

# Evolution at St. Francis



Katie Madigan.

Long known for old-vine Zinfandel and Merlot, Sonoma's **St. Francis Winery & Vineyards** is rapidly evolving as a new generation of winemakers brings their vision to this tried and true Sonoma brand. During a fireside tasting at the winery's Mission-style tasting room, winemaker **Katie Madigan**, who is now responsible for making the winery's Sonoma County wines, poured several firsts, including a rosé and Pinot Gris. "I make high-case production wine, but I'm pursuing many smaller projects and interests, like increasing the quality of our old-vine Zinfandel and developing some interesting red blends," said Madigan whose 10 years at St. Francis culminated in her appointment as Sonoma County Winemaker in 2012.

Madigan's Rosé, a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot created to acknowledge Breast Cancer Awareness, sports a lively tension and enough structure to rate a spot on the new, five-course pairing menu created by full-time winery Chef Dave Bush. Madigan's 2011 Chardonnay was delicate and bright with green apple, lemony citrus and just nod of restrained oak. "There's been an evolution in the wine style over the last several years. We've been reverse-engineering the wines and selecting barrels according to the way they work with various sub regions." Given that the winery was originally named after St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and protector of the natural world, St. Francis fulfilled its namesake this year by receiving full certification for its sustainable vineyard practices and winery operations from the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance. —Deborah Parker Wong