

# 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  
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## VINE TO BOTTLE

### The Glorious Journey of the Grape

*All of us wine lovers know how wine is actually made...right?* I mean, it's just 'fermented grape juice,' is it not? We know there are these noble souls called winemakers that produce the wonderful elixirs that we so adore, but do we really comprehend the process these vintners follow in order to produce our favorite libations? Don't they just basically oversee the extraction of the juice from grapes, age it in barrels, and then pour it into bottles? Weren't even everyday Roman citizens drinking wine thousands of years ago? Surely if ancient civilizations could produce wine, then it cannot be so overly complicated...



Such generalizations may be sufficient for a rudimentary knowledge of the grape, but there's just a little more to the process of modern day winemaking, and I think we can safely say that our wine today is more complicated than the wine of the Caesars.

So, let's grab our glasses and fortify our collective knowledge of wine together! We're going to briefly walk through the process, although one could take an entire course on it and spend a lifetime perfecting it- we'll do what we can for now. Now on to the harvest!

**GATHER THOSE GRAPES.** The harvesting of grapes involves picking of the fruit anywhere from the end of summer into autumn. Simple enough to follow, is it not? Perhaps not, since it's not just picking that matters here, as the ultimate decision on when exactly to harvest fruit can have drastic impacts. Consideration needs to be extended to the level of sugar in the grapes (referred to as degrees of Brix), acidity, ripeness, flavor, tannin structure, color, etc. You see-not so simple, after all!

**CRUSH AND MUST.** After the fruit is harvested, it next needs to be crushed and destemmed; although winemakers will differ in their timing of destemming. The grape clusters are fed into a machine that administers an initial crush of the fruit and removes stems. Crushing will gently squeeze, but not press, the grapes and with their skins breaking the first juice of the grapes is produced and captured.

Now, we move to initial fermentation time, also referred to as making must for red wines (there is no must for white wines). After the initial crush, the juice will be combined in large vats with the skins, seeds and stems (see previous note on stems). This substance is called the must. The juice will remain in contact with the skins for an average period of three to four weeks. The must will gradually turn into two fairly distinct components: a liquid one and a more solid substance called pomace.



This stage is critical for the future characteristics of a red wine, and a winemaker will make the call on when to move onward. Must or no must (despite that yeast naturally occurs on the skins of grapes), cultured yeast is added to the juice by winemakers during this period of the process. Fermentation is encouraged as yeast cells feed on the sugars in the juice and multiply, producing carbon dioxide gas and...yup, alcohol.

**PRESS THAT FRUIT.** Wine presses come in many different forms, but the basic concept is universal: press the juice out of grapes. For red wines this involves pressing the pomace blend. It's possible to make a wine entirely with the free-run juice during the pressing, and this will consistently be a higher quality wine. But, in order to increase the volume of juice per tonnage of grapes, most winemakers will continue to press the pomace that is leftover after the initial press in order to extract as much remaining juice as possible. From this point onward, we're now working purely with wine.



**LET'S FERMENT AGAIN!** The secondary fermentation process is sometimes called 'bulk aging' and is really focused on allowing a final stage of fermentation for typically a period of three to six months (although some winemakers will deliberately bulk age longer). These days, this stage is primarily done by holding the wine in large stainless steel tanks that will keep oxygen from touching the wine while allowing carbon dioxide to be released.

**EVERYTHING AGES.** The aging stage is probably the easiest phase to picture as we all recognize seeing rows of wooden wine barrels stacked upon one another. Whether done in stainless steel or in oak barrels, the shared requirement for the aging period of wine is that the wine be protected from oxidation by keeping it airtight. The winemaker's decisions on how long to age a wine, what material to age it in (i.e. stainless steel or oak, new or seasoned oak, American or French oak, etc.), or perhaps how long to age the wine in different materials (e.g. three months in stainless steel followed by three months in oak), will have direct implications on the wine. The aging period will last anywhere from a few months to a few years. *Continued Inside*

# MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

## MUIRWOOD - 2016 Merlot



Muirwood is a line of limited production, reserve quality wines grown, produced and bottled from Arroyo Seco Vineyards along California's Central Coast. Located in the premium grape-growing appellations of Monterey and Arroyo Seco, these vineyards yield intense, full-flavored fruit of exceptional quality. For the Muirwood collection, the winemaker selects the finest fruit, and then handcrafts the wine with extraordinary attention and care to produce distinctive wines with great nuance and depth. It is the best the winery has to offer.

The Muirwood Merlot blends the unique characteristics of several vineyards to create a distinctive and exceptional wine. Grapes from their Los Lobos vineyard in southern Monterey County, where warm days and cool nights prevail, enhance the wine's tannin and structure, while temperate days and cool nights at Suter Ranch in the Arroyo Seco lend color intensity and red berry aromas.

100% Merlot

13.3% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2021

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

## BARRYMORE - 2017 Rosé of Pinot Noir



Wine is all about the journey. The discovery of new wines, new regions and new vintages is what keeps wine exciting to novices and enthusiasts alike. For Drew Barrymore, the allure of that journey and the chance to create an offering to share with her family and friends propelled her to delve into the world of wine. A lover of crisp, fruity wines, Barrymore worked with Carmel Road winemaker Kris Kato to create a wine that is perfect for sharing and making memories around the table.

"My Barrymore by Carmel Road Rosé of Pinot Noir is a delicate wine with floral and light citrus aromas. Delicate red fruit flavors with hints of stone fruit and blood orange intertwine with bright, mouthwatering acidity, leading to a crisp and vibrant finish. Irresistibly refreshing, it reminds me of times spent with friends and family gathered around a long table, sharing food and laughter on an endless summer day." – Drew Barrymore, Winemaking Partner

100% Pinot Noir

12.9% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2021

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

## CARMEL ROAD - 2014 Drew's Blend Pinot Noir (Club Red)



The slightest differences in clonal composition and terroir can have a terrific impact on Monterey Pinot Noir, yet the essentials remain. The wines are bright, crisp and silky, with a perfumed fragrance leading to complex flavors ranging from cherry pie filling to rhubarbs, pomegranates and dusty brown spices, all accented by smoky oak.

Lush and vibrant highlighting fresh red fruit aromas and flavors with hints of spice and tobacco. It's a very pretty wine and has lots of subtle aromas and nuances

100% Pinot Noir

14.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2020

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

## MUIRWOOD - 2016 Chardonnay (Club Blanc)



The Muirwood Chardonnay is handcrafted from grapes grown on their Zanetta Vineyard located in the Arroyo Seco appellation of Monterey County. Unique vineyard conditions, which extend the growing season, result in wines with bright acidity and generous tropical and citrus fruit flavors. Barrel fermentation and ten months sur lie aging enhance the complexity and depth of this memorable Chardonnay.

For the Muirwood collection, their winemaker selects the finest fruit, and then handcrafts the wine with extraordinary attention and care to produce distinctive wines with great nuance and depth.

100% Chardonnay

13.2% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2021

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued

**OH, HOW REFINED!** What do gelatin, egg whites, bone char, bull's blood, sturgeon bladder, skim milk powder, volcanic clay, cellulose pads, and membrane filters all have in common? Answer: They can all be used in the fining stage of the wine process. Fining is used to clarify the wine and to reduce tannins and most wines are fined and then filtered. Filtration, also called clarification, is used to remove particles that may still be present in the wine.

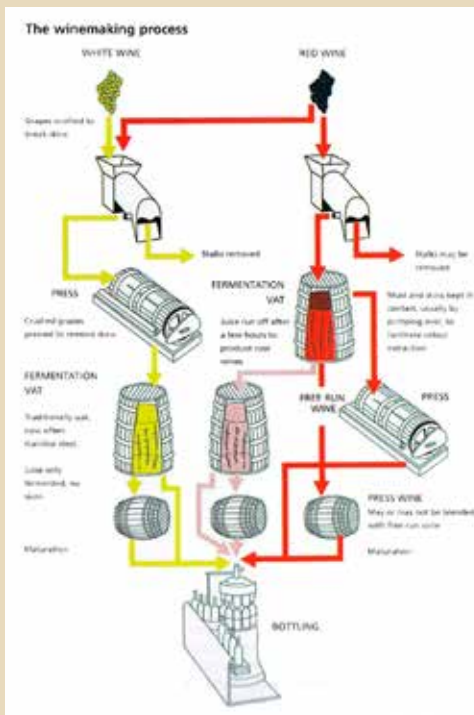
**PRESERVE FOR LATER.** Preservatives are added in the process in the form of sulfur dioxide, usually as sodium, potassium metabisulphite, or potassium sulfite (get out your chemistry sets!). Typically sulfite is added to wine in order to help preserve it and deter any additional fermentation that could occur after bottling.

**TO THE BOTTLE!** Bottling is conducted carefully to restrict oxygen from coming into contact with the wine. Whereas in former days, sealing each bottle with a cork was routine, nowadays a winemaker can also use a synthetic plastic cork or screwcap. With any form of a cork, a foil capsule is then enclosed on the top of the bottle. The winemaker now has a final and crucial decision concerning the release of their wine, as bottleshock is not just a clever film title.

**LIFE GOES ON.** But we're not done yet! We probably don't fully appreciate enough how the wine process is not actually finished with the capping of the bottles. A bottle of wine will continue its own individual cycle of reaching a peak followed by an inevitable decline...a familiar sounding life cycle, no?

**ET VOILA!** There we have it- a brief recap of Wine 101 that we hope will arm you, corkscrew in hand, for your continuing degree advancements in all things wine-related. There are other steps involved, such as cold and heat stabilization, malolactic fermentation, racking, testing, and blending, but greater specificity will need to wait for another day. For the present, let's just appreciate how much actually goes into producing each bottle of wine as we enjoy our monthly wine club selections and raise our glasses to our dear friends the winemakers!

-Bryce Ternet (contributing author for A Taste of Monterey and is the author of three books. See [www.mbyceter.net](http://www.mbyceter.net) for more.)



VISITING Varietals



PINOT BLANC

**Pronunciation:**  
pee noh blahnk

Pinot Blanc may not receive the same respect given to noble varieties like Chardonnay and Riesling, or even other Alsatian whites like Pinot Gris and Gewurztraminer. But at its best, with grapes from low-yielding vines, Pinot Blanc can produce exciting values: creamy, medium bodied wines, with honey-like aromas and flavors.

A relative of both Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc is grown in a number of countries under a variety of names. In Germany, it is Weisseburgunder, while in Italy, it is called Pinot Bianco.

Still, the fact that we are most familiar with the grape as Pinot Blanc is a dead tip-off that the best examples of the grape come from France. In France, Pinot Blanc is most notably grown in Alsace, where it is either bottled on its own, used as a major component in the sparkling wine Cremant D'Alsace, or blended with other varieties in the region's traditional wine, Edelzwicker. We don't see much Edelzwicker, since the export market for this wine is virtually non-existent. But we're happy that we can get a decent amount of single-varietal Pinot Blanc from Alsace; the wine is made in some form by almost every Alsatian winery. These can be rich, sometimes tropical, smoky wines that are low in acidity. Look for offerings from Domaine Marcel Deiss and Domaine Schoffit.

In the U.S., some California vintners are producing Pinot Blanc with the same techniques used to make expensive Chardonnay, including new oak and malolactic fermentation.

RECIPE

SEAFOOD PASTA MONTEREY

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 12 oz fresh salmon, cut in 1-inch cubes
- 12 large scallops
- 12 large prawns, peeled and de-veined
- 1 cup white wine
- 1 cup clam juice
- 1 six-oz. jar artichoke hearts, drained and quartered
- 1 lb fresh spinach
- 2 large tomatoes, diced
- 2 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
- 1/2 cup or 1 stick butter
- 1 lb angel hair pasta, cooked
- salt and pepper, to taste



Method:

Heat the oil in a large saucepan and sauté all the seafood. Add the wine until most of it evaporates. Add the clam juice, artichoke hearts, spinach, tomatoes and basil and cook for about five minutes. Add the butter and the cooked pasta, season with salt and pepper, and serve.

CHEESE

*Varietals*



**EMMENTAL**

Emmentaler or Emmental is a yellow, medium-hard cheese that originated in the area around Emmental, Switzerland. It is one of the cheeses of Switzerland, and is sometimes known as Swiss cheese. While the denomination "Emmentaler Switzerland" is protected, "Emmentaler" is not; as such, Emmentaler cheeses of other origins, especially from France and Bavaria, are widely available, and even Finland is an exporter of Emmentaler cheese.

Emmentaler has a savoury, but not very sharp taste. Three types of bacteria are used in the production of Emmentaler: *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus*, and *Propionibacterium freudenreichii*. The large holes formed within the cheese are caused by a presence of hay particles which cause gradually larger holes when the cheese is being matured. Historically, the holes were a sign of imperfection, and until modern times, cheese makers would try to avoid them. Emmentaler cheese is used in a variety of dishes, including some types of pizza, and ravioli, where it is often accompanied by prosciutto.

**WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

In order to better serve our members, we need to receive any new info and changes regarding your status (i.e., change of address, new credit card number, etc.) by the 20th of each month.

PLEASE NOTIFY US BY CALLING (888) 646-5446.

Any information received after the 20th of each month will not take effect until the following month. Change of address updates, for the upcoming shipment, called in after the 20th, may be subject to a special handling fee.

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**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*
	Muirwood 2016 Merlot	\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
	Barrymore 2017 Rosé of Pinot Noir	\$23.00	\$17.25	\$18.40
	Carmel Road 2014 Drew's Blend Pinot Noir	\$28.00	\$21.00	\$22.40
	Muirwood 2016 Chardonnay	\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
DECEMBER SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2019		
	Ranch 32 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
	Cru 2016 Cru Unoaked Chardonnay	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
	Cru 2014 Montage Pinot Noir	\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
	Sofia 2017 Blanc de Blancs	\$19.00	\$14.25	\$15.20
NOVEMBER SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 01/31/2019		
	Scheid Vineyards 2014 Pinot Noir	\$36.00	\$27.00	\$28.80
	Mission Trail Vineyards 2017 Chardonnay	\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
	Lineshack 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
	Scheid Vineyards 2017 Sauvignon Blanc	\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
PRIVATE RESERVE CLUB		PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2019		
	Mesa del Sol 2013 Zinfandel	\$38.00	\$28.50	\$30.40
	Wrath 2015 Destruction Level	\$39.00	\$29.25	\$31.20
	Mission Trail Vineyards 2016 Reserve Chardonnay	\$42.00	\$31.50	\$33.60

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\*PRICES LISTED REFLECT PRICE PER BOTTLE. NO OTHER DISCOUNTS APPLY.