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<http://eastcoastwineries.blogspot.com/2010/06/unionville-has-always-been-at-forefront.html>

Unionville Still One of the Best on the East Coast



Unionville has always been at the forefront of New Jersey and East Coast winemaking. It is one of the first growths of the East Coast for sure, up there with Wolffer, Raphael, Sakonnet, Chaddsford, Barboursville, and numerous others. But several years ago new owners took control of Unionville, and made some changes, and brought in Cameron Stark.



Cameron Stark, formally trained at UC Davis and spent his early career under the tutelage of Napa Valley wine experts perfecting his skills and mastering his unique, creative style of winemaking. Cameron's wines have earned him respect and recognition in the wine establishment including Wine Enthusiast ratings of 90+ points. He is committed to crafting some of the finest, sustainable American wines, here in New Jersey, by continuously strengthening the vineyards with superior vine stock and employing painstaking methods to nourish the soil and harvest the finest quality fruit. Cameron's pretty good on the crush pad, in the barrel room, and everywhere else.



I have never personally met Cameron. But I know his wines. And I know his Assistant Winemaker Zeke Johnson. I've met Zeke several times by now. And I was lucky enough to bump into him again at the East Coast Food & Wine Festival down at Hopewell Valley Vineyards.

I tasted a number of their wines, all of which confirmed for me their place in East Coast winemaking.

Some brief notes:

Pinot Grigio 2009 - light, refreshing, citrusy, great finish. Lovely!

Fox Series Chardonnay 2007 - A kiss of oak as they say. Hint of vanilla. Melon and apples on the nose. Fresh fruit followed by a touch of creaminess. Usually don't like oaked Chards, but I liked this alot!

The Juggler - Riesling, Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer, and Pinot Grigio. Light white with citrus tones and a fabulous refreshing finish! Very fun.

Mountain Road Pinot Noir 2008 - Recently won a Gold Medal at San Diego Wine Competition 2010. Single vineyard bottling. A light Pinot Noir. Very Finger Lakes in its style. Light. Fruity. But austere at the same time. Big acid, which balanced out the bright cherry fruit. A lovely wine.



But of course, the big fun was tasting The Big O. This year's version of this wonderful red is 69% Merlot, 26% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 5% Cabernet Franc. They were tasting the wine at the event, but they did not have labels, so they could not sell it. But if you didn't go to the event, then you missed your chance to taste it for now. And boy, is that a shame! A wonderful big red wine. A combination of cherry, bright and dark, as well as raspberry, touch of prune and plum, as well as a touch of cassis and a hint of spices and vanilla. The wine underwent a two week dry maceration and five weeks extended maceration, which helped with color and flavor extraction. Unfiltered. Bottled in May. An excellent, excellent wine.

They didn't have the Merlot, but Zeke said it's one to watch for.

This tasting for me confirmed what I said above here - Unionville is one of the best wineries on the East Coast. And Cameron, with some help from Zeke, will ensure that that tradition and record will continue to grow.

Great job guys!