

The Opera House Gourmet International Wine of the Month Club Selection for September 2011

## Fiddletown Cellars Concerto Barbera 2009

### Amador County, California

Our selection this month is another wine from California....our fourth selection in a year well represented by California wines. Fiddletown Cellars is located in Amador County. Amador AVA (American Viticultural Area) is one of California's smallest AVAs and is located within the larger Sierra Foothills AVA. At an elevation of 1800 feet, the grapes have a longer growing season which allows for maximum flavor concentration and exceptional balance year in and year out.

Fiddletown is a sleepy and picturesque town on the northern edge of Amador County. The town was founded around 1849 during the California Gold Rush. The winery is privately held and sits on 23 acres in the heart of Fiddletown. It prides itself on attention to detail and the fact that its vineyard practices balance the art of winemaking with the science of the craft. Their Green Initiatives include: energy efficient insulated concrete form structures, using water from an artesian well with ultra violet sterilization to replace chemical additives, and solar and wind turbines which provide power to the winery year round. They also make it a practice to do business with Green Friendly companies, use the fruit grown by organic farmers, use the fruit pressings in the vineyard for organic compost, and use pulp shippers rather than polystyrene foam cores. At Fiddletown Cellars the emphasis is that the more they do now, the better off the earth will be for future generations.

Fiddletown Cellars Concerto Barbera is a wine that is elegant with a bright boysenberry fruit nose and plush bing cherry notes on the palate. It pairs beautifully with filet mignon – not too heavy to overpower the meal and not too light to be overpowered by the meal. Winemaker Joe Shebl who previously spent ten years at Renwood Winery, hand crafts his wines in extra small lots with extreme care given to every detail. Fruit is sourced from the same vineyards as Rombauer, Joel Gott and Renwood. By keeping every vineyard lot separate from vine to barrel, his wines are distinct.

Barbera is a grape varietal that is native to northwest Italy and has found a new “home” in California – especially in the Amador and El Dorado AVAs. In June 2011, Barbera Festival was held and Fiddletown Cellars Concerto was among the favorite for taste and value. The 2009 Concerto also won a gold medal in the Amador County Fair.