

Who's Your Daddy?



That's often a good question in the wine world. As we raise our glasses to April's release of the 2006 Tatria - let's talk about this.

Our "baby" in this wine is Cabernet Sauvignon - weighing in at 65.8%. Cabernet Sauvignon was born in the 1600's during spontaneous cross-pollination, its mother none other than the White Queen of Bordeaux, Sauvignon Blanc.

And the proud papa? Meet Cabernet Franc, featured in a supporting role in the 2006 Tatria. Rounding out the blend is smooth, mellow Merlot - a wonderful wine in its own right, never mind Miles in "Sideways" for his infamous defamation of a very Noble Grape!

When Marshall blends Stuart Cellars Estate Grown Tatria, it's a family affair with upwards of 67 different combinations vying for the ultimate mix. Blending is an art form and in the case of Bordeaux blends known as *Meritage* - pronounced "heritage" - it's become a legal affair.

Meritage is defined as a blend of at least two Bordeaux grapes, generally Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and sometimes Petit Verdot or Malbec. If you put "meritage" on your Bordeaux blend, it's going to cost you! That is one reason many winemakers opt for a "proprietary" name instead.

It's also more creative. Marshall chose **Tatria**, which means "*blend of three.*"

This month, we have the pleasure of **Two Tatrias**... one is the older, venerable 1999 vintage - the very first year Marshall offered Stuart Cellars Estate Tatria. The second is the new 2006 release. This is a rare opportunity to do your own comparison of these amazing wines.

What will you do with your bottles? The 2006 I'll put away for a few years. The 1999 I plan to decant this weekend with a few friends and garlic rubbed tri-tip BBQed to perfection on the backyard grill - cheers!