

# Tasting Monterey

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

**COMING EVENTS**

**Friday, April 26, 2013**  
**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.

**Extended Hours**

A Taste of Monterey  
 Cannery Row  
 11:00am-7:00pm\*\*  
 Our tasting room is now open 1 hour later on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

\* No new tastings after 5:45pm  
 \*\* No new tastings after 6:00pm

## HERE COME THE SPANISH VITAMINOS!

*Ándale, Ándale, Ándale!!!* The Spanish are coming! Spanish wine grape varieties that is, as they are becoming increasingly popular throughout California, including Monterey County. But Spanish and California, and especially Spanish and Monterey, is nothing new. It's a relationship that extends back more than two hundred years.

Monterey was the crown jewel of Spanish California, the northern part which was known as Alta California. The "Alta" was dropped as the years passed, but the name of our southern lower region has always remained Baja California. Under Spanish rule, Monterey was the capital of both. And during this time, it was Spanish missionaries at the Carmel Mission who first planted vineyards for wine production in what is now known as Monterey County.

As with its other Western Hemisphere colonial possessions, the Spanish Empire eventually lost its California colony. As with the rest of California, both upper and lower, Monterey County became a Mexican province, which remained the case until 1848. This year marked the end of the Mexican-American War and with it came the division of California, with the upper becoming part of the United States of America and the southern staying part of Mexico.

Unfortunately, those vineyards that had been planted by the padres at the mission were lost with secularization of the church's possessions in California, which occurred when it became part of Mexico. This explains why we don't have any super old vines, despite being one of the original European settlements on the West Coast.

But there has been a resurgence of Spanish influence once again in Monterey County, which is why you're seeing more and more of our wines with grape varieties such as Tempranillo or Albariño. This being the case, we thought it'd be a good time to provide this introduction to their homeland.

Spain is the third largest producer of wine in the world, following only France and Italy. It's believed that wine grapes have been cultivated in Spain since centuries before even the Roman conquest of Hispania.

The majority of Spain's growing regions share similar characteristics of experiencing hot summers and limited amounts of rain throughout the year. In order to counter this persistent level of heat, it's common for Spanish vineyards to be planted at high elevations, often over 2,000 feet above sea level. For comparison, this is around the altitude of Monterey County's highest planted vines.



Added to the challenging climate for vineyards, Spain's soils are notoriously lacking in fertility. In response to this, Spanish growers developed a tradition of widely spacing vines.

The major wine regions include Rioja, Ribera del Duero, and Valdepenas (all known for Tempranillo production); Jerez (Sherry); Rias Baixas (Albariño); and, the greater Catalonia region which includes the regions of Cava (sparkling wine), Penedes, and Priorat.



When it comes to Spanish winemaking characteristics, especially for red wines, there's one above all others that stands out: oak. And we're not talking just extended periods of aging in oak barrels during the winemaking process, which occurs as well, but also the type of oak used. Oak from different parts of the world will differ when used as barrels in winemaking, and Spanish winemakers have a long history of importing American oak, considered by many to be the boldest oak out there. These long periods aging in barrels also mean that most Spanish wines are ready to be opened soon after they are bottled.

What do you think is the most widely planted varietal in Spain? Even those of us knowledgeable of wine would likely incorrectly answer this question. Contrary to what we would initially assume, considering the varietal's immediate association with Spanish wine and the varietal we see most often here in the States, the answer is not Tempranillo. Tempranillo is, in fact, second to the white grape varietal Airén.

If you've never heard of Airén you're not alone. Yet it's estimated to be the most widely planted varietal not only in Spain, but on the entire planet! In Spain it's used to produce uncomplicated white table wines and brandy.

Other popular traditional varietals include Albariño, Godello, Loureira, and Verdejo for whites; Garnacha (Grenache) Mazuelo (Carignan), Graciano, Mencia, and Monastrell (Mourvedre) for reds. Sparkling wines, called "cava" *Continued Inside*

**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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# MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

## KOVAKS - 2011 *Sauvignon Blanc*



In 2003, the Kovacs family packed up and moved onto a rugged 13-acre parcel in Carmel Valley appellation of the Santa Lucia Mountains, located several miles inland from the Big Sur coast. While this land makes for tough sledding for we humans, it's like a spa for grapes: perfect soils, perfect exposure, perfect elevation. Their Szalay Winery gets hot summer days, followed by nights bathed in cool sea breezes. Jacob and Jesse began their Kovacs Brothers Winery in 2006 after finding someone to lend them money to buy grapes and get the business started. Their first wine was sold in 2007, and it turned out to be popular. Sourced from the 15.44 acre San Saba Vineyard which sits adjacent to the Santa Lucia Highlands A.V.A. The vineyard experiences a long growing season allowing for intense and complex flavors to develop in the grapes.

This Monterey County Sauvignon Blanc has a pale yellow color with green hues. Concentrated aromas of lemon/lime citrus, jalepano pepper and essence of spring grass. A clean and balanced palate with a bright acidity and lingering finish.

100% Sauvignon Blanc

14.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2015

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

## CIMA COLLINA - 2008 *Pinot Noir*



The grapes included in this blend were harvested from three distinct sites of the course of the 2008 harvest; two vineyards on opposite sides of the Salinas Valley in Monterey (Chula Vina and Tondre Grapefield), and also from their own vineyard, Hilltop Ranch, in Carmel Valley. Everything about this wine was handmade with a minimalist approach.

The resulting wine is purely Pinot Noir in character; the wine shows off bright cherry mushroom, earthy aromas that return in the flavor. Notes of toasted cedar and spice are well integrated into the wine. The structure and complexity of this wine is achieved through a balance of acidity, alcohol and phenolic components that create a food-friendly, fine Monterey Pinot Noir. Enjoy on its own or with lamb chops, rib roast, porcini souffle or roasted game.

100% Pinot Noir

14.4% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2015

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

## TRE GATTI - 2010 *Tre Gatti Baldo Rosso Syrah* (Club Red)



At Tre Gatti, the goal is to make memorable wines... and memorable wines begin in the vineyard. Their choice of varietal was driven by their desire to produce grapes having great concentration, intensity and a true sense of terrior. This principle compelled them to plant only the number of vines they could realistically manage and personally care for, because they believe no one cares for their grapes the way they do.

The 2010 Baldo Rosso is rich and complex showing an excellent balance between full fruit flavors and typical Syrah earthiness. The nose is raspberry and plum, with hints of smokiness and cocoa. The mouth reveals delicate but firm tannins while the mid-palate is defined by dark fruit: blackberry, boysenberry and a touch of blueberry. The wine finishes with notes of cherry, boysenberry and warm vanilla.

100% Syrah

15.0% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2017

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

## CHESEBRO - 2010 *Vermentino* (Club Blanc)



Mark Chesbro, grower and winemaker, grows wine grapes in his own vineyards: the Chesbro Home Ranch Vineyard and Cedar Lane Vineyard. The Cedar Lane Vineyard is located in the Arroyo Seco appellation and is adjacent to the southern end of the Santa Lucia Highlands appellation. Not only are the grapes used to make Chesbro wine, but also this vineyard supplies fruit to several central coast wineries including Morgan, Bernardus and Tudor.

Vermentino is grown commonly in Sardinia, Corsica and Liguria, Italy. This rarely grown California version has bright aromas of apple blossoms and wildflowers with a hint of vanilla. The mouthfeel is medium bodied and smooth with a bit of cleansing acidity. This is a truly unique and flavorful wine. 134 cases produced in 2010.

100% Vermentino

13.9% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2014

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

## Cover Article Continued

wines, have traditionally been made with Macabeo, Parellada, and Xarello; however, Chardonnay is growing in popularity for sparkling production. Similarly, the more mainstream varietals of Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Merlot, and Sauvignon Blanc are increasing in planted acreage.

With the wide range of diversity in our AVAs here in Monterey County, it should come as no surprise that while we don't have any of those original vines from the Spanish missionaries, we do have Spanish varietals planted and Spanish-style wines being produced.

Ventana has long produced Tempranillo wines, but the future of Spanish varietal wines in Monterey County may best be defined by their growing popularity with some of our newer wineries. Cambiata and Pierce Vineyards both produce outstanding Albariños. And speaking of Pierce, it's our opinion that no one else knows Spanish red varietals better. And with their, and that of others, proven successes with both red and whites Spanish varietals, we're sure that before long you'll begin seeing a lot more planted and produced in Monterey County soon. *Al futuro!*

**Bryce Ternet** - is a contributing editor and is the author of the just released novella: "The Yellow House on Maloney Grove." See <http://www.mbryceter.net.com/> for more.).



## VISITING Varietals



### TEMPRANILLO

**Pronunciation:** Temp-ra-knee-oh

**Definition:** The Tempranillo grape is the dominant grape varietal in Spain's Rioja wines. It produces a medium to full-bodied red wine with lower acidity and full fruit flavor characteristics. These wines are grown primarily in the Rioja and Ribera del Duero regions of Spain. Tempranillo arrived in California bearing the name Valdepeñas, and it was grown in the Central Valley at the turn of the 20th century. Since the climate of the Central Valley was not ideal for the grape, it was used as a blending grape for jug wine. California has since started to use it for fine wines.

**Flavor Profile:** When you first taste a Spanish Tempranillo you'll get hit with the flavor of leather along with cherries. The finish is mild, smooth and lingers with tannin on both sides of your mouth. American and other New World Tempranillo delivers tons of cherry and tomato-sauce flavors followed by chunky tannin. Tempranillo is technically a medium-bodied wine with red fruit characteristics. If you've never tried Tempranillo before you'll find it tastes similar to Sangiovese and Cabernet Sauvignon.

**Food Pairing:** Tempranillo pairs with all kinds of food because it's savory. The regional Spanish cuisine includes roasted vegetables and cured meats like the lusty Jamón Iberico de Bellota. It's true, Tempranillo pairs very well with the local cuisine but it works well with all kinds of cuisine. Suggestions: Lasagna, Pizza and dishes with tomato-based sauces, Grits, Polenta and dishes with corn as a major ingredient, Mexican food such as tacos, nachos, burritos and chile rellenos.

## RECIPE

# SCALLOPS

*with Red Pepper Dressing*

### INGREDIENTS

- 12 king scallops
- 1 tsp cumin seeds, freshly ground
- 1 tsp fine sea salt
- 3 red peppers
- 2 banana shallots, peeled (or use 3 ordinary shallots)
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1-2 T red wine vinegar
- 1 T butter
- ½ lemon, to squeeze
- olive oil
- chives, finely chopped, to garnish



### DIRECTIONS

Heat the oven to 425° F. Mix the cumin with the salt. Set aside. Put the peppers, shallots and garlic into a small roasting dish, just big enough to hold them all. Toss everything in a little olive oil and season. Cover with foil and roast for 30 minutes until soft. Keep covered and allow to cool a little.

When cool enough to handle, peel and seed the peppers, then throw all the vegetables and any juices from the roasting pan into a blender. Blitz to a purée. With the motor running, add another 100ml of olive oil and red wine vinegar. Taste and season as necessary. Push the mixture through a sieve for a smoother purée and keep warm. Thin out with a little water until you have a double cream consistency.

Heat a non-stick frying pan to a high heat, season scallops on one side with cumin salt. Add a small amount of oil to the pan and add the scallops seasoned-side down. Cook for 2-3 minutes until caramelized. Turn over and cook on the other side for a minute or 2, until they start to get golden. Add the butter, allow to brown lightly and add a squeeze of lemon juice. Baste the scallops quickly with the pan juices, then remove from the pan.

To serve, arrange the scallops on some of the red pepper dressing. Spoon some of the buttery cumin pan juices around the scallops, then sprinkle with chives and serve.



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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  
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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:

A Taste of Monterey  
Attn: Elaine Hewett  
700 Cannery Row, Ste. KK  
Monterey, CA 93940  
(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

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

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WWW.TASTEMONTEREY.COM

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	Cima Collina 2008 Pinot Noir	\$24.00	\$18.00	\$19.20
	Tre Gatti 2010 Baldo Rosso Syrah	\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
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