

# Tasting Monterey

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

## COMING EVENTS

**Friday, April 6, 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, April 27, 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

## APRIL REFERRALS



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



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## SYRAH, GRENACHE AND POPES:

### Introducing the Rhône



"This is a Rhône-style wine." You've heard this line before, but the definition of a Rhône-style wine can vary and calls for some background discussion. As always, we're here to bolster your knowledge. So grab your corkscrews, and let's go Rhône!

The Rhône Valley wine region, often simply referred to as "the Rhône," is located in the Rhône River valley in southern France. It's believed that vines were first planted by the Greeks here around 600 BC... that's a long time ago!

The region borders the Mediterranean Sea, west of the Côte d'Azur (i.e. the French Riviera), and is south of Burgundy. The Rhône is divided between two sub-regions: the Northern Rhône and the Southern Rhône. Although there is a distinct geographical difference between the two sub-regions, there is also a distinct difference in climate, and consequently, a variance in grapes grown and wine produced.

The Northern Rhône has a continental climate - a considerable winter and a hot summer. The sub-region's weather is coerced by mistral winds, which also influence the climate of nearby Provence. Although relatively warm, the north is cooler than its southern counterpart.

Syrah is the king varietal in the Northern Rhône, and it is considered by many to be the varietal's ancestral homeland (note: opinions vary on this subject). Other red varietals are grown, but Syrah plays such an important role that the others aren't worth discussing in their detail. The world-renowned red wines of the Hermitage AOC (AVA) come from the Northern Rhône; these wines are comprised primarily of Syrah (a touch of Marsanne or Roussanne may be added) and are considered by many to be the boldest, meatiest reds produced in all of France.

Marsanne, Roussanne and Viognier are the most widely planted white varietals. Viognier can be a stand-alone varietal wine (Condrieu and Chateau-Grillet AOCs) and is also a vital blending component. The wines of Côte-Rôtie are produced here; a blend of Syrah and up to 20% Viognier. Famed varietal white wines of Marsanne and Roussanne are produced in the Hermitage, Crozes-Hermitage and Saint-Joseph AOCs.

The Southern Rhône sub-region has a Mediterranean climate - mild winters and hot summers. Growers in the south are also well-known for gathering large pebbles at the base of their vines to absorb as much sun as possible during the day, and this helps keep the vines warm at night (the south is rarely cloudy, and at certain times of the year can experience vast overnight drops in temperature).

The landscape of the north is hilly with steep slopes; the Southern Rhône is flatter with broad plains. The south offers far more planted acreage of grapes with not as many famed appellations as its northern neighbor. This is illustrated by the fact that although the Côtes du Rhône AOC could be used for grapes sourced from either the north or south, these wines are almost universally entirely comprised of Southern Rhône fruit.

The most esteemed wine produced in the Southern Rhône is by far Châteauneuf-du-Pape. It has its own AOC and is a blend of up to 13 different varietals (eight red, five white - although is often made with far less). The name literally translates as the "the pope's new castle," which, without a brief history lesson, really doesn't make a shred of sense. It originates from the fact that the nearby city of Avignon temporarily was home of the papal court in the 14th century.

White wine grapes are grown in the south, such as Ugni Blanc, Roussane, Viognier and Bourboulenc, but red varietals play the dominant role. While Syrah is king in the north, Grenache plays a similar role in the south. Syrah, Mourvedre, Carignan and Cinsault are the other most widely-planted red varietals.



Continued Inside

# MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

## HOLMAN RANCH VINEYARDS - 2010 *Pinot Gris*



The 2010 growing season had a long cool summer with a blast of heat near the harvest date allowing the grapes to perfectly mature. Their estate grown Pinot Gris is from vines grown on a small bench in sedimentary soils at an elevation of 1050 feet in Holman Ranch's Carmel Valley appellation vineyard. The vines are from two clones – 146, 152.

This wine presents classic aromas of peaches and honey. The whisper of lime creates a clean finish and makes this an ideal wine with lighter food, such as cheese, salads and fish dishes.

100% Pinot Gris

13.4% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2013

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

## CRU - 2009 *Montage Pinot Noir*



The 2009 CRU "Vineyard Montage" Pinot Noir is a true "Montage" as the name suggests. Winemaker Ken Post, brought together six different clones from five different vineyards in two distinct coastal AVAs. Upon arrival, the fruit de-stemmed, crushed and then transferred into 3 and 5 ton open top fermenters. The must was allowed a 24 hour cold soak prior to inoculation with Ashmanhausen and RC212 yeast. The must received 3 to 4 punch downs a day until it reached 5 brix, then tapered off to 2 a day until fermentation was complete. The wine was pressed off into French Oak barrels (20% new), composed of Sirigue, Damy and Marsannay cooperage. Total time in oak was 9 months.

The color is a brilliant ruby hue with a lovely rose rim. On the nose, one is greeted with aromas of strawberry, raspberry, with a hint of pie crust, orange peel and tea. On the palate, this wine shows nice complexity and depth of flavors of pomegranate, raspberry, strawberry infused tea, white pepper, with a well integrated oak.

100% Pinot Noir

14.1% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2014

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

## HAMMOND VINEYARDS - 2006 *Dua* (Club Red)



Hammond Vineyards is the culmination of many years of winemaking in Monterey. Specializing in Rhone and Burgandy varietals, Hammond Vineyards strives to produce wines with a sense of place, showing all the character and flavor of each individual wine.

This blend of Syrah and Grenache marries the best of both varietals. It is a vibrant purple with silky acidity and persistent minerality, with a wonderfully long, spicy finish, with a rich nose of plum, white pepper and mineral. The complex palate shows powerful flavors of black fruit, licorice, pepper and roasted meat.

70% Syrah, 30% Grenache

13.4% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2014

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

## YOSEMITE VIEW - 2009 *Chardonnay* (Club Blanc)



Emulating the bold, organic beauty of the world famous Yosemite National Park, these wines are designed to please a wide array of wine drinkers. 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 beautifully depicts the stunning grandeur of the namesake landmark. The Yosemite View wines are flavor destinations to be visited repeatedly. The 2009 Yosemite View Chardonnay is sourced from multiple vineyards throughout the Arroyo Seco and Santa Lucia Highlands appellations in Monterey County.

The nose develops hints of white peach and nectarine with underlying citrus notes. In the mouth, crisp green apple and nectarine greet you right away, followed by a long lasting finish of citrus and mineral with a great balance of acid and structure.

100% Chardonnay

14.4% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2013

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

## Cover Article Continued

Other significant AOCs in the south include Côtes du Rhône Villages, Vacqueyras and Gigondas. The Southern Rhône also offers fortified wines ("vin doux naturel," en français) from Muscat de Beaumes de Venise AOC and a princely Rosé produced in the Tavel AOC.

Rhône varietals and methods of blending have been exported around the world, and it is in certain Californian and Australian growing areas where arguably the best Rhônes are made outside of France.

Australian winemakers love the Syrah grape (even if they do call it Shiraz), but they also produce a wide range of Rhône blends. These red blends are often called GSM or SGM, referencing Grenache, Syrah and Mourvedre, with the most prominent varietal listed first. As for whites, Marsanne and Roussanne are also bottled as varietal wines and white blends. Australian Rhônes differ in approach and style to their French cousins, as they are fruitier and intended for opening while young.

In California, Rhône-style varietal wines and blends, both red and white, are generally considered to be of a style somewhere between the fruity Australian-style and the subtle refinement of the motherland. Although you'll find Rhône-style wines throughout California's growing regions, premier regions include Paso Robles, Sonoma, Santa Barbara and...yes, you guessed it - our very own Monterey County. Paso Robles was first to heavily invest in Rhônes and is by far leading the way; however, outstanding Rhône wines from other growing regions are not hard to find these days.

So now that you're filled with knowledge, we suggest you fill your glass with one of Monterey County's own fine Rhône varietals. We offer quite a few (check out our inventory online or in one of our tasting rooms), and we know you won't be disappointed!

-Bryce Ternet

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



## VISITING Varietals



## SYRAH

**Pronunciation:** Sih-Rah

**Definition:** Syrah, or Shiraz, is a dark-skinned grape grown throughout the world and used primarily to produce powerful red wines. Whether sold as Syrah or Shiraz, these wines enjoy great popularity. Monterey Syrahs, much like those in France, vary a great deal based on the climate and terroir that they inhabit. In exceptionally warm regions, such as southern Monterey County, the wine is often blended with other Rhône varieties. Other appellations, primarily mountainous ones, tend to produce varietal-based wines that can stand on their own.

**Flavor Profile:** Syrah wines display firm tannins (although they are typically ripe and smooth, not abrasive like younger reds can be), a medium to full body, and the rich round flavors of black cherry, blackberry, plum, bell pepper, black pepper, clove, licorice, dark chocolate and smoked meat.

**Food Pairing:** Syrah is great for grilled meats or veggies, wild game, richly flavored red meats, beef stew and meat lover's pizza.

## RECIPE

## Chicken Provençal

Serves: 4

## Ingredients:

2 Tablespoons	vegetable oil
4	skinless, boneless chicken breasts (6-oz each)
2	shallots, finely chopped
3 Cloves	garlic minced
1/2 Cup	chicken stock
1/4 Cup	white wine
1 Can	14-oz chopped plum tomatoes
1/2 Cup	chopped pitted black olives
2 Tablespoons	capers
1/4 Cup	chopped fresh parsley
1/4 Cup	chopped fresh basil
4 Cups	couscous



## Method:

1. Heat 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Add chicken and sear on both sides until well browned.
3. Remove chicken from pan and set aside.
4. Reduce heat and add another tablespoon of oil to pan. Add shallots and garlic, and sauté for approximately 2 minutes. Add chicken stock, white wine and plum tomatoes and simmer until mixture thickens slightly, approximately 5 minutes.
5. Return chicken to pan and simmer until cooked through, about 5 minutes. Remove chicken from skillet and set aside on platter. Stir black olives, capers and parsley into tomato sauce.
6. Spoon sauce over chicken and garnish with basil.



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

\$49  
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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 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  
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**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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ANY OF THE CURRENT OR PREVIOUS CLUB WINES TO RECEIVE **25% OFF 12 BOTTLES** OR **20% OFF 6**

APRIL SELECTIONS		REGULAR PRICE*	12-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*	6-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*
	Holman Ranch Vineyards 2010 Pinot Gris	\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
	Crū 2009 Montage Pinot Noir	\$23.00	\$17.25	\$18.40
	Hammond Vineyards 2006 Dua	\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
	Yosemite View 2009 Chardonnay	\$13.00	\$9.75	\$10.40
MARCH SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 05/31/2012		
	Bernardus 2010 Griva Sauvignon Blanc	\$19.00	\$14.25	\$15.20
	Bocage 2010 Merlot	\$16.00	\$12.00	\$12.80
	Parrot Ranch 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon	\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
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	Cobblestone 2008 Chardonnay	\$29.00	\$21.75	\$23.20
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	Chock Rock 2007 Pinot Noir	\$30.00	\$22.50	\$24.00
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	Boëté 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon	\$36.00	\$27.00	\$28.80
	Scheid 2007 Reserve Chardonnay	\$45.00	\$33.75	\$36.00
	Aiena 2008 Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir	\$36.00	\$27.00	\$28.80

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