

Tasting Monterey

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

STORE HOURS



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Food service begins at
11:30am daily

*No new member tastings
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Wine Cocktails



It is April now. The beginning of Summer is in sight. Perhaps you are starting to think of outdoor entertaining. It might be fun to “mix” things up with what wines you serve your

guests. Mix can be taken literally and figuratively. In a past newsletter we shed some light on sangria, a refreshing beverage easily enjoyed on a warm evening. Unfortunately, many only consider this fruity concoction while traveling abroad, far away from our peers, for fear they may see us drop a few cubes of ice and some peaches into our Bordeaux. After all, wine is a delicate and sophisticated beverage. Much toil goes into the final product that finds its way to our table. From the crushing of the grapes to the pulling of the cork or twisting of the cap, finished wine is rarely altered. Do we dare tamper with the results? Yes!

We here at A Taste of Monterey could not wait to make a batch of that Sangria. As it turns out, it not only tastes magnificent, but it makes you brilliant. A couple of glasses later, we were inspired to come up with some cocktails of our own.

Unlike liquor cocktails, think of wine cocktails as the “keep your clothes on cocktail.” It is the marriage of sophistication and fun. There are no rules for the blending of wine cocktails, but here are some suggestions to keep in mind. Do not spend a lot on your vintage selection. These are fun drinks that should not break the bank. So, adding some melon slices to your \$60 Meritage will not impress your friends. From time to time you will come across lighter fruit-driven wines, both white and red, that make perfect candidates for enhancing with creative additions.



Here are a couple of options to keep in mind when making your wine cocktail. You may use fruit, liquor, or a splash of cognac. Try pouring a fruity dry Riesling or Viognier over some frozen grapes and into a martini glass. It is a beautiful and refreshing alternative to a gin martini. You could consider adding a bit of gin, Campari, or amaretto as you strive to mix the perfect wine cocktail. A simple addition of a complementary slice of fruit can be all it takes to transform a good wine into an interesting and festive drink. There is a rumor going around that the Elder Rock Petit Sirah is delightful chilled with a slice of orange inside the glass. Not into chilled red wine? Try a slice of mango with a crisp and light well-chilled Chardonnay.

Don't be afraid to try something new. Maybe at your next party you can put out a selection of wines, fruits, and cognacs and let your guests make their own wine cocktail masterpiece. Check out some of these classic recipes for a little inspiration. Have fun mixing it up.

Bishop

In your cocktail shaker place cracked ice and the following ingredients:

- 3 ounces red wine
- 2 ounces lemon juice (Be aware that bottled juices are sweeter than fresh. Always use fresh juice for the best results.)
- 2 teaspoons simple syrup (To make your own simple syrup, dissolve two cups sugar in one cup water, until the water boils. The longer you boil the water, the stronger the syrup. It should be the consistency of olive oil not honey.)

Shake ingredients together and pour into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with an orange twist.

Continued Inside

MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

METZ ROAD - 2013 *Pinot Noir*



Metz Road was created out of the desire to express the unique terroir of a single vineyard site. They select the top vineyard block from each vintage to craft a vineyard-designated Pinot Noir that is genuine in style and exemplifies this complex, temperamental varietal.

Aromas of ripe cherries, red fruit and blood orange are intermingled with subtle notes of vanilla and butterscotch. The palate is supple and layered with vivid flavors of black cherry and raspberry. Silky and elegant, the balance of tannin, acidity and intense fruit truly captures the beauty of Pinot Noir.

100% Pinot Noir

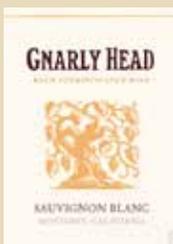
1,200 Cases Produced

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2020

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

GNARLY HEAD - 2016 *Sauvignon Blanc*



The majority of the fruit for Gnarly Head Sauvignon Blanc is selected from vineyards in the San Bernabe region of Monterey. As one of the coolest growing regions in California, this vineyard contributes grapes with crisp, bright acidity and brilliant flavor concentration.

Gnarly Head Sauvignon Blanc is a standout. This refreshing white wine is bursting with aromas of bright citrus and nectarine that are followed by crisp flavors of honeydew melon and green Granny Smith apple on the palate. Medium-bodied with an opulent mouth feel, this wine extends into a lingering, zesty finish and pairs well with roasted artichoke salad with lemon and mint, grilled marinated shrimp, or pesto pasta.

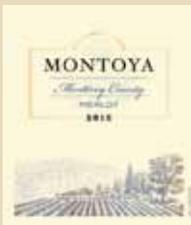
100% Sauvignon Blanc

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2018

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

MONTOYA - 2015 *Merlot* (Club Red)



The Montoya Merlot is made from grapes grown on their family vineyards and other select Monterey County appellations. The subtle influences of these different microclimates add depth and complexity to the final blend.

The Montoya Merlot has been skillfully blended from several of their vineyards located in the diverse terroirs of Monterey County. The Montoya Merlot is blended to deliver the dark cherry and berry flavors Monterey is known for. These are framed in cedary oak with tones of tea and spice. This is a supple wine that a red wine lover will enjoy with or without food.

100% Merlot

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2019

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

METZ ROAD - 2014 *Chardonnay* (Club Blanc)



The 2014 growing season was picture-perfect. The spring months were temperate and uneventful, with no significant frost threats and ideal temperatures. Cool nights and overcast mornings followed by breezy afternoons made the summer months perfect for even ripening and good flavor development. Excellent harvest-time conditions allowed them to let the grapes hang until optimal ripeness was achieved.

Juicy red apples, citrus and bright tropical fruit greet the nose, followed by lilting aromas of vanilla and toasty oak. The palate delivers concentrated apple and pear flavors with a distinct mineral component. Beautifully balanced, the well-integrated oak doesn't overpower and a soft, full mouthfeel is complemented by a balanced acidity.

100% Chardonnay

1,200 Cases Produced

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2018

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued

Le Perroquet

Into a chilled Champagne flute pour the following ingredients:

- Dash gin
- 2 dashes Campari

Top with 4 ounces champagne or sparkling wine. Twist a mint leaf over the drink, and discard. Garnish with a twist of lemon and orange.

Loving Cup Wine Punch

- 1 bottle red Burgundy wine
- 1/2 cup brandy
- 1/3 cup Triple Sec
- 2 liters club soda
- 1 Tbs corn syrup
- 1 cup strawberries
- 1 bunch red grapes

1. At least one day before you make the punch, wash the grapes and remove from the stem.
2. Place the grapes in a freezer bag and place in the freezer.
3. In a punch bowl, mix all the ingredients except the club soda. Stir well.
4. Add 1-cup ice cubes or an ice ring to the punch bowl.
5. Add the club soda, frozen grapes, and strawberries.
6. Serve in punch cups or wine glasses.

RECIPE

Apples and Walnuts with Stilton Cheese

Ingredients

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 6 oz. | Stilton cheese |
| 1 Tbs. | extra-virgin olive oil |
| 1 Tbs. | red wine vinegar |
| 2 Tbs. | heavy cream |
| 1 tsp. | freshly ground pepper |
| 6 | sweet eating apples, such as Braeburn, Gala or Red Delicious, unpeeled, cored and cut into 1/2-inch dice |
| 4 | celery stalks, thinly sliced, plus several whole celery leaves for garnish |
| 2 Tbs. | dried currants or raisins |
| 1 Tbs. | fresh lemon juice |
| 1/2 cup | coarsely chopped walnuts, toasted |

Directions

1. Put one-third of the cheese in the bottom of a large bowl.
2. Add the olive oil and, using a fork, mash together the cheese and oil.
3. Add the vinegar and continue to mash and to mix.
4. Add the cream and pepper and mix well to make a thick, chunky dressing.
5. Add the apples, sliced celery, currants and lemon juice to the dressing and mix well.
6. Crumble the remaining cheese and sprinkle it over the salad along with half the walnuts.
7. Mix them into the salad gently and evenly.
8. Transfer the salad to a serving bowl and garnish with the remaining walnuts and the celery leaves. Serve immediately.

Serves 6

VISITING Varietals



PINOT BLANC

Pronunciation:

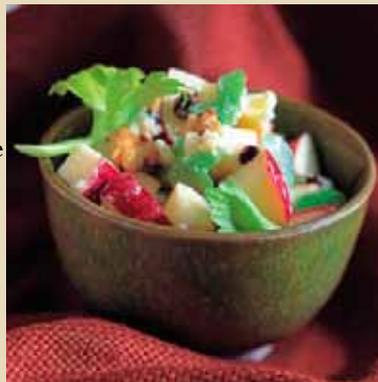
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Pinot Blanc may not receive the same respect given to noble varieties like Chardonnay and Riesling, or even other Alsatian whites like Pinot Gris and Gewurztraminer. But at its best, with grapes from low-yielding vines, Pinot Blanc can produce exciting values: creamy, medium bodied wines, with honey-like aromas and flavors.

A relative of both Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc is grown in a number of countries under a variety of names. In Germany, it is Weisseburgunder, while in Italy, it is called Pinot Bianco.

Still, the fact that we are most familiar with the grape as Pinot Blanc is a dead tip-off that the best examples of the grape come from France. In France, Pinot Blanc is most notably grown in Alsace, where it is either bottled on its own, used as a major component in the sparkling wine Cremant D'Alsace, or blended with other varieties in the region's traditional wine, Edelzwicker. We don't see much Edelzwicker, since the export market for this wine is virtually non-existent. But we're happy that we can get a decent amount of single-varietal Pinot Blanc from Alsace; the wine is made in some form by almost every Alsatian winery. These can be rich, sometimes tropical, smoky wines that are low in acidity. Look for offerings from Domaine Marcel Deiss and Domaine Schoffit.

In the U.S., some California vintners are producing Pinot Blanc with the same techniques used to make expensive Chardonnay, including new oak and malolactic fermentation.



CHEESE

Varietals



STILTON

Pronunciation: STILL-tuhn

This is one of the best British cheeses, worthy of a sonnet. It is a quintessential English cheese, suitable not only for celebrations, but also to perk up everyday dishes. It is the only British cheese to have a Certification Trade Mark and an EU Protected Name.

The Stilton cheese can only be produced in the three counties of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire. The cheese is made from locally produced cow's pasteurized milk. It is made in a cylindrical shape and allowed to form its own coat or crust. The distinctive feature of this cheese is magical blue veins radiating from the center of the cheese.

Traditionally, this cheese has been paired with sherry and port wine. It is also a good choice to go with walnuts, crackers, biscuits and breads.

It is smooth and creamy with complex, with a slightly acidic flavor when young. As it matures, the texture becomes softer and creamier with a mellow flavor. It makes an excellent dessert cheese and is traditionally served with Port at Christmas. However, it can be enjoyed all year round and is worth trying with a dark cream sherry or a sweet dessert wine. It is also very versatile and can be used in hot or cold recipes.

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	Montoya 2015 Merlot	\$16.00	\$12.00	\$12.80
	Metz Road 2014 Chardonnay	\$30.00	\$22.50	\$24.00
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