

Let's *Wine*  
About it



PINOT GRIS

**Pronunciation:**  
"Pee-no Gree"

**Taste:** Delicate citrus (lime water, orange zest) and pomaceous fruits (apple skin, pear sauce), white floral notes, and cheese rind (from lees usage)

**Style:** Light-Bodied White Wine

**Description:** Pinot Gris is a dry light-bodied white grape that is planted heavily in Italy, but also in France and Germany. Wines are light to middle-weight and easy drinking, often with some bitter flavor on the palate (bitter almond, quinine)

**Food Pairing:** Salad, delicate poached fish, light and mild cheeses

**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.

**VISIT US ONLINE**

WWW.TASTEMONTEREY.COM

**Mix & Match**

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

APRIL SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 06/30/2023	REGULAR PRICE*	12-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*	6-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*
Mission Trail Vineyards 2021 Friars' Reserve Meritage		\$45.00	\$33.75	\$36.00
District 7 2021 Chardonnay		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
District 7 2020 Cabernet Sauvignon		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
Joyce 2021 Rosé		\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
MARCH SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 05/31/2023			
Rocklin Ranch 2021 Pinot Noir		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
Bernardus 2021 Rosé of Pinot Noir		\$30.00	\$22.50	\$24.00
Pacific Valley 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon		\$26.00	\$19.50	\$20.80
Line Shack 2019 Chardonnay		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
FEBRUARY SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 04/30/2023			
Aristotle 2020 Petite Sirah		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
Exposition NVV sparkling Wine		\$29.00	\$21.75	\$23.20
Fog & Light 2020 Cabernet Sauvignon		\$26.00	\$19.50	\$20.80
Equoia 2021 Sauvignon Blanc		\$15.00	\$11.25	\$12.00
PRIVATE RESERVE CLUB	PRICES EXPIRE 05/31/2023			
Bernardus 2021 Rosella's Chardonnay		\$50.00	\$37.50	\$40.00
Wrath 2019 115/667 Pinot Noir		\$35.00	\$26.25	\$28.00
Comanche Cellars 2020 Tempranillo		\$34.00	\$25.50	\$27.20

TO ORDER, CALL TOLL-FREE: 888-646-5446  
\*PRICES LISTED REFLECT PRICE PER BOTTLE. NO OTHER DISCOUNTS APPLY.

# TASTING MONTEREY

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



**Missing our view?**  
Check out our live webcam while you sip on some Monterey Wine.

## THE FRENCH-AMERICAN-HUNGARIAN CONNECTION

Why does my wine taste like I'm chewing on an oak tree? Ever found yourself asking this question at some point in your wine journey? Chances are pretty good that you have. It's also likely that you took your inquiry a step further and began to wonder why some wines taste "oakier" than others. A step more would lead you to question how the flavors imparted on wine could differ between new or seasoned oak barrels. And, why oak anyway? Perhaps we should take a closer look...



**History of the Barrel** - One of the earliest historical references to wine barrels comes from our friend Herodotus, the Greek historian, who recorded that the ancient Mesopotamians used barrels to transport wine along the Euphrates River. He noted that palm wood was initially used, however our crafty Mesopotamians soon realized the faults in this material for barrels and began testing different sources.

We know that by the time of the Romans that oak had become a preferred barrel material, and even that Roman vintners were aware that using oak barrels could result in adding new and improved qualities to wine. Centuries later, Robert Mondavi, a pioneer of Californian and U.S. wine production, continued the legacy of experimenting with barrel techniques. Amongst other discoveries, this resulted in his introduction of a Sauvignon Blanc aged in oak, now known as Fumé Blanc.



**More than Storage** - The use of oak in the winemaking process can have major influences on a wine by affecting color, texture, flavor, and tannin structure. Wine can be introduced to oak in either the fermentation or aging stages. Due to lessened exposure and contact, wine that is fermented in oak will receive less of the impact than wine that is aged in it...makes sense, right? But the technical explanation is not so simple- it's actually due to a reaction between the yeasts in the wine and the chemicals in the wood.

But, did you know that a typical 60 gallon barrel can lose a few gallons of wine in the aging phase and that this is not uncommon? It's true, as with the porous nature of an oak barrel small levels of evaporation and oxygenation occur with the wine inside, but not enough to cause oxidation or spoilage. Evaporation actually results in a concentration of the wine's flavors.

Chemical properties of oak also play a role, as mentioned earlier. They interact with the wine and produce those lasting impressions you notice when sipping from your glass. That toastiness you've tasted in wines before? How about vanilla, caramel, cream, toffee, mocha, smoke, spice, coconut, cinnamon, tea, cloves...Yup, all these can derive from a wine's contact with oak.

**Why Oak?** - As it turns out, the answer is fairly simple: Oak just works best! Chestnut, pine, redwood and acacia are other wood types that have been used in the winemaking process either as aging vessels or larger fermentation vats, but none of these seem to offer the water tightness and slightly porous storage that oak does. Plus, oak has unique flavor characteristics that blend with wine so well.

*Continued Inside*

**April Referrals**



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



Follow us on Instagram and Facebook  
@atasteofmonterey

# Monthly Wine Selections

## MISSION TRAIL VINEYARDS - 2018 Friars' Reserve Meritage



Nearly 230 years ago Franciscan friars planted wine grapes in Monterey County. Although these early vineyards are no longer around, they foretold the story of the thriving grape growing industry of today. Mission Trail Vineyards is dedicated to showcasing the promise that Monterey wine country has to offer. Only small lots of hand-crafted wines are produced. The grapes for these wines are selected from choice locations throughout Monterey County. Owners, Ken and Robyn believe wine should be a reflection of the true varietal character with little man-made influences.

The Carmel Valley's terrain and climate is ideal for creating rich, full bodied wines; the Bordeaux varietals are favorites here. Average summer temperatures can reach into the 100's with cool evenings dropping into the low 30's and 40's. This dramatic swing in temperature extends the ripening time and growing season, allowing the grapes a slow maturation process for eventual complexity in the fruit and the wine.

This Meritage is deep garnet in color, with aromas of blackberry, cassis and oak. On the palate, there are initial flavors of plum and blackberry that lead into dark chocolate and cassis, finishing with touches of earth and cedar.

73% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Merlot 13.5% Alcohol Cellar Through 2026  
 Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

## DISTRICT 7 - 2021 Chardonnay



District 7 is all that Monterey as a winegrowing region has to offer. The number refers to the official regional designation within the state of California, but District 7 is much more than just a prime number. Most experts recognize Monterey County as one of the most beautiful and diverse winegrowing regions in the world with complex soils and coastal weather patterns. District 7's winemaking team reaps the benefits of the exceptional fruit we produce, creating wines that are fruit forward, true to varietal character and a delicious reflection of Monterey.

The 2018 Chardonnay is pure Monterey. The aromas are fresh and extroverted with notes of yellow apple, pear and citrus, enhanced by hints of coconut, vanilla and toasty oak. On the palate, it is medium bodied, soft and balanced with bright fruit, hints of butter and a lingering subtle oak finish. The combination of fruit, viscosity and structure ensures this Chardonnay can accompany a wide variety of foods from soft cheeses to roasted chicken or seafood.

100% Chardonnay 13.5% Alcohol Cellar Through 2025  
 Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

## DISTRICT 7 - 2020 Cabernet Sauvignon (Club Red)



The Cabernet Sauvignon combines fruit from two estate vineyards in southern Monterey County. Their Hames Valley Vineyard is located near the border of San Luis Obispo County. Sheltered from the afternoon winds, it possesses the largest diurnal temperature swings in the county. The combination of warm days, crisp nights and an incredibly long growing season makes this an ideal locale for big, tannic reds. Their San Lucas Vineyard is Monterey County's climatic tipping point for Bordeaux red varieties with days that are warm and sunny and nights that are cold and calm.

The 2020 Cabernet Sauvignon is wonderfully dark with aromas and flavors that include blackberry, elderberry and black cherry, with hints of fresh tarragon, vanilla and toasty oak. It is ripe, round and juicy with soft, integrated tannins and a lingering bright black fruit finish. This is ideal with beef and game dishes but also vegetarian fare like mushroom risotto.

100% Cabernet Sauvignon 13.5% Alcohol Cellar Through 2027  
 Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

## JOYCE - 2021 Rosé (Club Blanc)

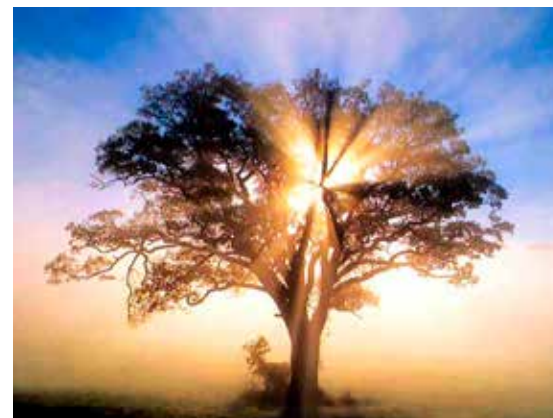


The fruit was harvested from vineyards adjacent to Joyce's estate winery in the Arroyo Seco AVA. This AVA is recognized as having the longest growing season in California. Strong daily winds that bring cool fog from the Monterey Bay force the grapes to spend more time on the vine building flavor and complexity. Extremely rocky well-drained alluvial soils are the base for creating wines processing freshness and minerality.

Fresh and bright, this Rosé is best served poolside. One glass will enliven the senses and refresh the spirit, encouraging even the most timid wallflowers to jump in the deep end. Always the crowd-pleaser, drink this Rosé at brunch for inspiration to seize the day.

50% Mourvedre, 50% Grenache 13.0% Alcohol Cellar Through 2024  
 Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued



**Look to the Trees** - The United States, France, Hungary, Croatia...what do they all have in common? They all have species of oak trees that are used to produce wine barrels.

The way to think of the differences in oak sourcing regions is almost similar to growing grapes for wine. The same way that a grape varietal grown in one place can have noticeable differences from the same grape grown somewhere else is similar for oak trees from different spots of the planet. For example, American oak is regarded as imparting more intense flavor to a wine than French oak and even barrels from different regions of France

offer different characteristics...in fact, in France barrel regions are pretty much divided into specific appellations.

In the United States, the species of oaks most popular for cooperage are white oaks mostly found near the East Coast, but there are some populations in other places of the country used as well.

**Barrels Today** - Oak trees used for barrel production are normally on average a hundred years old when harvested in winter months. One tree can typically provide enough wood for two large barrels (typical size of large wine barrels used for aging are the Bordeaux style at 59 gallons and the Burgundy style at 60 gallons). Let's get out our calculators and see how much wine comes out of 60 gallons...One bottle of wine is 750 ml, or 1/5 of a gallon; therefore 60 gallons will produce 300 bottles of wine (25 cases).

If you traveled to France over the weekend, you would probably remark how a lot of things seem to be more expensive there than in the States...with oak barrels it's the same. American oak barrels cost about half as much as French barrels and other European-produced barrels of good quality are pricey as well, especially considering that a new American oak barrel will easily be in the \$300-\$500 price range. Added to the fact that barrels tend to only impart overtones for about five years, we're talking an investment. After roughly five years, they are mostly considered to be neutral (which doesn't mean "useless," but at this point they have definitely lost the ability to achieve a primary purpose as we don't need barrels to transport our wine down the river like the Mesopotamians anymore).

**Barrel Construction** - After oak staves are split and seasoned, the next step is to heat the staves either over an open fire or with steam to the point that they are pliable and can be bent into the shape of a barrel and clamped together with iron rings.

The downside of using steam instead of fire is that the staves will not receive a "char" that is desired by many winemakers. The char characteristic is very prevalent in some wines...remember that super smoky-finishing red wine you tasted recently? Some winemakers will even order the staves of barrels to be medium or heavily toasted, which will not only enhance the smokiness of a future wine to be aged in the barrel but also can add other characteristics such as spiciness.

**Oak Alternatives** - Oak can be added alternatively by adding oak wood chips or staves into wine that is fermenting or aging in stainless steel tanks. This form of oaking was in the past forbidden in commercial wine production in some countries; however, it is growing in popularity based on the cost of oak barrels and the flexibility offered by it (one can achieve oak characteristics in wine much quicker by introducing chips or staves as opposed to waiting many months or even years for the same effects from barrels). We'll note though that although increasing in popularity, oak alternatives have not proven to impart as everlasting flavors and aromas to wines as those aged in oak barrels.

And so, that's the "oak" of it! We now know the basics of how oak plays into the wines we drink, and we hope this brief tutorial has enhanced your appreciation of the grape. Oak barrels may be the only thing that the adjectives American, French and Hungarian share in common outside of NATO negotiations, but we epicureans now know of their lasting relationship!

**Bryce Ternet**  
 Contributing author for A Taste of Monterey and is the author of three books. See [www.mbryceter.net](http://www.mbryceter.net)

## Entertain with Wine



### Lies You've Been Told About Wine

Part 3

Only "Aged" Wines Are Worth Drinking

Have you ever found yourself in a conversation with someone who acts as if they know everything about wine and what's good/bad to drink?

If so, they may have mentioned the amount of aged wines they have in their cellar and how they can never go back to drinking "fresh" wines. This is a huge misconception and a lie that gets repeated time and time again.

Many wines not only taste incredible fresh but would actually suffer from aging, which is why the idea that wines must be aged to taste good is nothing short of a joke. In most cases, wines that age well will be higher in alcohol and darker in color — Cabernet Sauvignon comes to mind.

There Are No Good Sweet Wines

Whenever someone mentions "sweet" wines, it's almost as if everyone in the room turns around to give them a questionable look. This is in large part a product of the fact that many extremely cheap wines consumed in America are sickeningly sweet, which in and of itself has been enough to turn entire generations of wine lovers against the very concept of sweet wine.

The fact is, some of the finest wines available are produced with the intention of having sweetness be the end result, such as Port and Sherry. Though typically reserved for dessert, there's no reason to think that these wines and their counterparts are "bad" just because they're sweet.