



Bonny Doon Vineyard 2010 Old Telegram

Monday, November 4th, 2013

I had never received a telegram before. I've seen them in the movies a lot, and they usually carry bad news, so I don't feel I've been shortchanged. I have heard them referenced in the great Kinky Friedman country classic "Western Union Wire," which is likely the only country song about a telegram.

*"It said, 'from Billy' at the bottom, 'to baby' at the top.
Western Union wire please help me. Stop.
Western Union wire don't leave me. Stop."*

The label on the bottle of Old Telegram - received as a sample - will stand as the only telegram I have ever received, and it will do nicely. With STOP at the end of each truncated sentence and a little Friedmanesque wordplay thrown in - "I can't STOP" - it makes for an amusing read while you are letting the wine breathe. That is the purpose of a wine label, right? The small, less entertaining print reveals an alcohol content of 14.5% abv. Retail is \$45.

Bonny Doon Vineyards Old Telegram is winemaker Randall Grahm's love letter to the great wine of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Vieux Télégraphe. Like the Rhône classic, it is produced from grapes which the label identifies as Mataro, an alias under which thick-skinned, late-ripening Mourvèdre sometimes goes.

Grahm states that the grapes for the varietal wine are taken from "two exceptionally old, dry-farmed, head-trained Mourvèdre vineyards - Enea (75%) in warmish Antioch and Enz (25%) in the coolish Cienega Valley of San Benito County." He says the 2010 Telegram has lots of heft, but is riper than the typical release. It is mostly reserved for DEWN wine club members, but he says a few cases will drift into "wholesale commerce."

One of the telegram lines on the label promises a "wildly aromatic" experience, and it is. The nose of this dark red wine shows pepper, tobacco, anise and some beef jerky amid the riot of dark fruit. After a sniff, the heft is expected. With a sip, it is delivered. The wine has great acidity and firm tannic structure. The fruit does come on strong - big, dark shades of black plums and blackberries. There is a rather large licorice play, too, and some some tarry meat figures in - especially on the finish. A singing telegram.

Pair it with as much beef as you like, but I think it would be wonderful with some duck, grilled chicken or even roasted potatoes and veggies.

Posted by
Randy Fuller at 2:00 AM
Labels: California,
Mourvedre, Santa Cruz
Mountains

