

## MAY STAFF PICK: 2013 BRUT ZERO SPARKLING

The whole Cartograph team chose this month's staff pick. It's a month of great celebration with the release of the new wines, so we thought a sparkling would cap off the celebration.

As we approach the 10-year mark for the [2013 Brut Zero](#), we're impressed by how it has retained its fresh and lively character. With no added sweetness when disgorged, the wine has kept the soft aromas of toasted brioche, lemon custard and graham cracker. There are hints of warm apple pie and hazelnut on the nose as well as the palate. The flavors are very well integrated, with plenty of citrus and some subtle but ripe fruit flavors of pear and green apple. Wet stone lingers on the long finish. With the elevated acidity, this is a sparkling best paired with food. It's perfect for seafood (oysters in particular) and a good match for hard cheeses, especially a well-aged Gouda.



## FROM THE WINEMAKER

The 2022-23 winter rainfall total is hovering around 61 inches and the growing season is finally upon us. Not only was the winter wet, it was quite cold; we didn't get our typical couple of weeks of warm weather in late winter that might trick the vines into an early budbreak. This was good news, since we had frosty conditions well into April.

However, as a result we're close to a month behind average budbreak dates across Northern California. We're hoping for a nice mild summer to get us to a timely harvest, but you never know what is coming. There are definitely regions that will struggle to get the late-ripening grapes ripe for harvest before the fall rains come.

We've seen warm and dry weather over the last two weeks, and the vines have just exploded. Our cover crop also saw a late-winter rush of growth. In fact, it was so thick that we had to buy a new implement to incorporate all the organic matter into our soil. It's a two-step process: You mow the cover crop, then use the new spader to dig it into the soil. The spader also eases soil compaction and leaves the rows between the vines in great shape for water penetration. Click the tractor image below to view a video of the mower gobbling up the lush cover crop. The photo of the early-shoot growth shows where the vines are this week.

Cheers,

Alan

