

David Coffaro Vineyard and Winery where blending is taken to a new level
October 15, 2014 5:40 PM MST

David Coffaro Vineyard and Winery is located in Dry Creek Valley in northern Sonoma County. They make a variety of wines focusing on unique blends.

Steve Ferree

David Coffaro Vineyard and Winery is a small, friendly, family operated winery in the Dry Creek Valley at the northern edge of Sonoma County. So what makes Coffaro unique? A word that applies so well to Coffaro is "blend". The operation is a blend of home, farm and winery. The sales process is a blend of direct to

consumer sales and the "Crazy Coffaro Futures Program". The vineyards are an amazing blend of varietals, with these 20 acres producing the widest selection of varietals I have ever seen in one vineyard. And the wines themselves focus on blends of unique grape

o

By 1994 he got his commercial winemaking permit. Over the years as Coffaro Vineyards and Winery continued to grow to its current size of 5000 cases per year he has added in managers for winemaking and vineyards, but he is still hands on with the operation.

As you pull onto the property past the Coffaro home you will at first wonder if you just drove into someone's driveway or a winery. But you will notice the small sign directing you to the tasting room behind the home, through the well maintained garden. You will experience David in so many ways during your visit. His open and friendly manner and thinking outside of the box are reflected in his tasting room staff and his wines. The tasting room is open and friendly, right inside the winery and barrel storage area. At the tasting room you are at the heart of the Coffaro winery operation, you will see fermentation tanks and barrels all around you; in fact watch your step for there might be hoses along the floor of this active winery. Note the winemaker's work bench right across from the tasting bar. You will often see sports events playing on the TV overhead, and some of the winery cats strolling through the area. Just outside of the tasting room is the crush pad that is very busy in the fall.

They do not have distributors, and 100% is sold direct to the consumers, primarily through the "Crazy Coffaro Futures Program" or direct from the tasting room. Approximately 75% of their production is sold via the futures program where you taste the wine from the barrel and then purchase it at about 40% discount from the eventual purchase price. The wine is then available in August. This program works great for both the consumer and the winery without the need for a middleman.

Strolling through the vineyards with David Coffaro was an amazing adventure. Packed into this 20 acre vineyard are over 22 different varietals and even more unique clones. As we walk along the rows you will see small blocks of Zinfandel, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Carignane. And in some areas you might see a row of Tannat, a row of Touriga, Lagrein and more. In many cases there might have been 10 feet between rows and he then squeezed in a row of another varietal. And in a few blocks the rows are a mix of grape varietals. Dave will point out a Zinfandel vine, then a Petite Sirah, or Carignane. These blocks result in some interesting field blend wines where the blending occurs in the field rather than the winery. Some examples of the interesting grape varietals found in this unique vineyard includes well-known types such as Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petite Sirah, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir, but many lesser known grapes such as Peloursin, Carignane, Lagrein, Alvarelhao, Souzao, Aglianico, Tannat and more.

And of course, all of this variety and character is reflected in the wines. First, Dave is not shy at trying new blends that you will never see from any other winery. Second, he will tell you right on the bottle what grapes were used in that blend. Third, all his bottles have screw caps, making it easy to open and savor the wine.

Just a sample of the many wines on their tasting menu includes:

- **2012 Carignan** – Even when he has a wine that is 100% of a single varietal such as the Carignan, Dave will still be different, going through significant work to get TTB approval to use the Carignan spelling used in France rather than the Carignane spelling commonly used in the U.S. This wine is loaded with the aromas and flavors of blackberry, black currants, pepper, red berries and plums.
- **2012 MyZin** – This is a blend of 75% Zinfandel, 13% Petite Sirah and 12% Cabernet Sauvignon. You will love the dark fruit flavors and aromas including blackberry, black currants along with a strong body and pepper and spice.
- **2012 Block 4** – This wine is a field blend of 50% Zinfandel, 25% Petite Sirah, 5% Peloursin, 5% Syrah, 5% Carignan and 10% of other varietals. As a field blend it means that this is the percentage of grapes of each type in Block 4 in the vineyard. You will enjoy the milk chocolate, blueberry, red fruit, and brown sugar characters of this wine.
- **2012 Escuro** – Here is a wine that will not find anywhere else, a touch of Portugal with 27% Alvarelhao and 27% Souzao, a bit of Italy with 18% Lagrein and 18% Aglianico and a dash of France with 10% Tannat. And what a great variety of flavors

you will find in this wine including spice, chocolate, tea, blueberries, red berries and a nice dark tannic finish. Escuro means dark in Portuguese.

A visit to David Coffaro is a great experience that is different than what you will find in most of California. It is laid back, friendly and you will be in the heart of the operation as you sample a collection of wine blends and single varietals that you will enjoy. They are located at 7485 Dry Creek Road in Dry Creek Valley near Geyserville.

For more information: **David Coffaro Vineyards and Winery**

<http://www.examiner.com/slideshow/david-coffaro-vineyard-and-winery-where-blending-is-taken-to-a-new-level>