

PACK DESIGN SPOTLIGHT

An Invitation to a Mediterranean Vacation in Northern California's Backyard

Sarah Brown

WINERY: Sean Minor

DESIGNER: Honey Agency

BOTTLE VENDOR: Gallo Glass Co.

CLOSURE VENDOR: Portocork

LABEL VENDOR: Labeltronix

CAPSULE VENDOR: Etched Images, Inc.

AVERAGE BOTTLE PRICE: \$44

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS, and the illustrations on the Sean Minor Wines Invited Series have a lot to say.

The Sonoma Valley Grenache encourages drinkers to take the bottle on the go and enjoy it on a brightly colored picnic blanket with a salty snack, like olives or tinned fish, while the Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir says, “Let’s stay home” with a charcuterie board and a chat with friends as the sun sets.

The newest member of the series, the Denmark Street Sauvignon Blanc, follows suit, utilizing bright, playful imagery and suggestive persuasion to transport and inspire the drinker.

Social media and marketing manager Danni Farnsworth shared via email that the incorporation of culinary elements on the label is meant to be a “nod to pairings without being prescriptive” and gives a more experiential element; rather than telling drinkers how it tastes, the label shows them.

Whereas the Grenache and Pinot Noir capitalize on local fare and at-home celebrations, the Sauvignon Blanc transports the drinker to the coast of Sicily, which is where husband-and-wife team, Nicole and Sean Minor, were traveling when they were struck with inspiration. Nicole described tasting the bright, Italian white wines of the region and learning about the ancient practice of using clay amphorae for aging them.

Upon returning to California, they spoke with their daughter and the winemaker for Sean Minor Wines, Elle Minor, who said it was sheer serendipity that at the same time, a local winemaker was ridding himself of his amphorae. The clay, she said, allows for a pure expression of the fruit while adding an almost drying mouthfeel and a feminine quality to the wine.

The label on Sauvignon Blanc leans into the bright, oceanic character, blending together the rustic charm of Sicily with the breezy nature of Northern California. The Sacramento-based Honey

Agency team included the inspirational amphora on the label, with North Coast native agapanthus in the vessel, as well as oysters, which Minor said would be a perfect pairing with the wine. The shadow of boats can be seen in the blue water, another nod to the Mediterranean inspiration. The label utilizes bright colors and contrast, as well as gold foil detailing, which is strategically placed on the amphora. The agapanthus flower buds and other elements on the label tie into the rest of the Invited series.

All three labels for the Invited Series were created in partnership with the Honey Agency. Utilizing the same creative team across the whole series allowed for a greater understanding of the larger brand image, as well as the incorporation and continuation of style, which draw all bottlings within the series together.

Judges called the illustration on the label “deceptively appealing” with the invitation to get away from the everyday. “The label is beautiful, clean and tells a story,” one judge said.

The judges also appreciated the degree of “geekiness” on one side of the label, which details the clone, rootstock and soil type, all of which contribute to the story of the wine. The QR code allows buyers to easily and quickly learn even more about the wine and its producer.

On the other side of the label, the Minors invite drinkers to enjoy the wine, “Come, stay awhile! Settle in and relax.” In addition to suggested food pairings, the Minors include potential occasions to enjoy their wines on their respective tech sheets. The Sauvignon Blanc is touted as having tasting notes of pear, pineapple and quince, and is best enjoyed at a beachy BBQ, a seafood dinner or a warm summer evening under the stars. **WBM**

