

Tasting Monterey

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

COMING EVENTS

Every Friday
Feb 7, 14, 21 & 28, 2014
Every Fridays Wine Bar

A Taste of Monterey
Cannery Row
6:00pm-8:00pm*
Join us every Friday evening from 6pm to 8pm. Start your weekend off with a relaxing view, live music, great food and a glass of Monterey's finest.



Store Hours
A Taste of Monterey
Cannery Row
Sun-Wed 11am-7pm
Thu-Sat 11am-8pm
No new tastings after 6:00pm

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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Soils & Wine ...It's not just Dirt!

Have you ever wondered how much influence soils have on wine? Or, even what we're really even talking about when soils are mentioned? While the concept of *terroir* is important here (i.e. the interaction of all other factors, including soils), the individual role of soil should not be forgotten.

Soils sustain the life of not only grape vines, but all plants. They essentially store their food and water, and regulate climatic influences such as temperature and rainfall. But, let's get back to what we're talking about, as we want to be clear what we are referring to when we mention the term soils. Soil is the layer of lithosphere (a fancy word for "ground") in interaction with the atmosphere, hydrosphere, and biosphere; serving as the link between the organic and inorganic. Therefore, it is the top layer of the ground.

Soil is analyzed by profiling. A soil profile is a cross-section or vertical slice of soil which displays its layers as they occurred and formed during the course of the soil's formation. Each layer is defined by its physical, chemical, mineralogical, and biological structure. This is done by, well, basically digging a hole and taking a look at what's there.

When it comes to grape vines, you'll often hear that vines prefer looser, deep soils and stony soils instead of loam clay soils. But...stop right there! This clearly is not always true, some very good wines are produced here in Monterey County, and there is a lot of loamy soil. In fact, over 80% of the vineyards in Monterey County are comprised of eight soil types, many of which contain some *loaminess* or clay qualities.



The eight soil types and their percentage of total planted acreage are: Lockwood Shaly Loam (28%), Chualar Loam (15%), Garey Sandy Loam (9%), Arroyo Seco Gravelly Sandy Loam (7%), Rincon Clay Loam (7%), Placencia Sandy Loam (6%), Oceano Loamy Sand (5%), and Chamise Shaly Loam (5%). These soils are generally considered to be alluvial, porous, granite, and rich in limestone - all considered excellent for grape vines. So, don't believe the ill-informed notion that vines don't perform well in loam clay soils. Monterey County is a perfect example which proves this belief to be incorrect. Speaking of Monterey County, let's dive into the soil characteristics of the AVAs.

ARROYO SECO: Due to its extreme variation in topography, this AVA has a variety of soil types. The soil also varies from the sub-region's canyon to its valley floor. The valley is composed of palm-sized stones, called "Greenfield Potatoes" by the locals. These relatively large river stones provide adequate drainage for the vines' root systems, as well as retain warmth captured from the sun to prevent the vines from freezing during frigid nights. In contrast, the soil found in the canyon is less fertile, forcing the roots of the vines to dig deeper for water and nutrients.

CARMEL VALLEY: The vineyards in the Carmel Valley AVA are planted mostly on mountainous terrain, with the highly prized San Andreas Fine Sandy Loam and the Arroyo Seco Gravelly Sandy Loam soils being predominant. This type of soil provides ideal drainage and allows for optimal airflow through the root system.

CHALONE: The heart of the Chalone AVA is in the unique limestone and decomposed granite soils found only here. They naturally limit the grape yields, and the limited rainfall concentrates the fruit and contributes to the rich full bouquet found in its wines.

HAMES VALLEY: This AVA currently has 10,000 acres suitable for grape growing, with only 2,000 acres currently planted (anyone else see aggressive growth potential?). The shale-loam soil found in Hames Valley, combined with its warmer weather, produces grapes with intense, bold flavors.

SAN ANTONIO VALLEY: The soils found in this AVA are primarily gravelly loam and clay. Added with frequent high temperatures, these elements provide an excellent setting for growing full-bodied varietals.



Continued Inside

MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

DE TIERRA - 2011 *Puzzler*



The 2011 growing season presented tremendous challenges for many California winegrowers. Unseasonably cool weather caused a very long growing season which resulted in giving the grapes plenty of hang-time, allowing them to ripen well. The crops were much smaller than usual, but the flavors and concentration were strong due to the extended ripening period. For Central Coast winegrowers, the early results are promising.

This is a blend of Merlot and Syrah from the Spur, Alta Loma and Russell Estate vineyards. It offers red fruit, wild strawberry and notes of hard spices. This is a rustic red wine with good structure and burly tannins. The Puzzler presents a flexible range of pairing opportunities from sophisticated grilled meats to a spaghetti dinner or any tomato based pasta or pizza dish.

Syrah, Merlot

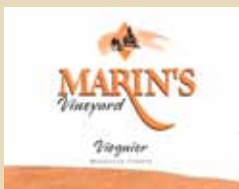
117 Cases Produced

13.9% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2017

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

MARIN'S - 2012 *Viognier*



This small family owned vineyard is located in southern Monterey County overlooking the beautiful, studded oak valley of Lockwood. The small vineyard was developed a little over 13 years ago with plantings of Syrah, until 2007, when an acre was grafted over to Viognier, leading to the first harvest in the fall of 2008. In the springs of 2009 and 2010, 2 1/4 more acres were grafted over.

Go out of your way and try this with truffle cheese. You will love them both. This Viognier brings aromatics of wildflowers, hints of honeysuckle, citrus and peach. Medium bodied frame and light spice minerality. Great with Thai food, pastas and fish.

100% Viognier

150 Cases Produced

13.7% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2015

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

MARIN'S - 2011 *Syrah* (Club Red)



"Marin's Vineyard" is a tiny vineyard (5 1/2 acres) located in the Lockwood Valley near Lake San Antonio in the San Antonio Valley AVA in Southern Monterey County. The vineyard consists of 2 1/4 acres of Syrah and 3 1/4 acres of Viognier. Syrah was chosen because of its growing character to the Southern Rhone and Australian Shiraz growing regions of warm climates, which the Lockwood Valley of Southern Monterey County delivers.

Marin's Vineyard 2011 Syrah shines with aromatic essences of blackberry and hints of black currant notes. Followed up with spiciness of violet, sandalwood and black pepper. A light tannin mouth feel, easy on the palate. A natural match with grilled or smoked meats, mushrooms, onions and lamb

100% Syrah

150 Cases Produced

14.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2017

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

DE TIERRA - 2010 *De Tierra Sargenti Chardonnay* (Club Blanc)



The 2010 Sargenti Chardonnay wine was made from grapes grown on the Sargenti Vineyard in the foothills of the Gabilan Mountains. This area is well known for its distinctive minerality. The vineyards have sparse and rocky soils. The warm days and cool night time breezes help the grapes in this vineyard to develop complexity and lovely acidity.

In the glass, the 2010 Sargenti Chardonnay offers appealing clarity and viscosity – medium straw/pale yellow. This wine is delicately floral with hints of honeysuckle and promise a crisp well balanced wine. In the palate, the wine begins with notes of crisp gala apple and expands in the mid-palate to soft cinnamon, lychee and custard flavors. The wine finishes with nicely balanced acidity and a flash of grapefruit peel that leave the palate feeling bright and ready for the next sip or nibble. This wine will pair nicely with chilled shellfish salads and wide array of brunch dishes. The very nice viscosity and sense of freshness and crispness on the palate also make it a good choice in the cocktail and passed appetizer setting.

100% Chardonnay

255 Cases Produced

14.4% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2016

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued

SAN BERNARBE: The vineyards of this AVA are grown on an unusual composition of Aeolian soil – a type of sand dune composition not usually found in grape growing environments. Sandy soils provide little water retention and thus allow for excellent drainage. This, combined with modern irrigation techniques, provides the grower with tools to adjust the vigor and quality of the fruit, producing rich full-bodied wines with complex and mature aromas.

SAN LUCAS: The soil of this AVA is composed of diatomaceous shale and various sizes of sand stone. This allows for proper air circulation around the root system and offers less resistance to growing roots when compared to harder clay-like soils. Wines produced from San Lucas grapes possess brilliant color to match their rich flavor.

SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS: The most common soil in the Santa Lucia Highlands AVA is Chualar Loam (*fine, alluvial loam derived from a variety of rock types, well-drained and typically found on slopes*). There are also areas of Arroyo Seco Gravelly Sandy Loam (*coarse and gravelly calcareous loam, well-drained*) and Placentia Sandy Loam (*fine, granitic alluvial soil, moderate to well-drained*). The balance is an assortment of 25 different soils.

The greater Monterey County AVA includes areas of pretty much all the above mentioned soil types, with the exception of Chalone's unique soils' setting. And there's more, as we have yet to discuss how certain soils impart flavor characteristics into grapes and ultimately into wines...but we'll get into that subject next month. We hope this introduction of the importance of soils and the soils of Monterey County leads to a greater appreciation for the role they have in winemaking. After all, it's not just *dirt* out there!

Bryce Ternet - contributing editor and author of the recently released: "The Stevenson Plan, A Novel of the Monterey Peninsula." See <http://www.mbryceter.net.com/> for more.



\$5 WINE CLUB
MEMBER

Special



*Arugula & Fava Bean
Crustini*

Eating seasonally means eating young green fava beans with salty, nutty crumbles of Pecorino Toscano—a firm sheep's-milk cheese. That favorite snack was a jumping-off point for these savory little toasts. Fresh arugula, both puréed and roughly chopped, punctuates the spread with spice and texture.

Every month A Taste of Monterey will be featuring a special menu item, at a great price, exclusively offered to our wine club members. Enjoy with one of your favorite Monterey wines (or beer!) at our tasting room on Cannery Row.

RECIPE

Southwest-Style Cod

Make tonight fish night, and this festive recipe with a little zip will guarantee the night's anything but boring! This dish pairs extremely with Marin's refreshing 2012 Viognier or their fruit forward 2011 Syrah.

INGREDIENTS

1	onion, chopped
1	green pepper, chopped
2 teaspoons	olive oil
2	garlic cloves, minced
1 can (15 ounces)	tomato sauce
2	tomatoes, chopped
1 can (2¼ ounces)	sliced ripe olives, drained
½ teaspoon	ground cumin
¼ teaspoon	hot pepper sauce
⅓ teaspoon	pepper
4 (6 ounces each)	cod fillets



DIRECTIONS

In a large skillet, saute onion and green pepper in oil until tender. Add garlic; saute 1 minute longer. Stir in the tomato sauce, tomatoes, olives, cumin, pepper sauce and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes.

Add fillets. Cover and cook over medium heat for 10-14 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork, turning once. Yield: 4 servings.



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WE NEED YOUR HELP!

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PLEASE NOTIFY US BY CALLING
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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:

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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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	Marin's 2012 <i>Viognier</i>	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
	Marin's 2011 <i>Syrah</i>	\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
	De Tierra 2010 <i>Sargenti Chardonnay</i>	\$32.00	\$24.00	\$25.60
JANUARY SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 03/31/2014		
	Cima Collina 2009 <i>Pinot Noir</i>	\$24.00	\$18.00	\$19.20
	Noble Vines 242 2012 <i>Sauvignon Blanc</i>	\$14.00	\$10.50	\$11.20
	Pelerin 2009 <i>RTW</i>	\$21.00	\$15.75	\$16.80
	Joullian 2011 <i>Roger Rose Chardonnay</i>	\$30.00	\$22.50	\$24.00
DECEMBER SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2014		
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