

PLATINUM SERIES

Select, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers

Sam Spencer is from New York City and the Manhattan native admits to having wine with his family meals in his early adolescence. A chance meeting during high school with his science teacher opened Sam's eyes to the possibilities of the wine industry and planted the initial seed he needed to become interested.

However, Wall Street called and after graduating from Colorado in 1987, he worked in New York for a big stock firm until the grind finally forced him into a business he thought he would enjoy – wine.

Wine wanderlust called him to New Zealand in 1991 where a friend introduced him to the Judd Family who would soon sell their Cloudy Bay Vineyards to a large European wine conglomerate and become the top producer of Sauvignon Blanc in that part of the world. He also traveled to Chile, Argentina and Spain, and was able to consult in various capacities during his travels. A year later, Sam returned to California to further pursue his dream of becoming a winemaker. His mother was originally a Californian and Sam was able to spend a great deal of time with her relatives who just happened to live in Napa Valley. Along the way Sam attended UC Davis and departed with a degree in viticulture to complete his resume. He also started a wine bar in San Francisco that further whetted his appetite for the industry.

A fortunate meeting at a cocktail party in 1995 produced an immediate friendship with an ex-Chicagoan named Wendy Roloson. Wendy was a high level marketing executive who had fled to California with the desire of one day becoming involved with the wine industry. She had used her marketing and financial skills to help develop Bart Broadbent's fledgling import company that today has become a top importer of high quality Ports and Madeiras.

After much conversation and an appropriate amount of time and planning, Sam and Wendy decided to get together and Spencer-Roloson Winery became a reality in 1998. Sam agreed to do the growing and winemaking aspects of the business and Wendy would control the business and marketing sides.

The company's first release of approximately 1200 cases took place in 2000, utilizing some exceptional fruit from vineyards Sam had carefully nurtured. The response was immediate and the first

Spencer-Roloson Winery releases were quickly grabbed up by consumers. Rave reviews from industry periodicals and excellent scores and medals in wine tasting competitions quickly established the tiny winery as a real force among boutique Napa Valley wineries.

"We started off small by choice and have remained so to this point," offered Spencer recently. "It has always been our plan to use our estate fruit in a certain manner that actually reflected the work we put into making our wines. We probably do a little more than other wineries in that regard, but it seems to work out well."

Such an understatement is explicable for the personable Spencer. He has dedicated a good deal of time to selected vineyard locations including the well respected La Herradura Vineyard at the base of Howell Mountain in Napa County and the Madder Lake Vineyard in nearby Lake County.

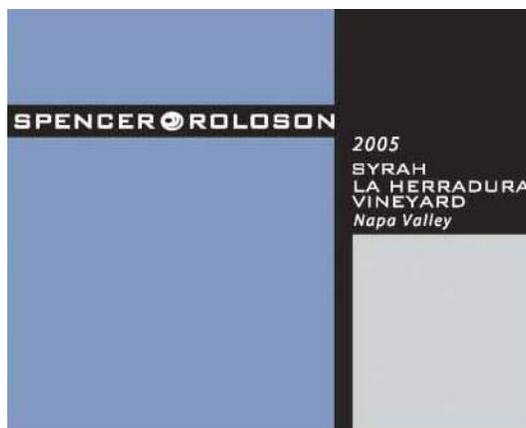
Spencer-Roloson Winery concentrates on Rhône and Spanish varietals that are a bit unusual for many Napa Valley entities.

"I have always been a person who was willing to take a chance," Spencer confided. "During my European travels, I also found some unique grapes that were available that could be easily adapted to certain areas of Napa and Lake counties. I've always enjoyed the cutting edge and that led us to develop the motto, 'provocative wines, evocative dirt' that we utilize on our web site and in our marketing. It speaks to the passion we both share for our company and our wines."

Several years ago, Sam and Wendy found they had more than business in common and married. This new relationship has worked perfectly and Spencer-Roloson has grown to a 5500-6500 case winery, depending on the tonnage their vineyards actually produce. They have found a near-perfect spot on Zinfandel Lane for their winery and are contemplating a tasting room facility in the near future.

Given the present state of affairs within the wine industry, Sam and Wendy are in no hurry to expand their operation beyond its current parameters.

This might come as a bit of a disappointment to many of Spencer-Roloson's loyal cadre of customers who are aware that these wines are becoming increasingly hard to find.



TASTING NOTES



SPENCER ROLOSON WINERY

Dear *Platinum Series* Members,

Nestled at the base of the Howell Mountain in the Conn Valley, east of the town of St. Helena is the La Herradura Vineyard. In 1999, we visited this ranch for the first time and were struck by the landscape; a natural amphitheater with opposing hillsides, varied soil types and excellent exposures. It brought back memories of Côte Rôtie in the Northern Rhone Valley of France and the exceptional wines that are crafted there.

We planted the Côte Rôtie selections of Syrah and eventually Viognier. The soils are thin, gravelly, clay loams overlying subsoils of ancient seafloor and Franciscan bedrock. These are the tell tale signs of a violent past in the Pacific sea floor that was active in producing California's unique coastline. Through the ages of uplift and erosion, they have been exposed here on the eastern reaches of the Napa Valley. These types of soils offer little in the way of nutrients and the vines work hard to produce what they can. The yields are naturally low in these thin soils, producing loose clusters with small, thick-skinned berries, full of flavor and definite character.

The 2005 vintage was long and moderate with a near perfect drift into October for a harvest replete with late season drama and high wire activity. Herradura responded beautifully with balanced fruit, glorious aromatics and lush complexity; the wine is thick with mocha, blackberry and crushed minerals supporting sweet and finely textured tannin. The finish is a balanced and persistent sixty-second experience.

Enjoy.

Sam Spencer
Partner, Grower, and Winemaker

TASTING NOTES

850 Cases Produced

The Spencer Roloson 2005 La Herradura Vineyard Syrah comes from a quaint 4-acre vineyard site tucked into the lower slopes of Howell Mountain in the Conn Valley. Owner Sam Spencer planted this Côte Rôtie inspired vineyard on family land in 1999 and has since succeeded in producing remarkable Syrahs garnering some serious scores. This 2005 La Herradura Syrah is one of tremendous complexity with balanced fruit and stunning aromatics that received an outstanding **93 Points** from the *International Wine Review*: "Absolutely delicious." Robert Parker also awarded the Spencer Roloson 2005 Syrah an impressive **92 Points**: "The single vineyard 2005 Syrah, La Herradura is a brilliant wine. Complex bacon, blackberry, and cherry notes intermixed with smoke and licorice emerge from the glass. On the palate, the wine's complexity continues with terrific fruit, a nice layered full bodied mouth feel, sweet tannin and a lengthy finish." Try pairing this Spencer Roloson Syrah with lamb shanks, spicy pizza, and barbecued chicken. 100% Syrah. Enjoy now until 2015.

REORDERS

Spencer Roloson is dedicated to the wines of the Rhône Valley and continues to demonstrate the breadth and versatility of Napa Valley vineyard sites through their distinguished wine portfolio. The 2005 La Herradura Vineyard Syrah is an excellent achievement and reveals the winery's strength in skillfully producing single vineyard estate bottlings.

The **Spencer Roloson 2005 La Herradura Syrah** retails winery-direct for \$48.00 per bottle. As a *Platinum Series* member your very special pricing is as follows:

2-Bottle Members \$40.00 /bottle*
4-Bottle Members &
Multi-Series Members \$37.00 /bottle*
*2 bottle min. order [Plus shipping]

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