



## Part 1. Calera's Totally New Website

**O**n November 11th we launched our upgraded, expanded, more user-friendly website: [www.CaleraWine.com](http://www.CaleraWine.com). Check it out! You will see dramatic new photos of our expert staff, exciting descriptions of our vineyards, rave third-party (i.e., wine writer) reviews of specific wines, order forms, and other items of surprising and exotic natures too numerous to mention.

We have made ordering our wines via our new website so easy and pleasant that we recommend you give it a whirl. We are also including a paper order form for those like me who prefer the touchy-feely method. Or better yet, feel free to visit us in person – and our happy human beings who always answer such communication outreaches will happily fill your order and perhaps even pour you a glass of wine while you wait.



## Part 2. Noise and America

**W**e Americans love loud noises. Loud motorcycles, buses, pickup trucks and cars. Loud motor homes, semi-trucks with trailers, and farm machinery. Loud construction sites, replete not only with ferociously loud jack hammers, arc welders, riveters, electric saws, pile drivers, cranes, elevators, generators and cement mixers, but also hordes of construction workers (humans) screaming at the tops of their lungs.

Loud police cars, ambulances and fire engines, plus their ear-piercing sirens and klaxons. Even our air conditioners, heaters and furnaces are noisy, not to mention vac-

uum cleaners, dishwashers, microwave ovens, kitchen blenders and coffee grinders.

And let's not forget leaf blowers (a pet peeve). How easy it is for one thoughtless leafy suburban homeowner – or more likely, his uncaring gardener – to wreck the peace of mind of 10,000 nearby residents with a single tiny machine that weighs less than 20 pounds and does nothing but blow their leaves onto someone else's property, or out onto a public thoroughfare?

What's a person who loves peace and quiet to do? I'd suggest you visit Tokyo and / or Seoul, as I have done in the last year.

Each of these Asian mega-cities has a far larger population than any U.S. city, and yet they are much, much quieter than our big cities. How is that possible? And why?

First, let's do the numbers...

	<b>Population: City Proper (year)</b>	<b>Population: Metropolitan Area (year)</b>
<b>Tokyo</b>	13,185,000 (2011)	World's most populous: 35,000,000
<b>Seoul</b>	10,500,000 (2010)	World's 2nd most populous: 25,000,000
<b>New York</b>	8,200,000* (2010 Census)	18,900,000

(Source for all the above: Wikipedia)

\* N.Y.C. Mayor Michael Bloomberg disputes the U.S. government's 2010 Census figure for NYC, contending that it undercounted the actual number of residents.

So how can it be that, with many more people crammed into them than any of our cities, both Tokyo and Seoul offer their residents such comparatively calm, tranquil, quiet soundscapes? My theory is that it's cultural. The Japanese and the Koreans value tranquility. They have designed their urban experiences to maximize peace and quiet when it comes to decibels produced in the public space. The ability of the individual to make as much noise as he wants is restrained for the greater good of the wider population, in terms of quiet and harmony.

In America, by contrast, we ardently defend the right of the individual to do whatever he pleases, short of murder, growing or smoking marijuana, plus a few other "crimes." (In this short essay I will not use the politically correct "he or she" terminology because "real American" noisemakers are almost exclusively of the masculine persuasion, i.e., guys.) This celebrated right of the individual – "It's a free country!" – is paramount in our culture, and it trumps (pun intended) any collective wish that the wider population may have for peace and quiet. If a guy wants to rig his motorcycle or car with an absurdly noisy engine and no mufflers, even in a city of a million residents, he just goes ahead and does it. Most cities have noise ordinances but they're rarely enforced. If, say, a policeman or a neighbor wanted to stop him from the pleasure he derives from blasting his motorcycle noise, you'd have to pry his motorcycle handlebars from his cold, dead fingers. So to speak. Besides, the policeman's own car generates a lot of noise, so he's not the ideal candidate to tell the noise-offending biker to tone it down. The next time you're alongside a police car at a red light, roll down your window and listen to his engine idling. Those cars are hot rods, with big, beefy V-8s.

In September I visited Tokyo, Osaka and Sendai. I actually saw and heard such a crazed American-style motorcyclist roar away from a traffic light in Tokyo, making a huge noise. It was a shock, because that's so, so rare in the large Japanese cities. Cars in Japan run almost silently. As they're idling at stoplights, you virtually can't tell if

the engine's running. Taxi drivers don't honk their horns. That would be uncivilized, and would attract unwanted attention. Japanese taxi drivers are well groomed, often wearing nice little uniforms, with white cotton gloves! Their cabs are spotlessly clean, and don't smell bad. The cabbies can also open and close the rear door of their taxi from their command module in the front seat, to let passengers in and out. And there's better leg-room in their cabs than there is in U.S. taxicabs, which are normal Detroit 4-door sedans with plenty of legroom in front for the taxi driver but little or no leg room in back for the paying customer because of the sliding plastic security barrier, extra padding and what-not. And if you tell a Japanese taxi driver the address you want to go to, he will know where it is and how to get there. He has had to pass tests to be licensed as a cab driver. He does not run red lights, nor does he swerve in and out of lanes like a maniac. Japanese taxi drivers also accelerate slowly, and brake their cars gradually, rather than....well, you get the idea. London cabbies are similarly professional and knowledgeable, and they, too, have to pass stringent tests to get their cabbie licenses.

Construction sites in both South Korea and Japan are very quiet compared to job sites here. For starters, their cement mixers, trucks, bucket loaders, forklifts, cranes, generators and other motors are all designed and engineered to be...very...quiet. Shhh.... The contractors build a temporary fence – a wall, really – around the site, partly for security, but with acoustic panels to absorb sounds and maintain quiet. There's a flagman, in uniform, who opens a gate to let a truck or trucks in or out, then the gate is immediately closed. You can walk right by a 20 story building being built at most times of the day and barely hear any sounds. No yelling. No clanging bells to signify a truck or other machine is backing up.

The only sound that is comparable to an American construction site is the pile driver. I guess that operation can't be converted to quiet mode.

In Seoul, cop cars and ambulances don't use sirens, they just flash their blue exterior roof lights and all the cars pull over to let them pass. How elegant! How civilized! By contrast, in even a smallish U.S. city like San Francisco, ambulance drivers, paramedics, firemen and policemen go into full-on siren mode at any and all times of the day and night. 2 a.m.? 3 a.m.? No problem! Fire up those urban sirens on the move! This lets citizens know that those activities are super-important, top priority, while also waking up the whole town.

Subway networks in both Seoul and Tokyo offer quiet, clean, smooth-riding service. You don't get that simulated Nascar experience that characterizes New York subways in particular: ancient subway cars, loud screeching noises, violent lurching side to side, too-rapid accelerations quickly and abruptly followed by full-bore panic stops, all accompanied by gross smells too numerous to mention.

I am the first to admit that I may be over-sensitive to noises. I live way out in the country, right alongside our winery. In the evenings and early mornings, the only sounds I hear are owls and coyotes, and sometimes the wind, or raindrops pattering on the roof. I've never lived in a house with air conditioning, and the sole source of heat in my house at the winery is a wood-burning stove made of cast iron. So when I travel and find myself in a hotel room with air conditioning cycling on and off, and the heater roaring away, I always try to turn these devices off and just open or close the windows. But as you know, many hotel room windows cannot be opened.

My closest neighbor is a couple hundred yards away. Our country road has very little traffic in the evenings and through the night, until about 5 a.m. when the huge semi-trailer diesel trucks from a commercial dolomite quarry, another neighbor, start rolling. The few homeowners out here have asked the owner of the quarry to politely ask his drivers to accelerate slowly and, most importantly, NOT to use their “jake brakes.” These are compression release engine brakes on very large diesel engines, and truckers like them because they save wear and tear on their regular brakes. If you’ve ever been to Hell you’ll immediately recognize the sound of a jake brake: a deafening, bellowing, pulsating roar that shakes the rafters and makes your fillings vibrate in your teeth. It’s Dante’s *Inferno*, 2011 version. And it comes straight into my bedroom like a tractor beam from the Death Star in *Star Wars*, pulling me inexorably out of my peaceful rural slumber, starting at 5 a.m. Most of the truckers do show us the courtesy of eschewing their jake brakes near the few houses out here, but not always.

So, about these noisy machines in America. I read a fascinating *New Yorker* article by John Seabrook (Sept. 20, 2010 issue) about the brilliant English engineer, inventor and entrepreneur Sir James Dyson and the revolutionary machines his company designs and manufactures, such as the Dual Cyclone vacuum cleaner, Air Multiplier fan and Airblade hand dryer. Seabrook wrote, “According to a Dyson representative, American machines are louder than the model made for Europe and Asia, because Americans associate noise with power and don’t trust a quiet machine.” Voilà! No wonder life in America is so noisy! We don’t trust quiet machines! Manufacturers have to engineer them to make intentionally louder noises or Americans won’t buy them! Goodness gracious, what’s wrong with this picture?

I’ve decided to buy a Dyson vacuum cleaner – they sell for \$400 and up, way up – but I’ve got to figure out a way to get one of their European or Asian models. It apparently picks up 100% of the dust, with none of that jet engine noise that usually comes with the territory.

I’ve put a lot of thought – probably way too much, if truth be told -- into this matter of America’s love affair with extremely loud sounds and noises. I think part of the explanation stems from our menfolk’s desire for power. A guy may be a complete loser, do nothing but play video games, watch t.v., surf the web, smoke, and sleep all day. He may even live with his parents. But if he has a great big pickup truck with an engine that snorts like a buffalo, a dog that barks all night long, a music system that can break glass and several semi-automatic weapons, and if he argues with everybody, yelling and cussing at the top of his lungs, screams insults and picks fights at sporting events – in his mind, at least, he’s a winner. He thinks people listen to him (they usually have no choice). He thinks he’s being suave. He thinks people envy him, his truck, his barking dog and his weapons.

“Hey, you losers,” he thinks, “I’m not dead yet! I can make as much noise as I always did, maybe even more! Listen to this: ROAR, ROAR! Vroom, VROOM! WEIAEE, WEIAEEEE. SCREECH, SCREECH!”



## Part 3. Recent Press Accolades

**O**ur wines have been blessed with some very significant rave reviews in the last 3 months.

*The Wine Advocate*, in its issue #196 dated August 31, 2011, reviewed 8 of our current release wines, all with excellent comments and scores, which I have directly quoted in the wine descriptions below. Significantly, these were the first-ever *Wine Advocate* reviews of California wines not authored personally by Robert Parker, the founder and owner of TWA. Mr. Parker recently passed the baton for reviewing California and several other of the world's important viticultural regions to Antonio Galloni, so everyone was very curious – beyond curious, actually – everyone was waiting with baited breath to find out how Mr. Galloni views their wines. (Please note: Our 2010 white wines were not bottled in time to be tasted for this issue #196, so notes on the five whites listed below were authored by our esteemed staff.)

The second big deal was our 2007 Selleck Vineyard Pinot, with a suggested retail price of \$75, being named Best American Pinot Noir, with a photo of the bottle prominently gracing the cover, by *Wine & Spirits* magazine, in their *25th Anniversary Buying Guide* dated Winter 2011. They also named Calera one of the world's Top 100 Wineries of 2011. Incidentally, the other bottles also on the cover with the 2007 Selleck had retail price tags of \$500, \$350, \$144 and \$195. So the Selleck was, comparatively, a “steal.”

