

From Chris Kern's website, "Friends of the Forgotten Grapes"

<http://www.forgottengrapes.com/tempranillo.html>

2006 Obscurity Cellars Sierra Foothills St. Amant Vineyard Tim Spencer Memorial Bottling Tempranillo

If you visit ForgottenGrapes.com regularly (and let's face it: you really should be), then you already know how much we love John Smith and Obscurity Cellars. They are based way out in the Sierra Foothills in a town called Fair Play, California, and he's producing wines using so many Forgotten Grapes that we're convinced we could just dedicate a permanent spot to him in this section every week and he'd have a new wine for us. Tempranillo is of course no exception, and the beauty of this wine is that the Sierra Foothills (and Amador County, to be precise) are an absolutely perfect place to grow Tempranillo – not too hot during the spring and summer months, and with lovely cool nights and plenty of rain (but not too much to invoke molds and rot). This particular Tempranillo has an interesting story behind it: after tasting a different Tempranillo from the St. Amant vineyard, John fell in love with the grape and bought grapes from the owner of the vineyard Tim Spencer. The 2006 vintage was John's second go-round with Tempranillo, but sadly, Tim Spencer passed away at the beginning of the 2006 harvest, so John dedicated this bottling to Tim and offered up the label and each bottle as a tribute to Tim. Fortunately, Tim's wife Barbara and son Stuart are keeping the St. Amant vineyard and Tim's legacy alive to this day.

The first thing you notice about this particular wine is hints of vanilla and wood on the nose from the oak the wine is stored in (16 months in new and used American oak). In many ways, this wine was the opposite of some of the other Tempranillos we tasted: soft, round, and very, very deep. It had elements of a Syrah to it, without the same brambly gaminess or length of that grape. It's a big, round, jammy version of Tempranillo without a lot of acid or tannin to the wine. Very soft and very memorable; the kind of wine that would do wonders with a melt-in-your-mouth filet. You can only get this wine by visiting Obscurity Cellars/Oakstone Winery in Fair Play or by calling John directly at (530) 620-5303 and ordering to your heart's content!