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# The Lightning Bolt

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## Update

The 2010 growing season and harvest is thankfully now in the rear view mirror. I'm sure we can speak for all the local wineries in hoping that 2011 is significantly less viticulturally challenging than 2010. Currently, we are working on our winter vineyard activities: pruning and tying vines, trellis repair and upkeep, and new vineyard preparation. We'll be adding 1 acre of new Nebbiolo vines to our

main vineyard this spring. We're pretty excited about this. We've got the best clones available, and they will have the best spot in the vineyard. We're hoping we can avoid the spring frosts that keep ravaging the half acre we have in our secondary vineyard. We're also converting 1.5 acres of Verdehlo to 1.25 acres of Aglianico (big, dense red found in southern Italy) and an additional quarter acre of Muscat. That

should be more than enough to keep us busy.



**Impressive ears!! This jackrabbit decided NOT to run from the dogs. The standoff lasted hours.**

## Montepulciano Bottling

Many thanks to our Sonoita neighbors Steve, Mimi, Bill, and Kate for their expert assistance in bottling the 104 cases of 2009 estate Montepulciano. The early reviews on this wine are excellent!



**Dumping the corks into the corking machine.**

## Meet the Grape

### Sangiovese:

Pronounced “*san-joe-VAY-zee*”, and loosely translated from Latin to mean “blood of Jove”, it is probably best known as the core grape used in traditional Italian Chianti wines. It is the primary grape grown in Italy’s Tuscany and Umbria regions. Sangiovese grapes can be made into a light or heavy wine, depending on the particular clone, where it is grown, and how it is treated during the wine making process. Typical

Sangiovese aromas and flavors include sour cherry, raspberry, and earth. It sometimes possesses a slightly bitter finish. The wines generally have relatively high acidity, and medium tannins, and thus pair particularly well with high-acid foods, like tomato sauce based dishes. Our Sangiovese wine is made from a blend of two clones in our vineyard. The Brunello clone, which originated from around the Tuscan hilltown Montalcino (known for the very structured, long-lived Brunello di Montalcino



wines), and the Prugnolo clone, which originated from the neighboring Tuscan hilltown, Montepulciano (known for its excellent VINO Nobile di Montepulciano wines).

## Upcoming Events

**Feb 12-13** – In celebration of Valentine’s Day, we will once again have our chocolate fountain set up, with assorted dunking items. This will be complimentary with your tasting.

**Sunday, April 3 – “Taste of Chocolate”, 1-3 PM at the Doubletree Hotel on Alvernon, across from Reid Park.** This will be a chocoholic’s dream! There will be 45 chocolatiers with their creations available for tasting and purchase.

We will be pouring several of our wines. The event benefits the Rincon Rotary Scholarship Program and PolioPlus. The entry fee is \$10.

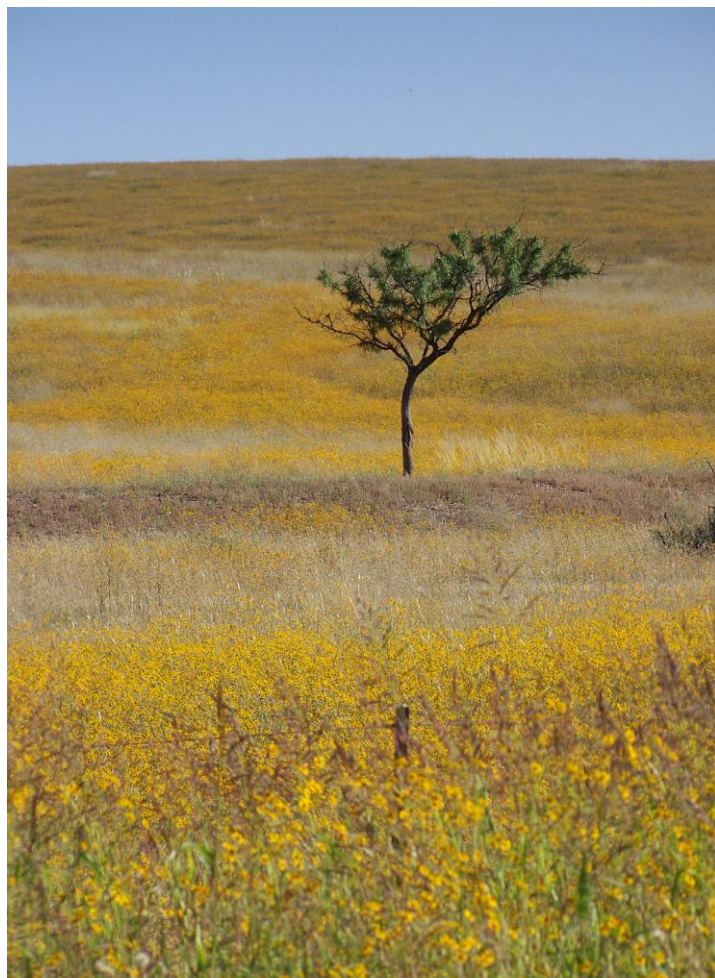
**Saturday, April 23, 12 PM (noon), Barrel Tasting at Lightning Ridge Cellars.** Light appetizers will be served, as we taste through a flight of 7 barrel tastings from the 2009 and 2010 vintage. Cost is \$40 (includes a glass, barrel tasting, and catered food). Reservations are required.



## Current Releases:

We are now mostly sold out of our 2009 Malvasia. The current tasting room lineup is:

- 2010 Muscat Canelli (estate), released in January. No bubbles in the 2010!!
- 2008 Sangiovese (estate)
- 2008 Compagno (Estate Bordeaux Blend)
- 2008 Resonance (Estate Rhone Blend)
- 2008 Cabernet -- <5 cases remain.
- 2007 Afterglow dessert wine. 100% Cabernet.



*The heavy summer rains produced a bountiful Fall wildflower season.*

## Weather Update:

Until the first week of February, we had been having an unusually warm and dry winter. But the recent single digit temperatures have wreaked havoc with our water lines. The lines feeding the winery and both vineyards, along with a line coming out of our 5000 gallon water tank, all sprung magnificent leaks. We apologize to anybody who was hoping to stop by on Friday, February 4, when we never managed to get the tasting room open. And thanks to

those who stopped by on Feb 5-6, when we had no running water, and thus no bathroom facilities. The water lines are fixable, but we are a bit apprehensive on what impact those temperatures might have on the vineyards. Most vines don't care to spend much time at single digit temps. We are keeping our fingers crossed. We'll know the full impact in about 6 weeks, when the vines start to awaken.



*Winter rainbow over the vineyard*

## Upcoming Releases



*One of our furry 8-legged visitors!*

We have our first estate **Zinfandel** that we will release once the 2008 Cabernet is finished up – probably the weekend of Feb 18-20. We only have 25 cases of this, so we expect it to move pretty fast.

Our 2009 estate **Montepulciano** is now bottled, and has been

extremely well-received in very limited “pre-release” (i.e. customer requests) tasting. We are pretty excited about this one, and plan to officially release it in April. One hundred cases were produced.

Our inaugural estate 2009 **Primitivo** (basically an Italian clone of Zinfandel),

estate 2009 **Mourvedre**, and a wonderful 2009 **Dolcetto** vinified from grapes purchased in Temecula, are all on tap to be bottled in the near future with a tentative release in the summer and early Fall.

## Out of State Shipping update

*Currently*, we can ship our wines to: Alaska, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Virginia, District of Columbia, West Virginia, and Wyoming. We can

only ship in the cooler months here, from about November through April.

## Bruna's Corner

Bruna celebrated her fourth birthday in December. She got to wear a pointy party hat and had a special doggy “cake”, but no candles! Nothing good could possibly have come from candles. Brunna is continuing with her duties as Lightning Ridge Cellars greeter and tour leader. If any of you have pictures of her that you'd like to share with us, we would love to see them. We know lots of great pictures have been taken.



*Bruna..... supervising from the truck.*



*Lightning Ridge Cellars, during Monsoon season.*

