

MILLER WINE WORKS
MILLER

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Miller Wine Works: “A winery that is worth watching...”

Miller Wine Works Miller Wine Works is a new operation run by Gary Miller, a former chef. Last issue we reviewed his 2002 Pinot Noir, while this issue covers his bottled Grenache and Syrahs, and takes a look at the Syrahs and Pinot Noir he has in barrels. Miller’s day job is with Biale Vineyards and the Biales are kind enough to let Miller use their facilities to make and age his wine. Prior to working at Biale, he spent time at La Jota and Martinelli. This is a micro winery – 600 cases in total were produced from the 2002 vintages and 750 cases was 2003’s yield. Miller’s goal is to top out at 3,200 cases, [based on] the timing of how soon he can ferret out enough quality vineyard sources, rather than merely buying juice in the open market and slapping a label on it.

Miller’s production regime is fairly typical. He uses a combination of new and neutral barrels (Rousseau and Francois Feres primarily). Wines receive 14 to 15 months in barrel and are aged in bottle for one year prior to release (the 2003’s are scheduled to be releases in first quarter 2006). Exposure to new oak varies with the varietal. Pinot Noir receives 50 to 60% new oak while Syrah gets only 30 to 40% new oak. Racking also changes with the varietal. Pinot Noir is minimally handled and racked only at the time of bottling while Syrah receives a couple of rackings before being put into bottle. Wines are filtered when necessary.

2002 Miller Wine Works Grenache. Buley Vineyard, Amador County California. 15.6% alcohol \$25 87 cases made

From 15-year old vines (that were yanked after this vintage so this is a one off for Miller Wine Works), this Grenache has big but rather simple aromas of syrupy red fruits with a touch of spice. A fruity very enjoyable quaff with integrated acids and food length. It was raised primarily in neutral oak. Drink over the next few years.
87 points.

2002 Miller Wine Works Syrah. Brookside Vineyard, Napa Valley, California 15.5% alcohol \$38 193 cases produced

A focused nose of sweet plum, pepper, some rose, and traces of chalk and burnt rubber. Good depth of fruit with intriguing nuances of rose. Good length and fine acidity. Very North Rhone in orientation. Brookside Vineyard is three acres in size and is located next to Hendry. 95% Syrah, 4% Mourvedre, and 1% Viognier. Drink now (2008) to 2012.
90+ points.