



## A Celebration Of Place & Time At Kimsey Vineyard

BY RANDY SMITH | OCTOBER 2022

TEN VINTAGES IN WAS CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION AND RETROSPECTION. KIMSEY VINEYARD THREW A PARTY.

While a decade in wine obviously pales in comparison to centuries of wine heritage in Burgundy or Bordeaux, this tasting proved to be a fun and instructive exercise. Vineyard owner Bill Kimsey, vineyard manager Ruben Solorzano, and winemaker Matt Dees first took guests on a walk through the vines before we gathered in the barn for a tasting.

And what a tasting. We sampled the 2015, 2018, and 2019 vintages of the Kimsey White Blend. We were pleased to see the life remaining in the 2015. The White Blend has evolved into an equal parts combination of Roussanne, Viognier, and Grenache Blanc. "Bright" is a good descriptor.





We then moved to a Grenache flight containing wines from 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2020, and a barrel sample of 2021. These wines are so giving in terms of aromatics. They are effusive, spicy, and delicious. Matt Dees commented that he believes the 2016 is the first real signature Kimsey Grenache. He, Ruben, and their team have really dialed in elegance with this wine.

A course of Syrahs concluded the tasting with sips of the 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 vintages. When Matt Dees was asked if he'd ever considered making a Kimsey Grenache/Syrah blend, he declined by indicating that his blending philosophy was "power with power"...the elegance of the Kimsey Grenache could get lost in a cuvée. These Syrahs stand on their own, and deliver the meatiness and structure that mark the best of the variety. Matt varies the whole cluster percentages vintage to vintage. The aromatics on this wine are consistently top shelf. The older vintages are holding up well as they approach their second decade.

After tasting all that wine, guests dined on an impressive catered lunch paired with Kimsey Rose'. Some of us snuck in a revisit to a favorite wine or two in the tasting. There was camaraderie and good talk among the invited winemakers and Kimsey fans and friends. It was hard to leave. This was ideal timing for a get together with harvest looming in just a few weeks.

We've been fans of Kimsey Vineyard for years. You may recall a 2017 interview we did with Bill and Matt. It's linked below. You'd be hard pressed to find two nicer people. And don't get us started on Nancy Kimsey. What a gracious lady and energetic host!

Have you tried the Kimsey Vineyard wines? They speak of this special place. The vineyard sits in the southwest corner of Ballard Canyon, not far from the Sta. Rita Hills. The vines get Pacific Ocean influence. It really is a sweet spot in the Santa Ynez Valley. Speaking of sweet, is there a better winegrowing team on the planet than the one led by Ruben Solorzano and Matt Dees? Wines of this pedigree don't grow on trees, but they do on the vines of Kimsey Vineyard.

Do yourself a favor and get on the mailing list. Thank me later.

