The Geek Sheet Cheat Sheat

Twisted Oak

SILVASPOONS VINEYARD
PETITE SIRAH
2004 · LODI

At Twisted Oak, we love all that **Hard Data** as much as any wine geek. (Actually, we just like saying "Hard Data.") However, Hard Data is one of those things that, if you don't care, you don't want to see it. So, we have sequestered all of this Hard Data into our **Geek Sheets**, where you can find it if you want it. So...

WHAT'S IN THE BOX, JAY?

Our **Geek Sheets** contain pretty much what any good data sheet contains: a picture of the label, tasting notes, production notes, blends, and various measurements relevant to the winemaking process. All of our measurements have been pulled into the **Geek Box** you see at the bottom of each Geek Sheet. And here's what it all means:

Residual Sugar (RS) is simply the amount of sugar left in the wine. Wines that are "dry", as nearly all of Twisted Oak's wines are, will have very little RS left in them - nearly all of the sugar available at harvest has been converted into **alcohol** (yeah baby!)

0%	0.02%		0.1%
dry		residual sugar (% by volume)	sweet

Titratable Acid (TA) (there's a mouthful!) is simply a measurement of the tartaric acid and other organic acids in the wine. This is not a measurement of a condiment used on fish - rather, the TA relates to **the acidity you perceive** in the wine. A lower TA value tastes softer - some people (you know who you are) will refer to a wine that is too soft as being "flabby." A higher TA value means a wine has a "crisp" flavor - some people (same ones!) will infer that a higher TA value means a wine stands up to food better. To each their own, say we.

0.2	0.59	1.0
soft	titratable acid (grams per 100mL)	crisp
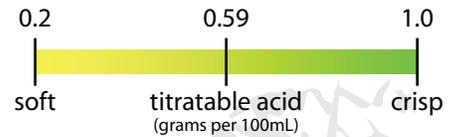
Volatile Acid (VA).... yeah. As you can see, the scale goes from "simple" to "complicated." VA is simply a measure of several non-titratable acids, especially **acetic acid**. Real Foodies in the crowd will instantly recognize that acetic acid is what makes vinegar, well... vinegar! VA is one of those things where there is no "right" amount, and a little goes a long way. If your VA is low, that's OK - but if the VA is just a little higher, that can add some **complexity and a little zing** to the wine. Too much VA? Pass the lettuce...

0	0.084	0.120
simple	volatile acid (grams per 100mL)	complicated
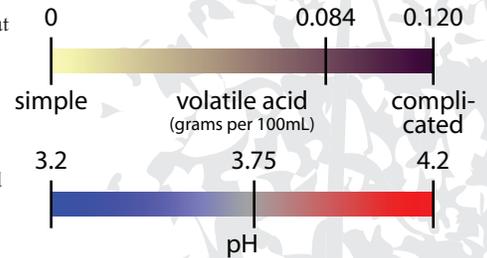
pH comes from the Latin "pondus hydrogenii" and roughly translates as the "power of hydrogen" (scared yet?) Most of us who were forced to take chemistry class just remember pH as telling us whether a solution is an acid or a base. For our purposes, pH is a **measurement of wine stability** - oddly enough pH has little to do with the sensation of acidity. A lower pH is generally better because the wine will be less susceptible to bacteria that can spoil the wine - and to some extent a lower pH means that one can use **fewer sulfites** to stabilize the wine. (Not all winemakers do this, but ours does. Nyyaaah!)

3.2	3.75	4.2
	pH	

12.0%	14.2%	16.0%
light body	alcohol (% by volume)	full body

Alcohol by Volume (ABV) is obviously the "**buzz power**" of any beverage, but for wine it means much more (that's our story and we're sticking to it.) More alcohol in wine distributes the flavors, and contributes to our perception of the fruitiness and even the sweetness of a wine - alcohol is perceived as being sweet and can cause a wine to be considered "off-dry" even though it has little RS. For the wine drinker, the value of ABV can be a guideline, but the real consideration is **balance**. A wine can have high ABV and still be balanced in aroma, flavor, and overall mouthfeel - but higher ABV wines run the risk of being too "hot." ABV is also all about... taxes - we pay more tax on wines that are above 14% ABV, and if that isn't a **buzzkill**, we don't know what is.

20°	24.6°	30°
sour	brix at harvest (degrees)	raisin
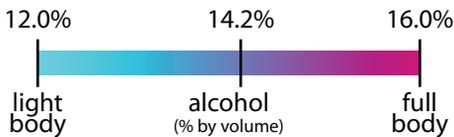
Brix is simply a measurement that tells us the percentage of **sugar in the grapes** when they were harvested. (Why don't we just say "%"? Beats me.) A higher Brix means more alcohol in the finished wine. Brix is perversely measured in degrees (just when you thought you had Celsius figured out...) - 24° refers to a Brix value of 24. If you have ever wondered why the **ancient Greeks** made wine from grapes, it is because grapes have a higher Brix when ripe than just about any other fruit - and those ancient Greeks liked their buzz... Grapes are usually picked when the Brix is 24° or higher, and the flavors have also developed - making for "yummy wine!"

0	18	24
fruity	age before bottling (months)	oaky
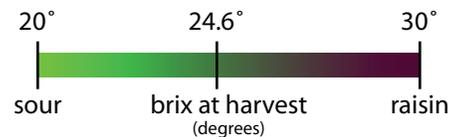
Age is just the time the wine spent **aging in a barrel or tank** prior to bottling. Some time in any container allows all of the icky by-products of winemaking to settle and clarify the wine. Time spent in oak barrels can **add complex flavors** to the wine (see "Oak Program" below), and oak barrels make our **wine cave look extra cool**.

Varietals & Vineyards details the vineyards that were harvested to produce this wine. We at Twisted Oak enjoy a close working relationship with all of our vineyards and we like to **give them props** whenever possible!

Harvest Date really doesn't matter too much, unless it was in July or December (which would define a "wierd year") - but we like knowing when our **babies were born**...

Oak Program is a fancy term for the kinds of barrels we use during the aging process (see above). In general, French and Hungarian Oak have a **vanilla** character, while American Oak is more like a **butterscotch**. New oak imparts more flavor than 1-, 2-, or 3-year-old oak (think "tea bag"). As you might also expect, neutral oak and stainless steel impart no flavor. The way we mix up these combinations is a big part of the "recipe" for the wine - knowing how to do this is why winemakers make the **big bucks**. And if you want to know more than this you'll just have to drink a whole lot of wine. Bummer.

Food Pairings: Steaks! - Other Grilled Meats (like, say, grilled SPAM) -PB&J (oddly enough) - Corn flakes

Food Pairings - now we're getting down to it! This is our attempt to give some idea of what foods the wine might go with. This is obviously **highly subjective** but you at least get an idea. You can rest assured that each and every suggestion has been extensively **tested** in Twisted Oak's Test Kitchen.

Varietals & Vineyards:
100% Petite Sirah
from Silvaspoons Vineyard

Harvest Date:
September 17, 2004

Oak Program:
30% new American oak
15% new French oak
20% 2-year old French oak
35% Neutral oak