Lodi – the Central Valley of California south of Sacramento. The warmth of the growing conditions here are closer to the climatic conditions of the Southern Rhone Valley in France – the source of this ancient varietal. These are the Geneva clone of Viognier. For those of our unfamiliar with Viognier, we feel it has the best of a Chardonnay and a Riesling or Gewürztraminer in one!

Pinot Noir: These grapes come from a vineyard near the Central Coast of California – a Monterey appellation – because we can't make a Pinot Noir in this price range from Sonoma County grapes. Bill likes clone 23 for its color and bing-cherry notes accentuated by the cool climate in this area.

Syrah: This vineyard is in the Dry Creek appellation but very close to the Russian River – cooler growing conditions that Bill thinks the Syrah needs to express its color and flavor.

Merlot: These grapes are grown at slight elevation on Sonoma Mountain (2/3 Sonoma Mountain appellation – 1/3 just outside). Bill feels he can make a merlot that tastes like something from these grapes – not just a generic red wine.

Winemaking

Bill tries to experiment a little with his winemaking techniques in the Praxis wines. He can practice his craft by varying the grape sources, the clones, the fermentation and the barrel choice.

Sauvignon Blanc: The wine was fermented in stainless steel and part of the wine later spent a few weeks in a large neutral oak tank to help the wine develop without overpowering the aromas.

Viognier: The wine was barrel fermented in neutral oak barrels for 2 months with no malolactic fermentation. In our 2001 vintage the barrels were newer and Bill felt the oak overpowered the fruit in the wine so he tried this and we think it is more evenly balanced.

Pinot Noir: The Pinot was fermented in small lots and remained in French oak barrels for 7 months to add a touch of cedar, vanilla and spice to the flavor.

Syrah: Bill prefers to make a Cote Rotie style syrah rather than to replicate the Australian fruit bombs. After complete malolactic fermentation, the wine was placed in French oak barrels for a year before bottling.

Merlot: After complete malolactic fermentation, the wine was placed in French oak barrels for a year before bottling.