



BONNY DOON  
VINEYARD

September 30, 2010

Jason Rzutkiewicz  
164 Tamalpais  
Mill Valley, CA 94941

Dear Jason,

I worried (needlessly, as it turned out) about this wine.<sup>1</sup> As you know, we've been gradually paring down the Bonny Doon product line with the aim of producing only those products that have a real raison (or raisin) d'être, i.e. are utterly distinctive and in some way tangibly enrich the world.

Contra is such a wine. Here is why: It is (or at least seems to me to be) a wine that fuses some very disparate elements with great grace and elegance. In this instance, Contra unites the earthy rusticity of old-vine carignane—that hard stoniness that if untempered may be a tad too austere for some—with the luscious, opulent fruitiness of a number of the softer blending grapes.

The wine is a blend of 55% carignane, 15% grenache, 15% mourvèdre, 7% petite syrah, 5% zinfandel, and 3% syrah. The carignane, mourvèdre, and zin, the backbone of the wine, are from dry-farmed, ungrafted vines grown in the sandy terroir of the Sacramento Delta, and this confers a genuine gravitas if not irreplaceability to the wine.

Yes, in a perfect world I would like nothing better than to be selling rarified Estate wines at rarified prices, contemplating the Platonic forms in my smoking jacket.<sup>2</sup> But for now, in these challenging economic times, Contra is a wine of the Zeitgeist—lots of flavor, soulfulness, and a reasonable price tag.<sup>3</sup> It is a wine that is just bursting with life, with exuberance; I hope you have a similar reaction.<sup>4</sup>

Please be in touch if I may answer any questions you might have about the wines.

With best regards,

Randall Grahm  
Winemaker & President-for-Life

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<sup>1</sup> Introducing new wines into the arteries of wholesale commerce these days is particularly fraught. Wholesalers are generally in some variant of overwhelm mode and the last thing they are looking for is a new product to sell. But a brilliant wine at a fair price is always compelling.

<sup>2</sup> At our new Estate in San Juan Bautista; this will eventually occur. (Stay dooned.)

<sup>3</sup> California retail is \$14; 6,500 cases were produced.

<sup>4</sup> Oddly, or perhaps not so, the flavor of carignane is a bit divisive—it is rather the cilantro of grape varieties. Some people, despite an intellectual admiration for old vines, etc., just can't quite get it. Another one of life's vinous mysteries.