

Tasting Monterey

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

COMING EVENTS

Friday, Feb. 3, 2012
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!

Friday, Feb. 24, 2012
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

GRAFTING & CLONING

GROWING THE IDEAL GRAPE

You've probably heard the terms "grafting" and "cloning" related to the cultivation of wine grapes but, even if you know the biological definition of each, are you aware of how critically important the techniques are in the grape growing world?

For example, have you ever wondered why you've tasted a wine that is a particular outstanding varietal wine, yet it's produced from a growing area you would have expected something much less from? Yup, this could easily be based on grafting and/or cloning.

Both are common agricultural practices, but each application in the wine world is unique and vital in the overall equation of producing a fine glass of wine. So, what are we really talking about? Pour yourself a glass, and start picturing the two most basic elements of wine: vines and grapes....Now we can begin.

Even though spring hasn't yet arrived, most of us are expectantly awaiting its arrival. And this is also the time of year wine grape growers may be contemplating grafting new vines in their vineyards.

The technical definition of grafting is a horticultural technique where tissues from one plant are combined with another so the two join together. It's actually a very common technique used for horticultural and agricultural purposes. To describe the process in more simplified wine terminology: grafting is a way to blend characteristics of one vine with those of another.



One vine is normally selected for its root qualities and is referred to as the "stock" or "rootstock." The vine combined with it is called the "scion", and is selected for its stem, leaf, flowering and fruit characteristics.

The beneficial advantages of grafting have been understood for centuries; even if it initially sounds like a complicated affair. For example, apple and cherry trees would never have been domesticated if people had not figured out how to graft.

With vineyards, grafting is extremely important as it explains how vintners are able to experiment with vines in order to find the ideal match for differing climates and soil conditions...as even though there can be similarities between different growing regions in the world, no two spots will ever be precisely the same.

Further illustrating this point is that many grapevines aren't actually grown on their own roots, as most are grafted onto different grapevines with stronger rootstocks. So, what's cloning?

Cloning is tied to grafting as the selection of the scion, mentioned earlier, is essentially the concept of cloning grapes. So why would a grower or winemaker want to clone a grape? Well, there are numerous reasons. For example, there are literally hundreds of different clones of Pinot Noir, and each clone has certain qualities different from another.

We, as the ultimate end-tasters of the wines, may not be able to differentiate between the different clones, but the growers/winemakers of those wines would definitely be able to describe to us how that particular clone or clones used in their wine was specifically picked for the grape they wanted to grow and the wine they wanted to produce.

This is certainly no easy choice for them to decide. At times, entire growing regions



FEBRUARY REFERRALS



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



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Continued Inside

MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

COBBLESTONE - 2008 Chardonnay



As always, Cobblestone Chardonnay is made entirely from the fruit of our cobblestone-laden, old vines family estate in the Arroyo Seco appellation of central Monterey County. While maintaining its signature elegance and crispness, the 2008 vintage is especially complex and delivers a rich mouthfeel. It is again a blend of two Chardonnay clones, the Wente Traditional and the French ENTAV 809. This clonal blend coupled with unique winemaking technique, which incorporates stainless steel fermentation and French oak aging with no malolactic fermentation, results in bright fruit without sacrificing the wine's all-important acidity.

Medium straw color. Apple, lemon and orange blossom on the nose. Ripe apple continues through the palate along with racy lime, pineapple, mineral and stone. The long finish rounds out with vanilla, spice and warm oak tones.

100% Chardonnay

14.4% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2014

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

J. LOHR - 2010 Wildflower Valdiguié



2010 was the coolest growing season we've seen in the Arroyo Seco in the past decade. The season allowed for adequate hang time, which enabled great flavor development with less accumulation of sugar than in typical years. Valdiguié is a very large-berried variety, requiring extra vigilance from their Greenfield vineyard team to prune to only one bud per spur and to aggressively thin any extra shoots pushing from the spur area. Otherwise, yields are too high and ripening becomes difficult for this late-maturing variety, particularly in a cool year. In their winemaking, their goal is to preserve Valdiguié's wonderful natural acidity and fresh fruit flavors. Two different winemaking techniques were incorporated to achieve this. In 2010, they handpicked roughly 19%

of the fruit and put those whole clusters directly into the fermenters in a winemaking process called carbonic maceration – no yeast or pumping over of the fruit is performed. The other techniques are to gently de-stem and crush the fruit going to the fermenter, pump over and extract with fairly short, warm fermentations. These processes give the wine a remarkable similarity to the wines of Beaujolais, with enticing berry fruit flavors, a vibrant color and soft tannins. Malolactic fermentation is discouraged in order to preserve bright acidity and fruit character.

100% Valdiguié

11.7% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2014

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

CHOCK ROCK VINEYARD - 2007 Pinot Noir (Club Red)



Chock Rock Vineyard produces wines from their estate and from other unique vineyard sites in Monterey County. This absolutely handcrafted wine is made at the estate micro-winery secluded high in the Santa Lucia Mountains of Monterey. Great fruit from unique sites, coupled with 27 years of winemaking experience ensure quality.

This is the first Pinot Noir from the Chock Rock Vineyard estate. This wine has about 1.5 years of bottle age and is tasting fantastic. The wine is easy to drink with deep red color, aromas of cherries, low tannins and an amazing finish. Food friendly.

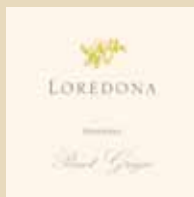
100% Pinot Noir

14.2% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2013

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

LOREDONA - 2010 Pinot Grigio (Club Blanc)



The grapes for the 2010 Loredona Pinot Grigio were delivered to the winery cold in late September. The juice was inoculated with specific yeast strains from South Africa that were developed to enhance the elegant aromas and rich mouth feel that are present in aromatic white varietals. A long fermentation occurred over 4 weeks at cool temperatures (53° - 58° F) to preserve the bright fruit character and elegant aromas. The wine has very little residual sugar, but because the grapes naturally contribute so much aroma, fruit flavor and mouthfeel, the drinker is left with an impression of sweetness.

The 2010 Loredona Pinot Grigio features a melange of tropical and spicy aromas including pear, pineapple and ginger. The flavors are rich and intense, with ripe pear and Fuji apples. The wine finishes with strong hints of vanilla.

100% Pinot Grigio

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2013

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued



can make the mistake of putting too much faith into an idea and end up growing the wrong clone(s) of certain varietals, thinking they would achieve great success only to later be thoroughly disappointed.

This proved to be historically true in the case of Oregon's Willamette Valley. Initially, growers there planted Pinot Noir clones suited to Californian warmer growing climates and conditions. However, after experiencing disappointing results, growers switched to Burgundian cooler climate clones, which in hindsight probably did have some growers shaking their heads since the climate of

this area of Oregon has much more in common with France's Burgundy region than Sonoma County. The end result has been that Oregon now produces outstanding Burgundian-style Pinots.

Lucky for us, Monterey growers and vintners long ago figured out fantastic Pinot Noir clone matches not only for Monterey County AVAs, but also to a finer detailed degree of grafting different clones on a vineyard by vineyard basis...how horticulturally impressive is that!?

Growers in Monterey County and in the wine regions of the world will continue to strive to try and discover how to ever-improve their wines. Planting new vines will not do this alone, but rather it will be achieved through the wonders of grafting and cloning in the eternal quest to grow the ideal grape. While they experiment and take their nobly wine-stained risks, the rest of us will sit back and wait to savor the future bottled beauties.

-Bryce Ternet (Contributing editor and author of three books. See <http://www.facebook.com/pages/M-Bryce-Ternet> for more.)

RECIPE

Tuna Steaks

With Fresh Ginger & Cucumber Soy Sauce

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

- | | |
|------------|------------------------------|
| 1 1/2 lbs. | tuna steaks, lightly floured |
| 3 cups | peeled and diced cucumbers |
| 1 Tbsp. | peanut oil |
| 3 Tbsp. | soy sauce |
| 2 Tbsp. | minced garlic |
| 2 Tbsp. | rice vinegar |
| 2 Tbsp. | fresh ginger |
| 1/4 bunch | cilantro, chopped |
| 1 pinch | dried red chile |

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a small pan and add the garlic, ginger and chile. When cooked, set aside.
2. In a mixing bowl, add the cucumbers, then the mixture of oil, garlic, ginger and chile.
3. Add the soy sauce, rice vinegar and cilantro. Mix well.
4. Saute or flat grill the tuna.
5. Arrange the cooked fish on a serving platter or on individual plates topped with 4 Tbsp of the fresh ginger and cucumber soy sauce per serving.



No Corkage Fee
Program Participant!



VISITING Varietals



CHARDONNAY

Pronunciation: Shar-doe-nay

Definition: Chardonnay, America's number one selling white wine varietal, continues to climb the production ladders to emerge as the most beloved of dry white wines in the U.S. The Chardonnay grape itself also contributes to the wine's popularity. It is a relatively "low-maintenance" vine that adapts well to a variety of climates, resulting in fairly high yields worldwide. These high yields translate into millions of bottles of Chardonnay wines.

Flavor Profile: Chardonnays boast an impressive range of flavors from the expected buttered, oak overtones to the fresh, fruit flavors of apple, pear, tropical, citrus and melon, leaving a lasting palate impression.

Food Pairing: Chardonnay will pair well with poultry dishes, pork, seafood or recipes that have a heavy cream or butter base. Also consider pairing unoaked Chardonnay with guacamole, garlic, salads, grilled shrimp or even curry dishes.



- 3 Award Winning Wines
- Tasting Notes
- Detailed Varietal Article

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3 Reserve Wines / Quarterly
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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 Ext. 13

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

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Bryce Ternet - Contributing Editor

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	Cobblestone 2008 Chardonnay	\$29.00	\$21.75	\$23.20
	J. Lohr 2010 Wildflower Valdiguié	\$12.00	\$9.00	\$9.60
	Chock Rock 2007 Pinot Noir	\$30.00	\$22.50	\$24.00
	Loredonna 2010 Pinot Grigio	\$12.00	\$9.00	\$9.60
JANUARY SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 03/31/2012		
	Lockwood Vineyard 2007 Partners' Reserve	\$24.00	\$18.00	\$19.20
	Rail 2 Rail 2010 Chardonnay	\$13.00	\$9.75	\$10.40
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	DeTierra Vineyards 2006 Estate Chardonnay	\$30.00	\$22.50	\$24.00
DECEMBER SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 02/29/2012		
	Ventana Vineyards 2008 Tempranillo	\$29.00	\$21.75	\$23.20
	Christopher Paul Wines 2008 Chardonnay	\$23.00	\$17.25	\$18.40
	Hahn Winery 2010 Pinot Noir	\$12.00	\$9.00	\$9.60
	Ventana Vineyards 2009 Chardonnay	\$19.00	\$14.25	\$15.20
PRIVATE RESERVE CLUB		PRICES EXPIRE 02/29/2012		
	Tudor Wines 2006 SLH Pinot Noir	\$55.00	\$41.25	\$44.00
	Pelerin Wines 2010 Sierra Mar Chardonnay	\$42.00	\$31.50	\$33.60
	Wrath 2009 Cerberus Syrah	\$39.00	\$29.25	\$31.20

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