

Tasting Monterey

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

COMING EVENTS

Friday, Feb. 4, 2011
First Fridays Art Walk
 A Taste of Monterey
 Old Town Salinas
 5:00pm-8:00pm*
 Stop by A Taste of Monterey in Old Town Salinas on your journey through the First Fridays Art Walk. Enjoy art from a featured local artist, while we stay open later!

Feb. 12-14, 2011
Valentine's Day Weekend
 A Taste of Monterey
 Cannery Row
 11:00am-7:00pm*
 We will be open an extra hour and offering special wine by the glass pricing to celebrate Valentine's day weekend.

Feb. 19-20, 2011
Presidents' Day Weekend
 A Taste of Monterey
 Cannery Row
 11:00am-7:00pm*
 We will be open an extra hour and offering special wine by the glass pricing to celebrate President's day weekend.

Thursday, Feb. 24, 2011
New! - Thirsty Thursdays
 A Taste of Monterey
 Old Town Salinas
 4:00pm-6:00pm*
 Join us on the last Thursday of every month from 4pm to 6pm. A Taste of Monterey, Oldtown Salinas is keeping its doors open later and offering special wine by the glass prices. Featured Winemaker, local food products and 30% Off wine and gifts (discount for club members only).

Friday, Feb. 25, 2011
Last Fridays Wine Bar
 A Taste of Monterey
 Cannery Row
 6:00pm-9:00pm*
 Join us on the last Friday of every month from 6pm to 9pm. A Taste of Monterey, Cannery Row is keeping its doors open later and offering special wine by the glass prices. Start your weekend off with a relaxing view and a glass of Monterey's finest.

* No new tastings after 5:45pm

FEBRUARY REFERRALS



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

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!

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.

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

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.



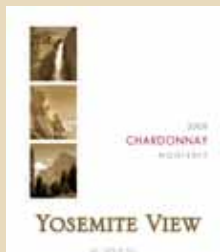
LET'S FERMENT AGAIN! The secondary fermentation process is sometimes called 'bulk aging' and is really focused on allowing a final stage of fermentation for typically a period of three to six months (although some winemakers will deliberately bulk age longer). These days, this stage is primarily done 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

Continued Inside

MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

YOSEMITE VIEW - 2008 Chardonnay



Emulating the bold, organic beauty of the world famous National Park, Yosemite View wines are designed to please a wide array of wine drinkers. The fruit for this Chardonnay comes from the cool, coastal influence vineyard in the Monterey AVA. The Yosemite View flavor profile is rich and rustic in a fruit forward style, balanced by a light, well integrated winemaking touch. Seamless and classic in style, the label colorfully depicts the stunning grandeur of their namesake landmark. On the nose the wine shows elements of honey, melon, pear and white fig. These elements carry over to the palate with additional layers of fuji apple, roasted chestnut, and mineral notes. A combination of American and French oak round out the finish.

100% Chardonnay

14.1% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2013

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

CRU - 2007 Vineyard Montage Pinot Noir



The Montage Pinot Noir is a composition of multiple vineyard lots; two Monterey vineyards: Paraiso Vineyard in the Santa Lucia Highlands and Chualar Canyon Vineyard in the northern Salinas Valley make up a good part of this blend. The other pieces of this composition were sourced from famous vineyards in Arroyo Grande and Santa Barbara. The various elements come together as a classically styled Pinot with a lovely varietal nose and light well balanced fruit. Rich garnet in hue, this is classic Monterey Pinot Noir. Cola, black cherry dried rose petal and bramble all come through at first whiff, with classic varietal flavors of cranberry, black cherry, and mushroom with earthy undertones. The finish is dry with tart red cherry pie filling flavors.

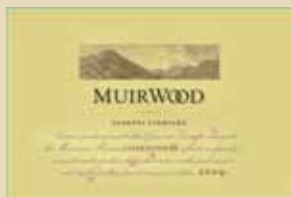
100% Pinot Noir

14.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2012

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

MUIRWOOD - 2009 Reserve Zanetta Vineyard Chardonnay (Club Blanc)



Grown, produced and bottled from their winery's Zanetta Vineyard in the Arroyo Seco AVA, the Muirwood Reserve Chardonnay reflects the family's commitment to produce distinctive wines with great nuance and depth from their finest vineyard estates. Their best lots, displaying exceptional qualities, go into their reserve selections. Barrel fermented and sur lie aged for 10 months in French and American oak. This Chardonnay has tropical fruit flavors of pear and peach with a creamy oak mouth feel. Vanilla and spice extends through the lingering, viscous finish.

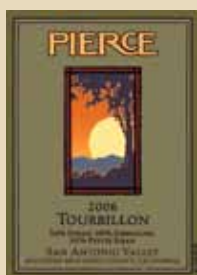
100% Chardonnay

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2014

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

PIERCE RANCH VINEYARDS - 2006 Tourbillon (Club Red)



Tourbillon is a rhone-styled blend of Syrah, Grenache and Petite Sirah. The vineyard team performed their standard meticulous practices of early season suckering and basil leaf removal. Fruit on weak shoots was removed. Leaves were removed to maintain ambient light through the canopy (both a green harvest in June and an early August veraison thinning were performed). Finally, a pre-harvest touch up pass insured evenly ripened fruit. This vineyard produces less than 4 tons per acre. Deep, dark purple in color with black cherry, plum and violet aromas. Full-bodied, fruit forward, hearty and rich with big, ripe, jammy fruit. Slightly oaky flavors with nicely integrated tannins in a long smooth finish. Made with fruit from the new San Antonio Valley AVA in Southern Monterey County.

54% Syrah, 26% Grenache, 20% Petite Sirah

14.8% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2013

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued

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.

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.

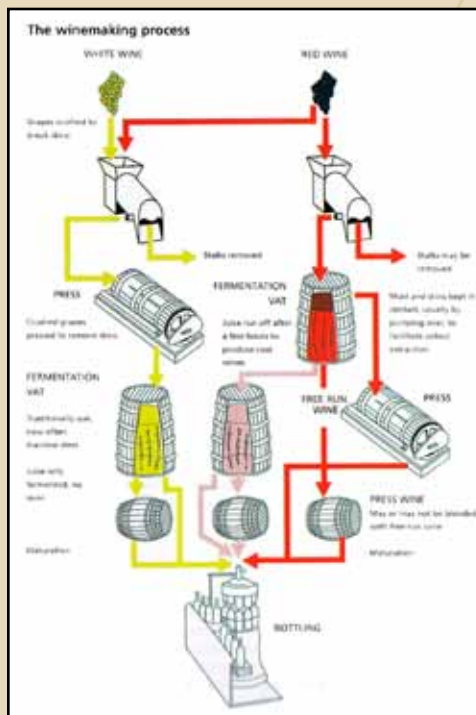
PRESERVE FOR LATER. Preservatives are added in the process in the form of sulfur dioxide, usually as sodium, potassium metabisulphite, or potassium sulfite (get out your chemistry sets!). Typically sulfite is added to wine in order to help preserve it and deter any additional fermentation that could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



FEATURED PRODUCTS

BIG GAME PACK



Turn the Big Game into a Super Wine Tasting Party!

Why settle for beer, when you can bring smiles to your friend's faces by sharing this fabulous selection of wines from Monterey County! A red blend to go with something off the grill. Refreshing whites for your famous Chili. Or, try some Pinot Noir or Roussanne for the perfect pairing with chips, guacamole and a little medium-hot salsa. It is all here included in this great pack of wines, just add friends, food and the game.

\$94.00 Sale Price
\$79.90 Wine Club Price
\$75.20 Club Quattro / Cellar Club
\$131.00 Value

RECIPE

SEAFOOD PASTA MONTEREY

Ingredients:

- 1 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



Courtesy of:



No Corkage Fee program participant!

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.

Gift Cards



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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.

PLEASE SEND QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS TO:

A Taste of Monterey
Attn: Elaine Hewett
127 Main Street
Salinas, CA 93901
(888) 646-5446 Ext. 13
club@tastemonterey.com

CLUB SAVINGS

Remember, as a Club Member, you receive a 15% discount on all purchases (20% for Quattro and Cellar members) and a weekly complimentary tasting.

NEWSLETTER STAFF




Elaine Hewett - Club Manager
Robyn Rauh - Executive Editor
Bryce Ternet - Contributing Editor
Ken Rauh - Creative Director

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

FEBRUARY SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 04/30/2011	REGULAR PRICE*	12-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*	6-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*
 Yosemite View 2008 Chardonnay		\$14.00	\$11.20	\$10.50
 Cru 2007 Vineyard Montage Pinot Noir		\$23.00	\$18.40	\$17.25
 Muirwood 2009 Reserve Zanetta Vineyard Chardonnay		\$22.00	\$17.60	\$16.50
 Pierce Ranch Vineyards 2006 Tourbillon		\$18.00	\$14.40	\$13.50
JANUARY SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 03/31/2011			
 Line Shack Winery 2009 Roussanne		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
 Sycamore Cellars 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon		\$24.00	\$18.00	\$19.20
 Sycamore Cellars 2008 Chardonnay		\$26.00	\$19.50	\$20.80
 Line Shack Winery 2008 Syrah		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
DECEMBER SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2011			
 Morgan Winery 2009 Sauvignon Blanc		\$15.00	\$11.25	\$12.00
 Pacific Valley Vineyards 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon		\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
 Sofia 2009 Blanc de Blancs		\$19.00	\$14.25	\$15.20
 Pot Belly Winery Port		\$36.00	\$27.00	\$28.80
PRIVATE RESERVE CLUB	PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2011			
 Tudor Wines 2006 Sarmento Vineyard Pinot Noir		\$60.00	\$45.00	\$48.00
 Michaud Vineyards 2004 Syrah		\$38.00	\$28.50	\$30.40
 Pot Belly Winery NV Port		\$36.00	\$27.00	\$28.80

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