

Santa Barbara County's Newest Tasting Room  
Keeps it Real:

Tres Hermanas Winery

By Sao Anash

Luke Lindquist has winemaking in his blood. His father, Bob Lindquist, is one of the most celebrated winemakers in the United States, having produced Syrahs of great character, year in and year out, for over 15 years under his iconic Qupe label. His brother, Ethan, has established a loyal following with his Ethan brand of wines. Now Luke, 32 years old and boyishly handsome, has joined forces with Santa Maria Valley's esteemed Teixeira family, a well-respected agricultural family who farms row crops successfully, and runs large herds of cattle. Together, they are putting Tres Hermanas Winery, the newest addition to Santa Barbara County's lovely Foxen Canyon Road, on the enological map, with a line-up of stellar, yet reasonably priced wines. But, wait, I'm getting ahead of myself.

Founded in 2001 by Marvin and Paulette Teixeira, Tres Hermanas Winery produces approximately 5,000 cases of wines that include the varietals Sauvignon Blanc, Syrah, Pinot Noir and some Cali-Italian varietals, including Refosco. Although Lindquist did not come on board until earlier this year, the Teixeira's already have a line up of delicious, stand-out wines in their charming tasting room, thanks to the amazingly talented Bill Wathen, of Foxen Vineyards, who helped make their wines for the first few years. Wathen's imprimatur of excellence and elegance in winemaking is all over these wines; they're well-made, exhibit varietal character, and are thoroughly delicious. Though the winery was established in 2001, the wines are only now seeing their first release, and the tasting room just opened months ago.

Some of you may recognize Luke Lindquist's name from his years at Brander, where he learned to make wines from mentor, Fred Brander. Lindquist has already been in the wine business for 14 years, and it shows. Currently, he is assisting the Teixeira's in developing their winery cellar, from crush pad to barrel room. His experience has paid off; the equipment he is bringing into the cellar suggests that we'll be seeing small lots of well-crafted wines that are made in a sound and clean environment. The Teixeira's have also planted an estate vineyard, which unfolds alongside their fields of cattle. On the day that Lindquist showed me the winery and the grounds, baby calves were in a stall that is literally feet away from the tasting room parking lot. The proximity of Tres Hermanas to the rest of the Teixeira Ranch lends it an air of authenticity. For all of their elegant and well-made wines, there's something very homey and unpretentious about Tres Hermanas.

The Tres Hermanas, or Three Sisters, in the winery's name are Tracey, Stacey and Marcey, and the three sisters, along with parents Marvin and Paulette, can often be found working in the tasting room. The tasting room itself is fun, organized and well-staffed. A classic mechanical horse, emblazoned with the words, Ride the Champion, is the first thing you see when you walk into the room. For 25 cents, you can ride Champion and

listen to the theme of Bonanza, all at the same time. There are also interesting gift items and, best of all, a reasonably priced line up of wines. Truly, these wines are some of the best values in all of Santa Barbara, if not the Central Coast. Their quality suggests that they would be priced much higher. Alas, their price points are so fair that I've returned to the winery just to stock my wine cellar at home. The Sauvignon Blanc, in particular, is one of the best I've tasted in a long time. And, at an astonishing 12.00 a bottle....really, how can you go wrong?

#### 2005 Tres Hermanas Sauvignon Blanc, Central Coast

This is a delicious wine, with plenty of green apple, Bartlett pear and white flowers on the nose. It has great acidity, yet is never bitter, and is brilliant paired with oysters on the half shell. 12/btl

#### 2005 Tres Hermanas Chardonnay, Sta. Rita Hills

This 100% neutral oak Chardonnay is brightly flavored, with guava, nutmeg and minerality on the nose. It possesses great mouth feel and balance, and exhibits the best features of the Sta. Rita Hills appellation. 23/btl

#### 2005 Rose of Syrah

This wine reminded me so much of Bandol's Domaine Tempier Rose.....very elegant, floral and spicy. So many of California's roses are way over the top.....this one has that lovely pink salmon color and a leanness to it that makes it a great food wine. 14/btl.

#### 2004 Refosco

I really loved this wine. Lindquist described this varietal as the Pinot of Italy and I can see why. Though it's heavier than our Pinot Noir, it's elegant, sophisticated and complex. I have had it with several meals now, and can truly appreciate its balance and restraint. 25/btl

#### 2004 Tres Hermanas Syrah

Another winner...this Syrah tends to taste more like a cool-climate Syrah. There are nuances of wet forest floor, juniper berries, violets and cedar on the nose of this wine. Its elegant tannins allow for a pleasant mouth-feel. The mid-palate delivers great structure, yet is finessed....plums, eucalyptus, mocha...this wine just keeps going and going.

To visit Tres Hermanas, simply visit [www.treshermanaswinery.com](http://www.treshermanaswinery.com) for hours of operation and directions. But, to make it simple, they're located between Zaca Mesa Winery and Foxen Winery on Foxen Canyon Road.