



Garagiste

WINE CLUB

[gar-uh-zheest'] noun - A French term used to describe independent, artisan winemakers crafting small batches of wine in garage-type settings and not yet discovered by the mainstream.

Markus Wine Co.

Owner/Winemaker: Markus Niggli

Location: Lodi, CA

Founded in 2014 by Swiss-born winemaker Markus Niggli, Markus Wine Co. is a tiny boutique winery in Lodi, CA that truly stands out from the crowd. Markus Niggli carefully selects fruit from wisely-planted ancient vines and newly-planted unusual offerings throughout the Lodi region to craft small-production, European-style wines from his quaint winery facility in Victor, California, located just three miles east of Lodi.

Markus Niggli started his business career in the travel marketing industry working for Kuoni Travel in his native country of Switzerland. He gained valuable management and sales skills while there, and at one point managed 75 people while doing more than one hundred million dollars in revenue annually. But, the travel industry wasn't the right fit for Markus long term, and wine had started to pique his interest. He began traveling with a friend who worked in a wine shop, and after visiting various countries around the world (Australia, South Africa, and some European destinations), Markus was hooked. He was fascinated by the differences in the world of wine.

At a certain point, around the age of 30, Markus decided to leave his tourism job and pursue a future in the wine industry. He moved to Perth, Australia where he studied winemaking and viticulture, and also landed a position working both in the cellar and vineyard for Edgecombe Brothers. From there, he moved on to Napa Valley's Atlas Peak, and then to Borra Vineyards in Lodi in 2006. It was at Borra Vineyards that the plans for Markus Wine Co. came about.

Steve Borra, a third generation winemaker and the owner of Borra Vineyards, the first boutique winery in Lodi, initially hired Markus to oversee the cellar. Markus impressed him though and he quickly rose to the role of winemaker in 2010, while also overseeing the cellar, all wholesale grape and wine sales, and commissioning artists to design the wine labels. Borra Vineyards was special to Markus because in a region that was primarily known for growing fruit with higher tonnage yields and producing bulk wine, Steve Borra had gone the other direction seeking higher quality and lower yields. He was growing French and Italian varieties and the quality of the fruit was very high. When Steve was ready to retire, he offered the business to Markus, and thus began the transition from Borra Vineyards to Markus Wine Co.

For his first portfolio under 'Markus Wine Co.', Markus returned to his roots for inspiration and decided to go against the grain offering some rather obscure white varieties - Kerner, Bacchus, Traminette, Torrontes, Gewurztraminer, and Riesling, among others. Although it was a risk to offer edgy, unknown white varieties in Lodi, which is without a doubt 'red wine' country, his intention was - and still is - to do something different and people are responding to it. Markus also works with Petit Verdot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, Carignane, Petite Sirah and Syrah, offering Lodi's red wine lovers a selection as well. But - these are not your standard Lodi red wines. Markus wants to achieve freshness with his reds, using as little intervention as possible in his winemaking style. He likes the idea of introducing something different to an established market, and so far, it seems to be paying off. We are happy to present this under-the-radar Lodi winery to our Garagiste Wine Club members, and hope you enjoy his stunning Syrah blend. Cheers!

Markus 2016 "Zeitlos" Syrah

65 cases produced

Borra Vineyards Gill Creek Ranch, Lodi, California

Perhaps Markus' most age-worthy wine, the 2016 "Zeitlos" Syrah is an elegantly structured blend of 90% Syrah and 10% Petite Sirah. This wine is big and full-bodied with vibrant, savory flavors of cherry, plum, violets, coffee, and seared-steak meatiness. It is nicely balanced by gripping tannins and fresh acidity. The name, "Zeitlos," is German for ageless, and it perfectly sums up Markus' winemaking style. While this wine is fruit-driven and balanced and can be enjoyed young, it can also age for a decade or more and continue to evolve and still be absolutely elegant. Aged 23 months in oak. Enjoy!

Gold Medal Wine Club Price: \$36.00 / bottle

To order, visit the Wine Store at www.GoldMedalWineClub.com or call 1-800-266-8888

*2 bottle minimum per wine, per order. Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included. Call for details.

