

# THE WINE PRESS

Gold Medal Wine Club Newsletter: Vol. 18 No. 3

Faun Vineyards Edition

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"With Gold Medal Wine Club,  
The Road to Great Wine  
Begins at Your Door."

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## SUCCESS ALLOWS FAUN VINEYARDS TO PURSUE THEIR FIELD OF DREAMS

The evolution of Faun Vineyards into a highly respected wine entity was as much a product of circumstance as anything else. For owner J.D. Aguillar, the development of his pet project came as a result of meeting his wife to be, Ginger, almost twelve years ago.

Ginger Lindley was part of a winemaking family that owned Lockwood Vineyards, at the time an up and coming

winery in the Monterey County growing region. To be closer to Ginger, J.D. moved to the Monterey area and became closely involved with members of Ginger's family.

Eventually Ginger and J.D. married in 1996, and before long, the seed of winemaking was planted in J.D. by Aguillar's now brother-in-law Ken Rauh. Rauh and his wife Robyn (Ginger's

*Continued on page 4*



*Standing in front of their 22 plantable acres at the base of the Gabilan Mountain Range in the Salinas Valley, the Aguillar family — J.D., Ginger and Indira — are poised for the future of Faun Vineyards.*

Gold Medal Wine Club features two wines each month from only the best small wineries of California. Featured wines include those which have earned medals in the top wine-industry competitions or have been highly rated by a respected national wine publication. On occasion we feature a wine which is of high medal-quality, but due to its very limited availability or by preference of the wine producer, may not be submitted to these venues for review. Each and every selection is a superb wine made in small quantities and with limited distribution. There are over 2,000 wineries in California producing thousands of different wines. Only wines fitting the above criteria are considered in choosing the featured selections each month.



## 2005 CHARDONNAY

Dedicated to producing the highest quality Chardonnay possible, Proprietor and Winemaker J.D. Aguillar chose grapes from Monterey, California for Faun Vineyards' 2005 Chardonnay. A wine of extremely limited production, this is a *Gold Medal Wine Club Special Selection!* This Chardonnay demonstrates the best of both worlds, with a balance of toasty French oak and ripe fruit characteristics. Crystal clear and medium golden straw in color, this wine presents a combination of citrus, pineapple, and creamy toast notes that produce a plush mouth feel with great concentration. Flavors of white peach, nectarine, lemon meringue and a slight mineral expression linger on the palate but allow for a clean finish. The 2005 Faun Chardonnay pairs beautifully with halibut, cheeses, and creamy pastas. 100% Chardonnay. Enjoy now until 2010.



## 2005 RUBIA RED

A *Gold Medal Wine Club Exclusive Selection!* Faun Vineyards' 2005 Salado Creek Rubia is a full-flavored, remarkable blend that expresses a tantalizing combination of fruit, spice, and lushness. Predominantly Cabernet Sauvignon, the small percentage of Merlot contributes flavors of blackberry and plum with softer tannins, while the Cabernet Franc presents cocoa and pepper characteristics with slightly firmer tannins. The resulting blend exhibits remarkable levels of chocolate, cherry, and leather aromas and flavors that pair ideally with grilled or smoked hardy meats and sauces – see J.D.'s Cowboy Tri-Tip recipe. Named after proprietor J.D. Aguillar's wife's nickname, Rubia is one of the winery favorites and was made with the intentions of enjoying it alongside a delicious barbecue with the best of friends. Aged 14 months in oak. 94% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc. Enjoy now until 2015.

### WINE CREDENTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

**2005 VINTAGE:** *Gold Medal Wine Club Special Selection!* A new release for Faun Vineyards, this vintage is currently awaiting the results of state and national wine competitions.

**LEGACY:** Faun Vineyards' Chardonnay is an ideal representation of the high standard of quality the winery holds itself too. Faun Vineyards sells out of every vintage quickly, and is gaining a loyal group of fans and followers.

#### Just the facts:

pH.....	3.42
Alcohol.....	13.8%
Total Acid.....	0.62 g/100 mls
Aged in Oak.....	10 months
Cases Produced.....	1,014
Drink Now or Up to Year.....	2010

**2005 VINTAGE:** *Gold Medal Wine Club Exclusive!* Due to the limited production, this vintage is offered exclusively to Gold Series members. Awards are forthcoming.

**LEGACY:** First released in 2002, Faun Vineyards' Salado Creek Rubia has consistently been a crowd-pleaser and continues to be recognized by consumers and wine competition judges year after year.

#### Just the facts:

pH.....	3.55
Alcohol.....	13.9%
Total Acid.....	0.56 g/100 mls
Aged in Oak.....	14 months
Cases Produced.....	1,207
Drink Now or Up to Year.....	2015

# GOLD MEDAL SPOTLIGHT

## *J.D. Aguillar, winemaker*

Things have never come easy for J.D. Aguillar, now 37, even at the beginning of his life.

“People always ask me what the ‘J.D.’ stands for,” the personable owner of Faun Vineyards, remarked recently, “and I am forced to tell them the whole story.”

It seems that Aguillar’s parents were both of Mexican descent and neither one was really proficient in speaking English. At the time of his birth, both parents wanted to name him J.D. but were unable to convey that message to the authorities. In their effort to explain their desire, the couple tried to explain themselves by selecting a well known actor James Dean, who bore the same initials. So it was that James Dean Aguillar was officially recognized as being born.

“It took a few years and finally we were able to get my name changed to plain J.D.,” Aguillar chuckled, “and it’s all anyone has ever called me in my entire lifetime.” Aguillar had absolutely no idea he would ever wind up being in the wine business. He graduated from college at Cal Poly Pomona with a degree in Real Estate Finance. His closest contact with wine resulted from his father’s efforts at making some homemade wines with an Italian buddy during his youth in

Los Angeles when he was about ten years old. “It always seemed like a lot of fun for everyone, and that was the wine we drank with some of our meals,” he admitted. “I really can’t say, but I guess it was pretty good for the time.”

Everything changed for Aguillar when he fell in love with his future wife Ginger.

“Ginger’s entire family was really into wine,” Aguillar admitted. “Every time I went up to Monterey all that was discussed was wine in one form or another. I finally moved up here to be closer to her and we soon married. That probably sealed my fate.”

Quite naturally, Aguillar’s close association with his new brother-in-law, Ken Rauh, almost forced J.D. to enter the wine business. “Ken is a very forceful person, and he came up with this idea for us to make our own wines in our garage. He listed all these things to do and I wound up doing practically all of them myself. Ken was great with the idea, but I was left to do all the work. And let me tell you, making

homemade wines is very labor intensive,” he smiled as he recalled.

When it was time to go public with his first release, J.D. Aguillar was rewarded with instant critical success. His limited production from Faun Vineyards won several medals and encouraged him to grow larger.

“I have to say that for me, Faun Vineyards is strictly a labor of love,” he admitted. “I always tell everyone if you get into the wine business to make money, you are strictly in the wrong business. It is simply too

labor intense and also extremely competitive. It seems like everyone is getting into the winery business these days, and they are not all going to make it.”

J.D. feels the reason Faun has been so successful so far is the availability of Lockwood’s custom crush facility, which aids Aguillar’s search for quality grapes from the region. “Being able to utilize Lockwood’s facilities is a real plus. Everything there is first class and tends to make things easier during



*J.D. learned winemaking techniques through wine program courses at U.C. Davis.*

*Continued on page 6*



## WINE WIZARD

- 1) Why is pruning so vital to producing high quality wine grapes?
- 2) What is a *Cordon* in the vineyard?
- 3.) What are the best methods used to prevent the invasive vineyard pest phylloxera?

*Continued from page 1*

sister), long active in the Monterey County wine scene, were on their way to becoming the future owners of a new winery called Mission Trail Vineyards that has formerly been a Gold Series selection for the Gold Medal Wine Club.



*Highly-sought-after grapes from Monterey County were selected for the 2005 Faun Chardonnay.*

From this point on, the progression of Faun Vineyards is not too dissimilar to a number of other winery sagas. J.D. Aguillar and Ken Rauh began working together to make some homemade beer and homemade wines. Their formula was simple and to the point.

“We bought a book on winemaking and read it from front to back,” Aguillar recalled. “We had no real idea what we were doing at the time and decided it would be smart for us to stick to the basics.

We eventually were able to produce around fifteen or sixteen barrels a year and actually started making some pretty good wine.”

Buoyed by the ongoing compliments of family and friends and able to utilize the winery facilities of nearby Lockwood, the idea of Faun Vineyards slowly began to take shape. When a fulltime job opened at Lockwood, J.D. jumped at the chance to be in the wine industry on a permanent basis. “I actually

started at the bottom of the chain and worked my way up,” Aguillar explained. “I went from cellar rat to lab technician to becoming involved with the winemaking process. It was a great deal of intense

work but I managed to learn a lot about the entire process.”

In 2002, Aguillar enrolled in one of UC Davis’ programs intended for people already involved in the

wine business. “It was a wonderful opportunity to enhance what I was already experiencing on a daily basis,” he added. “By completing the course, I gained a more complete feeling about wine and the winemaking process. I would recommend it to anyone truly interested in improving

their wine expertise.”

That same year, Faun Vineyards released its first wines, comprising only 225 cases. The way the name Faun Vineyards came into being is a story in itself. For about eighteen months prior to the first release, the Aguillar’s new entity was nameless, with a number of potential names being tossed around by friends and family. One day, J.D. was looking through a dictionary and came upon a depiction of a faun, a devilishly symbolic character that was half man and half goat. The more he looked at the drawing the more Aguillar realized the figure described the personalities of the principals involved in his soon to be winery.

Further research involving the legends associated with the faun showed that the creatures celebrated life by carousing, chasing nymphs



*Fruit Set stage of a Chardonnay cluster.*

and drinking wine, all respectable tasks in Aguillar's mind. Moreover, the faun was sacred to farmers in both Greek and Roman mythologies and was always associated with prosperity, an essential element to any winery operation. When Aguillar found a picture of the wine god Bacchus next to a faun and learned that Bacchus wore the skin of a faun on his shoulders, the deal was sealed and Faun Vineyards became a reality.

Today, Faun Vineyards has grown to just over 2200 annual cases, but has plans to eventually expand to around 4500 cases during the next five years. Aguillar has recently purchased some additional property (approximately 22 plantable acres) at the base of the Gabilan Mountain Range that

dominates one side of the Salinas Valley and is parallel to the remarkable Santa Lucia Highlands that has become famous for some of the finest Pinot Noirs produced in California.

Aguillar also hopes to open a tasting room in either San Jose or Monterey in the not too distant future, a move that would afford his emerging winery a great deal of exposure. 🍷



*J.D.'s daughter, Indira, holds the future of Faun Vineyards in her hands.*

## ANSWERS TO WINE WIZARD

1) Pruning is necessary to space out shoots on the vine, to allow sunlight penetration to the fruit, to allow pest management sprays to reach the fruit and inside of the canopy, and to allow air circulation to lower the chance of rot and mildew. Sun exposure on the fruit is important for flavor development. Too much sunlight can result in burning or raisining, but the right balance can promote richer colors, phenolics (tannins), and discourage vegetal flavors.

2) The *cordon* is the permanent horizontal branch retained on a grapevine from season to season. Cordons can be decades old and achieve diameters of several inches or more around. The cordon supports the current season's growth that will be pruned back after each harvest.

3) One of the most important considerations for a viticulturist is choosing parent grape varieties that reduce the inhabitation of phylloxera, an insect that feeds on grape roots. These varieties include *vitis rupestris*, *vitis berlandieri*, and *vitis riparia*, and each assist grapevines by providing vigor, drought tolerance, and cool weather tolerance. Phylloxera is easily spread from vineyard to vineyard, so it's also essential to restrict the movement of people, equipment, and materials among vineyards and thoroughly clean all items that come in contact with vineyard soil.





# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## FAUNICIOUS TORTILLA DAY SOUP

Pair with 2005 Faun Chardonnay

Serves 4 - 6

- 8 oz. Chicken, sautéed, shredded into bite-sized pieces
- 2 Tablespoons unsalted Butter
- 1 Onion, coarsely chopped
- 2 Garlic Cloves, minced
- 28 oz. Chicken broth
- 8 oz. Tomato Sauce
- 1/4 Cup Chardonnay - *not the Faun Chardonnay*  
-save that to enjoy with your soup!
- 14 oz. Tomatoes, fresh, diced
- 14 oz. Green Chilies, mild, diced (or less, to taste)
- 1/2 Teaspoon Chili Powder (or less, to taste)
- 1/2 Teaspoon Cumin (or less, to taste)
- 1/2 Teaspoon Oregano
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- Tortilla Chips, fresh
- 4 oz. shredded Cheese  
- Monterey Jack & Cheddar blend preferred
- 1 Dollop of Sour Cream per serving

In a medium-size sauté pan, melt butter over medium heat. Add onions and garlic, and sauté until onions are transparent (about 15 minutes). Remove to a 2-quart saucepan. Set aside. To sauté the fresh chicken breasts, use same sauté pan (add additional butter if needed) and sauté chicken breasts until done. Cool and shred into bite-sized pieces. Set aside to add later. Add the next 8 ingredients to the cooked onion/garlic mixture in the 2-quart saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes. Add cooked shredded chicken; cover and simmer an additional 10 minutes. Taste, add salt and pepper as needed.

Ladle into bowls; top with coarsely crushed tortilla chips, shredded cheese, sour cream and a glass of Faun Chardonnay.

## J.D.'s COWBOY TRI-TIP WITH GRILLED ASPARAGUS

Pair with 2005 Faun Rubia Red

Serves 4

- One well marbled, untrimmed, Tri-Tip (to feed four)
- Garlic Powder
- Johnny Spice (optional-contains MSG)
- Fresh Ground Pepper
- 3 Garlic Cloves, whole
- Salt
- Smoke Chips, (oak or mesquite or apple chips)

Apply garlic powder generously over both sides of the Tri-Tip and then repeat with the black pepper. Just before putting your Tri-Tip on the grill, apply salt or Johnny Spice. Salt is applied last because it has a tendency to dry the meat out. Make two small slits on the top of the meat (not the fat side) and insert the whole garlic cloves. Apply meat to grill fat side down. Let cook on this side for approximately 40 minutes or until the meat appears to be cooked about half-way through. Don't panic if the fat burns-it is normal and the fat part will be trimmed off before serving. Flip the meat to the other side. Let cook on this side for about twenty minutes or until the meat feels slightly firm. Sometimes it looks like the meat needs more time to cook, but this is not always the case. The best way to determine if the meat is done is by taking a utensil and poking the top of the Tri-Tip. If it's firm, it's ready. One of Tri-Tip's greatest features is that there is a piece for everyone; the ends will be more done and the midsection will be rarer. Before serving, trim the fat off of the Tri-Tip. It is very important to cut the meat cross grain into thin slices (1/4 to 1/2 inch thick).

### Helpful Hint:

Remove your Tri-Tip from the refrigerator an hour or more before placing it on the grill. Room temperature meat cooks much more evenly and has better texture than meat placed on the grill cold.

### Ingredients for Grilled Asparagus:

- 10 to 15 Asparagus spears, fresh
- Olive Oil
- Salt
- Fresh Ground Pepper
- Freshly grated Parmesan Cheese

Place asparagus directly onto the BBQ grill. Brush the olive oil onto the asparagus spears. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roll asparagus on grill continuously while cooking. As soon as the asparagus gets warm all the way through (approximately five to seven minutes), remove the asparagus, and sprinkle with freshly grated Parmesan Cheese. The asparagus is ready to serve immediately.



J.D. Aguillar couldn't be happier.

Continued from page 5

the winemaking process. I can't begin to tell you how much they have helped me make a go of it," he added.

Aguillar learned from several different winemakers and has

developed his own unique style. He says that he is more of the classical winemaker (sense, smell) but also sees the need for utilizing numbers (brix, etc) when making decisions. "I'm a stickler for detail," he injected. "And I continue to do most of the work myself. Once you have

# JUDGE-THE-WINES RESULTS

In this section we publish the cumulative, on-going tallies of the Judge-the-Wines Scorecards which are provided in each delivery of wine and mailed back in by Club members. We believe it is fun as well as educational to think about and record the different characteristics of the wines you sample. No matter how acute you think your palate is, the person next to you will probably have a different thought or opinion about a certain characteristic of the wine you are sampling. It can also prove beneficial to record your impressions of the wine for reference at a later date.

Below are the most recent tallies of the Scorecards returned. Gold Medal Wine Club specializes in featuring small-sized wineries and small-production wines. Depending on availability from the winery, all members may not receive every wine that is listed below. The Scorecard results which are printed in green indicate the wine selections that as of press time are still available for reorder.

## 2005 Midnight Cellars Chardonnay

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	92%	6%	2%

## 2005 Mayen Creek Chardonnay

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	91%	6%	3%

## 2002 Van Ruiten Reserve Syrah

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	91%	6%	3%

## 2003 Madroña Cabernet Sauvignon

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	91%	6%	3%

## 2004 Midnight Cellars Syrah

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	92%	6%	2%

## 2005 Mayen Creek Cabernet Sauvignon

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	92%	5%	3%

## 2004 Van Ruiten Old Vine Zinfandel

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	93%	6%	2%

## 2004 Madroña Estate Merlot

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	90%	7%	3%

The above wines were recently featured. Due to space limitations, the entire list of available wines is not listed.

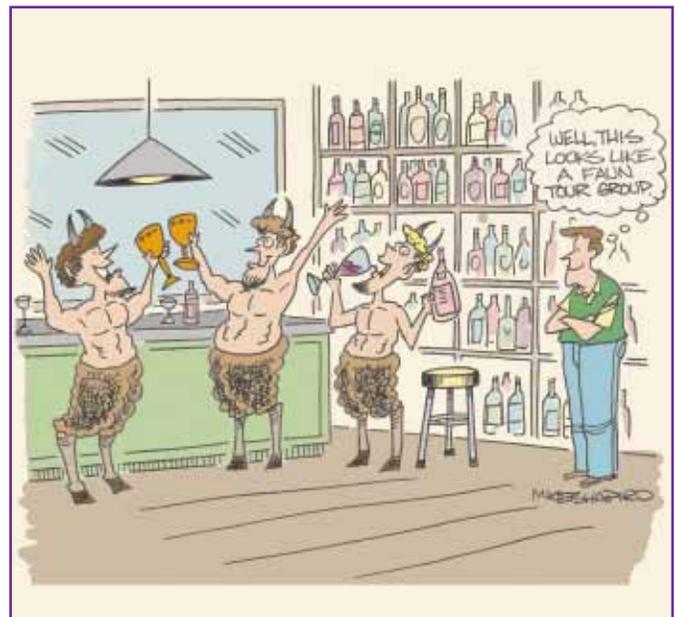
To see our entire inventory and reorder online, go to: [www.goldmedalwine.com/member](http://www.goldmedalwine.com/member)

■ Indicates wine is still available

developed a system that you are comfortable with, it's better to follow that system to its completion."

Aguillar is extremely excited about the possibility of producing Pinot Noir from the new acreage Faun acquired. "Pinot Noir is the real challenge to a winemaker," he finalized. "It requires a type of savvy that other grape varietals don't require. I know our land will be great for growing Pinot Noir, the rest will be up to me and my winemaking."

Judging from his past accomplishments, J.D. Aguillar is a cinch to produce even more great wines. 🍷



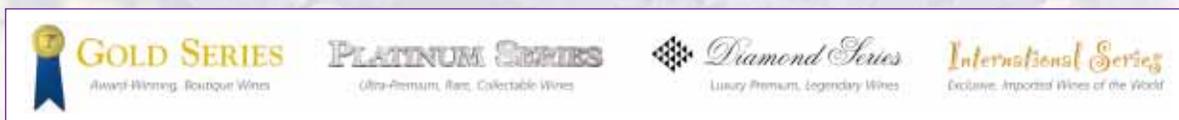
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# THE GRAPEVINE

*Comments from us and Club members*

We want to thank everyone who submitted their vote on line for the **Top Ten Wines of 2007**. The results and winner of the 2007 Mixed Bonus Case will be published in next month's *Grapevine*. To purchase a mixed case of the *Gold Series 2007 Featured Wines*, order online at [www.goldmedalwine.com/member](http://www.goldmedalwine.com/member) or call 1-800-266-8888.

**Deborah Kastenmeier** of Wisconsin was selected as this month's recipient of a 1/2 case of 2004 Bradford Mountain Zinfandel for submitting her Judge-the-Wines score cards online. Deborah consistently describes the wines and her food pairing selections. You too could be the winner of the next 1/2 case of bonus wine; but remember, you must rate the wines to win. Simply mail back the supplied Judge-the-Wines card in your wine shipment or go on line to [www.goldmedalwine.com/member](http://www.goldmedalwine.com/member), click on the Scorecard link, and fill out the form to submit your comments and ratings. We publish the cumulative tallies in the *Judge the Wine Results* section of the *Grapevine* every month. Cheers!



Members who send in their wine ratings on the provided Scorecards are eligible to receive a bonus half-case of any *Gold Medal Series* wine that is in stock if your name is drawn. Drawings are held each month. (Maximum of one Scorecard per wine per membership)...GMWC

## R E O R D E R

Faun Vineyards 2005 Monterey County Chardonnay and the 2005 Salado Creek Rubia are two classic bottlings produced to complement a chef's palate. J.D.'s foremost intention of creating food-friendly wines is notably recognized — enjoy these wines at your next get-together and raise your glass to toast your own field of dreams.

FAUN VINEYARDS	Retail Price Winery-Direct	Club Price 2-Bottle Members		Club Price 4-Bottle Members	
<b>2005 Chardonnay*</b> Monterey County	Half Case-6 \$132 Full Case-12 \$264	<b>\$90</b> (\$15.00) Save 32%		<b>\$81</b> (\$13.50) Save 39%	
		<b>\$162</b> (\$13.50) Save 39%		<b>\$144</b> (\$12.00) Save 45%	
<b>2005 Rubia Red*</b> Salado Creek	Half Case-6 \$132 Full Case-12 \$264	<b>\$93</b> (\$15.50) Save 30%		<b>\$84</b> (\$14.00) Save 36%	
		<b>\$168</b> (\$14.00) Save 36%		<b>\$150</b> (\$12.50) Save 43%	

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\*Availability is limited.

Note: Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in the above prices. Call for details.