

### 2014 Bouquet Rose "Bouke"

The 2014 Rosé "Bouké" is 70% Merlot, 22% Cabernet Sauvignon and 8% Cabernet Franc, dry and coming in at 12.5% alcohol. This is quite a mouthful for a pink, full of flavor, but seeming concentrated and rather deep. A super value, this exceeds all expectations. It tastes great, but it has the structure, tension and concentration to make it a pretty nice red wine substitute in the summer, too. It's the best value of the winery's submissions this issue. Add the pretty label—it should be a big hit this summer.

The branding is a bit confusing here since it has changed—yet not completely. Owner Lisa Donneson said, "The website is bouquetwine.com and includes both brands. I started out with Bouké (striped label) for dry wines and Bouquet (curlicue label) for sweet wines. The market liked the brand name Bouquet better, so I switched, retaining the striped label for dry wines and the curly label for the sweet wines. Since Bouké Rosé is my most popular wine, I didn't change its name."

With her concurrence, I have listed everything under Bouquet as the only producer, while noting the Bouké brand name in the wine name when appropriate. Remember, though, that may be all you see on the label.

- Mark Squires (June, 2015)

### 2010 Bouquet White Dessert Wine

The 2010 White Dessert Wine is all unoaked Chardonnay (60%) and Gewurztraminer (40%), with residual sugar of close to 90 grams per liter. It comes in at 17% alcohol—it is fortified. Seeming astonishingly and relatively dry considering the level of residual sugar, this is beautifully balanced. It has a sort of Beaufort de Venise Muscat style, but a bit tamer. The Gewurztraminer supplies some aromatic exuberance, but the Chardonnay holds it down, for better or for worse, making it a nuance rather than a dominant feature. Showing some grip on the finish, it handles itself well. It can be a good aperitif or a nice match for various cheeses, but it's not really a dessert wine as such. These tend to age pretty well. Take it in stages, though. The next day it was gentler, but still friendly, fresh and delightful. It is certainly attractive now. The price is for a 375ml bottle.

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### 2010 Bouquet Red Dessert Wine

The 2010 Red Dessert Wine is mostly Syrah with 10% Pinot Noir; all unoaked and coming in at 90 grams per liter of residual sugar. Fortified, it is listed at 17% alcohol. This has a Syrah feel, to its credit. Like its white dessert sibling this issue, it is hard to believe it has this much residual sugar, but the winemaker actually reanalyzed it at my request, with the result that the grams per liter actually increased. It hardly seems that sweet. If treated like a dessert wine, it won't do as well. A better match would be cheeses—or drink it by itself. Think of it as a relatively dryish Port. Owner Lisa Donneson said to me that: "Between the age of the wine and the balance of the alcohol and acidity, the sugar has melted into the wine. Our goal was to have...just a kiss of sweetness." Unlike its white sibling, it also has some complexity, an earthy edge and hints of that classic Syrah game and beef on the nose and the palate. It shows more grip on the finish, too. Drink this moderately chilled (upper 50sF to low 60sF at worst), not at room temperature. This should continue to age, given its style, but it's worth being conservative on that and reevaluating when we get there. In the meanwhile, it's also worth noting that it is drink...

- Mark Squires (June, 2015)

**2008 Bouquet Red Wine "Bouke"**

The 2008 Red Wine "Bouké" is 42% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon, 21% Cabernet Franc, 7% Syrah and 5% Petit Verdot, aged for 19 months in a mixture of French and Hungarian oak (half the total barrels being new). It comes in at 13% alcohol. Considering its age, this shows pretty well. Elegant—not demonstrating much mid-palate concentration—it has an earthy nuance of maturing fruit that imparts concentration. Nuanced with some herbs and bell pepper as well, it also has enough vibrancy, a little crispness and mild tannins, to give it some life, too. Friendly enough and interesting enough at the moment, this probably should be drunk in the near future for best results, no matter how long it theoretically lasts.

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**2014 Bouquet Sauvignon Blanc**

The 2014 Sauvignon Blanc is all unoaked and comes in at 12.5% alcohol. This is a fine value, crisp, aromatic and completely refreshing. With all of the classic herbaceous nuances on the nose and palate, it turns even a bit greener as it hits the tongue. This perky Sav Blanc with the pretty label that says "it's summer!" is going to be hard to resist as the weather warms. There is fine tension and a juicy finish, too. There isn't, to be sure, a lot of concentration and pure power. It likely won't age well but that's not what it is for—dive in.

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**2012 Bouquet Cabernet Franc**

The 2012 Cabernet Franc was aged in a mixture of French and Hungarian oak (only 20% of the total were new barrels). It comes in at 13% alcohol. This is a fruit-forward and friendly red meant for early consumption. It did grow on me, though, with some air. There is that very fruity nuance, but the good acidity, elegance and balance make it very pleasing. It will be fine for the next few years; after that, we'll see, but it should certainly be drunk young and fresh for best results.

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