

Tasting Monterey

A WINE ENTHUSIAST'S MONTHLY JOURNEY THROUGH MONTEREY'S WINE COUNTRY



STORE HOURS

A Taste of Monterey
Cannery Row
Sun-Thu 11am-6pm
Fri-Sat 11am-8pm*

Food service begins at
11:30am daily

*No new member tastings
after 6pm

JANUARY REFERRALS



Refer a friend to the
Monterey Wine Club, and
after they join, you get a
\$20.00 Gift Card!



Scan QR to...



2018 AGING WINE IN

Happy New Year! A time for celebrations, resolutions and trying to remember to use the correct date! As we ring in another year, may I suggest making a commitment to understanding your personal wine collection. Whether you are intentionally aging wines or not, chances are there's a few bottles you are saving for one reason or another. As the years pass, do you know if those special bottles are aging gracefully?

There is no doubt that wine changes over time. Actually, it may help to think of wine as being alive. Predictably, the life cycle of a wine will go from simple, bright fruit flavors to more complex and austere characteristics. Generally, wine that has been produced from high quality grapes, processed appropriately and stored under the right conditions will develop flavors that are complex and engaging. Often, the color deepens, aromas are intensified and flavor nuances allow the wine to be paired with a greater variety of foods. Remember, the vintage date on a bottle of wine is actually the year the grapes were harvested, not necessarily the year the wine was bottled or released.

The process of aging wine involves a complex series of reactions between chemical compounds called phenolics, which are responsible for the color, aroma, flavor and astringency of a wine. Proper aging allows the tannins (organic compounds found in the skins and seeds of grapes) to taste less bitter and to improve the wine's overall flavor profile. When aging wine, it is important to note that every wine is different. Varietal, vintage, appellation and vintner are some of the main factors that make each wine unique and influence aging possibilities. Nevertheless, there are some general guidelines you can follow to aid you in aging your special wines.

In general, white varietals age faster than reds. Fruit-forward style Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Grigio will lose their freshness with each passing year. Likewise, sweeter wines like Riesling, Gewürztraminer, Chenin Blanc and Muscat will also lose fruit character a couple of years after bottling. Higher end Chardonnay that has been produced in oak can age for five to ten years. Most Champagne and sparkling wines are ready to drink straight out of the cellar and don't benefit from additional bottle aging.



Reds are typically aged longer than whites, but most are still designed to reach their peak drinkability at a young age. Cabernet Sauvignon-based (Bordeaux blend) wines can be aged longer than lighter reds such as Pinot Noir and Sangiovese. With proper storage, most California Cabernets will improve for ten to fifteen years past their vintage date while Pinot Noir, Merlot, Zinfandel and Syrah continue to improve for up to five to ten years. Compared to wines from other regions, Central Coast white wines develop more fruit character and red wines more tannins due to a typically longer growing season.

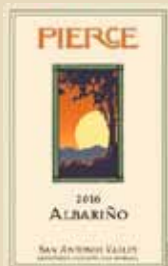
Proper storage conditions are one of the most important criteria for aging wine successfully. The longer you store wine, the more important appropriate storage conditions become. Constant temperature, bottle position and protection from light and vibrations are keys to successful wine maturation. Wine should be stored between 55-65°F and at about 70 percent humidity. High humidity is important because it keeps the corks from drying out and minimizes evaporation. Temperature has a major effect on the speed of which the chemical processes of aging take place. Variations of less than 3°F a day and 5°F a year are best. If the wine is allowed to get too warm, some aspects will mature and start to decline before other characteristics have had time to develop. When stored too cold, it will take many times longer for the wine to reach an ideal drinkability. Storing bottles in a horizontal position will keep the cork moist so that it does not dry out and allow air into the bottle.



Continued Inside

MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

PIERCE RANCH VINEYARDS - 2016 *Albariño*



This Albariño is the product of Pierce Ranch's vineyards in the San Antonio Valley, a recently declared appellation at the southernmost tip of Monterey County. Grown in a mix of calcareous rock, broken shale, decomposed granite, and clay, the 2016 vintage provides a clear expression not only of varietal character but also of the vineyards' own unique terroir. Produced on a limited scale, it was fermented at low temperatures in stainless steel. With the rich aromatics and crisp acidity that are the signature of the variety, it features notes of white stone fruit and citrus, with a hint of salinity and a characteristic minerality. Only 240 cases were bottled.

The 2016 vintage provides another excellent example of the rich aromatics and a bright acidity for which this distinctive Spanish variety is known. Notes of peach, apricot, white nectarine, and Meyer lemon, with salinity and a shaly minerality on the finish.

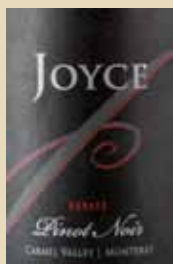
100% Albariño

12.6% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2018

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

JOYCE VINEYARDS - 2014 *Estate Pinot Noir*



Planted in 1990 Joyce Estate is tucked away in a small valley located on the west side of the Santa Lucia Highlands in Monterey County. Coastal influence combined with well drained chalk rock laden soil enriched by the sea-beds that once existed here, set the stage for wines of exceptional quality. Hand harvested 15% whole cluster fermentation in small vessels. Aged 13 months sur lie in French oak (30% new). Bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

Aromatics of cedar and dried cherries. The palate has a subtle spiciness along with rich notes of blackberry, ripe cherry, vanilla and soft tannins to round out the finish.

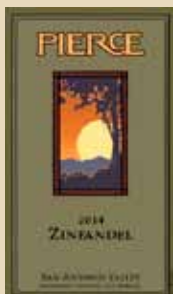
100% Pinot Noir

13.6% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2019

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

PIERCE RANCH VINEYARDS - 2014 *Zinfandel* (Club Red)



Located at the warmer southernmost tip of Monterey County, the San Antonio Valley with its rocky soils, high elevation, and wide variation in diurnal temperature provides excellent growing conditions for our one-acre block of heritage clone Zinfandel. Rooted on the slopes of our Y Ranch Vineyard in a mix of broken shale, calcareous rock, and decomposed granite, the 2014 vintage is a substantial yet nuanced presentation of the variety.

Produced on a limited scale, it was fermented in small lots and aged in French and American oak for 18 months. Berry compote, red cherry, and black plum combine with an herbal element and traces of spice.

100% Zinfandel

14.8% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2022

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

JOYCE VINEYARDS - 2016 *Tondré Chardonnay*



Planted in 1997, the Tondre Grapefield has quickly earned a reputation as one of the top producing vineyard sites in the Santa Lucia Highlands. Protruding southeast facing slopes, strong marine influences and ancient glacial soils consisting of decomposed granite, gravel and sandy loam are the basis for exceptional quality.

In the glass, the 2016 Tondre Grapefield Chardonnay displays poached pear, golden apples and yellow peaches. The palate is refreshing with moderate alcohol and a pleasant fleshiness which finishes with a hint of clean minerality.

100% Chardonnay

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2019

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued

The best place to store wine, whether you're aging it short or long term, is in a climate controlled area without exposure to light or vibrations, both of which have been found to negatively affect the preservation of the wine. A basement/cellar is ideal for wine storage. The next best option is a ground floor closet. If you have made a long term investment in a quantity of fine wine you may want to check out of the regional commercial wine storage facilities or purchase a home free-standing, temperature-controlled wine cabinet.

It may be surprising that more than ninety percent of all wines are designed to be consumed within a couple of years after they are produced. This is even more true today as contemporary wine-making practices allow for the production of wines that are fruitier, fresher and ready to drink. The tannic bite of a wine can be controlled, for instance, by late harvest, destemming and gentle pressing, so a particular wine can be enjoyed soon after its release. However, tannin is a building block for mature wines and is critical as a preservative, interacting over time with the fresh fruit to increase complexity and suppleness. In general, as wines age they gain complexity and lose fruitiness. It's just as possible to age a wine for too long as it is to age it for too short a time. So take the opportunity this year to inventory your personal wine collection, and make sure the wines you are saving are aging gracefully.



VISITING Varietals



UNOAKED CHARDONNAY

Pronunciation: Shar-doh-nay

Imagine a Chardonnay with no butter, no vanilla and no cream. Forget lattes, cappuccinos and all the creamy business... we just want black coffee. For those who've elevated their wine tasting chops to something beyond milk fat, unoaked Chardonnay sounds pretty compelling. There's a couple of other things that make unoaked Chardonnay delicious, sustainable and even technically more affordable than the oaked version.

Unoaked Chardonnay was popularized by Chablis, a region about 80 miles Northwest of Dijon, France in Burgundy. Since the wines from Chablis traditionally are made with stainless steel, concrete or neutral oak, they do not have the butter-cream style. Chablis popularized this style and soon everyone around the world started labeling their no-oak Chardonnays with the word "Chablis" until France complained. Unoaked Chardonnay tastes only of the varietal characteristics of Chardonnay which are green apple, lemon and sometimes pineapple with a long tingly finish.

What is MLF and how does it affect Chardonnay? Sometimes wine producers put Chardonnay through malolactic fermentation (happens in tank after the first fermentation) which alters the acids in the wine from the harsher malic acid (same acids found in green apples) to oilier lactic acid (a bacteria that is more common in sour cream). What's important to note is that not all unoaked Chardonnays go through MLF whereas most oaked chardonnays do, so it's hard to tell the difference between the oily texture of malo versus the buttery-vanilla flavor of oak.

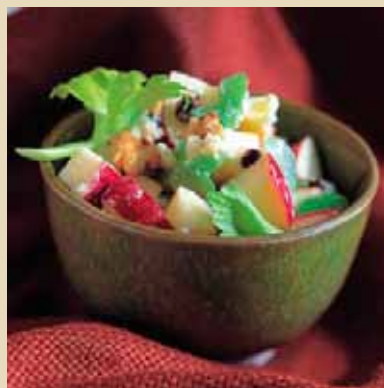
Unoaked Chardonnay is cheaper to produce. Yep. It's true. Take out the cost of paying for and shipping new oak barrels all over the world, year in and year out, and winemakers have a cheaper long-term solution. Thus, a lot of unoaked wines tend to fly into the marketplace at a much more affordable price point (and more sustainable).

RECIPE

Apples and Walnuts with Stilton Cheese

Ingredients

6 oz.	Stilton cheese
1 Tbs.	extra-virgin olive oil
1 Tbs.	red wine vinegar
2 Tbs.	heavy cream
1 tsp.	freshly ground pepper
6	sweet eating apples, such as Braeburn, Gala or Red Delicious, unpeeled, cored and cut into 1/2-inch dice
4	celery stalks, thinly sliced, plus several whole celery leaves for garnish
2 Tbs.	dried currants or raisins
1 Tbs.	fresh lemon juice
1/2 cup	coarsely chopped walnuts, toasted



Directions

1. Put one-third of the cheese in the bottom of a large bowl.
2. Add the olive oil and, using a fork, mash together the cheese and oil.
3. Add the vinegar and continue to mash and to mix.
4. Add the cream and pepper and mix well to make a thick, chunky dressing.
5. Add the apples, sliced celery, currants and lemon juice to the dressing and mix well.
6. Crumble the remaining cheese and sprinkle it over the salad along with half the walnuts.
7. Mix them into the salad gently and evenly.
8. Transfer the salad to a serving bowl and garnish with the remaining walnuts and the celery leaves. Serve immediately.

Serves 6

CHEESE

Varietals



FETA

Pronunciation: FEH-tuh

Feta is undoubtedly one of the most famous Greek cheeses. In fact, Feta occupies 70% stake in Greek cheese consumption. The cheese is protected by EU legislations and only those cheeses manufactured in Macedonia, Thrace, Thessaly, Central Mainland Greece, the Peloponnese and Lesvos can be called 'Feta'. Similar cheeses produced elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean and around the Black Sea, outside the EU, are often called 'white cheese'.

To create traditional Feta, 30 percent goat's milk is mixed with sheep's milk of animals grazing on pastures in the specific appellation of origin regions. Now-a-days, many stores sell goat and cow's milk feta as well. The firmness, texture and flavour differ from region to region, but in general, cheese from Macedonia and Thrace is mild, softer and creamier, less salty with fewer holes. Feta made in Thessaly and Central Greece has a more intense, robust flavour. Peloponnese Feta is dryer in texture, full flavoured and more open. Local environment, animal breeds, cultures all have an impact on the texture, flavor and aroma of Feta.


On the whole, Feta is a pickled curd cheese that has a salty and tangy taste enhanced by the brine solution. The texture depends on the age which can be extremely creamy, or crumbly dry. Upon maturation of 2 months, Feta is sold in blocks submerged in brine. The cheese can be used as a table cheese or melted on a traditional Greek salad, spanakopita, pizza or pie. It tastes delicious with olive oil, roasted red peppers and nuts. If required, it can be washed under water to remove the extra saltiness. The salty flavor of Feta pairs well with beer, Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc and Zinfandel.

VISIT US ONLINE

WWW.TASTEMONTEREY.COM

MIX & MATCH

ANY OF THE CURRENT OR PREVIOUS CLUB WINES TO RECEIVE **25% OFF 12 BOTTLES** OR **20% OFF 6**

JANUARY SELECTIONS		REGULAR PRICE*	12-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*	6-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*
PRICES EXPIRE 03/31/2018				
	Pierce Ranch Vineyards 2016 Albariño	\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
	Joyce Vineyards 2014 Estate Pinot noir	\$40.00	\$30.00	\$32.00
	Pierce Ranch Vineyards 2014 Zinfandel	\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
	Joyce Vineyards 2016 Tondré Chardonnay	\$30.00	\$22.50	\$24.00
DECEMBER SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2018		
	Rocklin Ranch 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon	\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
	Garnet 2013 Chardonnay	\$19.00	\$14.25	\$15.20
	Garnet 2014 Pinot Noir	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
	Rocklin Ranch 2014 Chardonnay	\$19.00	\$14.25	\$15.20
NOVEMBER SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 01/31/2017		
	Scheid Vineyard 2014 50/50	\$28.00	\$21.00	\$22.40
	Montoya 2015 Chardonnay	\$17.00	\$12.75	\$13.60
	Montoya 2013 Pinot Noir	\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
	Scheid Vineyard 2014 Pinot Blanc	\$26.00	\$19.50	\$20.80
PRIVATE RESERVE CLUB		PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2018		
	Comanche 2015 Chevera Pinot Noir	\$42.00	\$31.50	\$33.60
	Joullian 2014 Family Reserve Syrah	\$40.00	\$30.00	\$32.00
	Folktale 2015 Arroyo Seco Chardonnay	\$35.00	\$26.25	\$28.00
<p>TO ORDER, CALL TOLL-FREE: 888-646-5446 *PRICES LISTED REFLECT PRICE PER BOTTLE. NO OTHER DISCOUNTS APPLY.</p>				