

Tasting Monterey

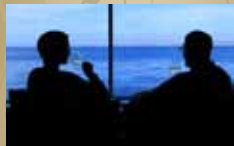
A WINE ENTHUSIAST'S MONTHLY JOURNEY THROUGH MONTEREY'S WINE COUNTRY

COMING EVENTS

Tuesday
May 29, 2014
Bistro Night
 A Taste of Monterey
 Reservation seating at 5:45
 See Inside for details

Friday
May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 2014
Every Fridays Wine Bar
 A Taste of Monterey
 5:00pm-8:00pm*
 Join us every Friday evening from 5pm 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 member tastings after 6:00pm

MAY REFERRALS



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



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Vineyards & Drought Conditions



We've had drought conditions this year here in California...perhaps you've heard. We've had droughts before, and we'll have them again. If you live in other parts of the country, you not only hear about drought in California on the nightly news, but you see the sudden price spikes for agricultural food products such as oranges, lettuce, strawberries, or artichokes. Being the wine connoisseur you are, even if you are still one "in-training," you've of course wondered how drought conditions affect your favorite Monterey County wines. The time is right to broach the subject.



First off, let's address the big audible in this equation - irrigation. In an ideal vineyard situation, irrigation would always be an option whereby a grower could thoughtlessly flip a switch to water vines in times of need. This may indeed be the case for large vineyard holders. However, for most growers, the irrigation question is more challenging, as not all vineyards are irrigated (and some are purposefully not irrigated with the intention of following dry farming techniques). Even for those that can, how much to irrigate is a factor to be considered. Furthermore, extended drought conditions could lead down the road to increased water costs and water use reductions, even for agriculture producers. So flipping the irrigation switch could very well be an economic consideration as well for wineries.

But, let's get to the heart of the matter, and discuss how drought conditions impact the small to medium growers that have limited or no access to irrigation for their vineyards, or who don't have access to massive financing reserves to irrigate away. This category is more typical of wineries here in Monterey county.

I'm sure your initial thought, and rightly so, is that drought conditions are never good for agricultural producers, including for wine grape growers. This is indeed true, as they are not...at least when looking at the long term. In the short term, meaning for a growing season, for example, drought conditions may actually not be so detrimental and even be beneficial for wine grapes. At least, that is the case for growers who want to limit yields and not have mass-produced wines which fall short on the quality charts even in ideal conditions. We don't offer those wines here, but solely for informational purposes, we'll offer that for any product, agricultural or not, where one desires quantity over quality, a steep reduction in a raw material is not going to be attractive.

On the contrary, it is quite a different story for the smaller, more artisan growers and winemakers. In general, grapes require less water than other fruits, especially older vines whose roots tap deep into the soil. And some of the highest quality wines come from vineyards which have been "stressed" through various vineyard management techniques. These techniques are meant to focus a vine's energy into a limited yield of fruit come late summer/early fall harvest time. Such measures include canopy management (trimming leaves off of the vine) in order to limit the amount of fruit eventually to sprout and... yup, you guessed it-restricting the amount of water a vine receives. The balance between when and how much water a vine receives during the growing season is a delicate one, and skilled growers know how to manipulate their vines to produce the best possible fruit.



So, a lack of rain is not always so horrible for wine growers, for a season, but we have to also consider the bigger picture. Irrigation in viticulture is a controversial topic in the wine world. In Old World growing regions, natural rainfall is often considered the only source of water for vineyards and irrigation is either severely frowned-upon, or outright not allowed. However, many New World growing regions, such as California and Australia, have regularly supported the use of irrigation.

Continued Inside

MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

HAHN - 2012 SLH Chardonnay



Hahn's vineyards planted in the Santa Lucia Highlands, experience a long and dry growing season that results in wines with singular depth, complexity and ripe fruit flavors. All four of their SLH vineyards—Lone Oak, Doctor's, Smith and Hook—are planted on a narrow bench at elevations ranging from 200 to 1,200 feet above sea level. Here, morning sun is plentiful and the gravelly, sandy loam soils drain beautifully, helping to create concentrated fruit flavors.

This wine is a thoughtful blend of different Chardonnay clones they've planted in their estate vineyards. After the fruit was handpicked and sorted, the grapes were whole-cluster pressed and fermented entirely in small French oak barrels. Part of the wine also underwent a secondary malolactic fermentation. Hahn then hand-stirred the wine on the lees every three weeks for the nine months. This Chardonnay aged in barrel. Hahn's winemaker, Paul Clifton, selected the barrels he felt best expressed the aromas, flavors and texture of the Santa Lucia Highlands. Hahn SLH Chardonnay is rich and layered, with silky notes of golden apple, mango and buttered toast.

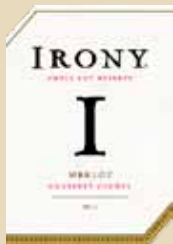
100% Chardonnay

14.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2017

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

IRONY - 2011 Merlot



Irony wines exemplify careful selection of grapes from prized vineyards in Monterey and Napa Valley. They crush and ferment the lots separately and then choose the best for our final blends. These Small Lot Reserve wines proudly display their impressive pedigree while offering a reliable, everyday treat for the discerning wine drinker.

Irony Monterey Merlot offers elegant aromas of ripe blackberry, cherry, cinnamon spice and white pepper with a touch of mint. The palate is rich and full with concentrated layers of black cherry, plum, cocoa and vanilla which lead to an elegant, long finish. Enjoy Irony Merlot paired with rosemary grilled lamb chops, roast chicken, pasta Bolognese and semi-hard cheeses like Gouda and Gruyère.

100% Merlot

13.9% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2018

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

HAHN - 2012 SLH Pinot Noir (Club Red)



The 2012 vintage was among the best for Pinot Noir in recent years. Consistent, moderate temperatures before and during harvest ensured that the grapes were able to ripen gradually on the vine. This long, extended growing season produced fruit with incredible intensity.

To make this SLH Pinot Noir, Hahn's winemaker selected fruit from clones that yielded the most expressive aromas and flavors. After the fruit was hand-picked and sorted, it underwent a three-day cold soak in open top fermenters. Hahn then aged this Pinot Noir for 11 months in a selection of French oak barrels. When the wine was ready to be blended, the winemaker chose the barrels he felt best exemplified the aromas, flavors and structure of the Santa Lucia Highlands. This Pinot Noir offers soft tannins,

delicious plum and cherry aromas and flavors, a hint of allspice and an underpinning of the earth itself. Without a doubt, its defining feature is its irresistibly silky, velvety texture.

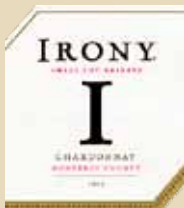
100% Pinot Noir

13.4% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2017

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

IRONY - 2011 Chardonnay (Club Blanc)



The 2011 vintage proved trying and unpredictable but in the end, provided the framework for flavorful, elegant wines. Late spring frosts and very cool summer temperatures contributed to low yields. With flavors developing at low sugar levels, harvest began several weeks late, and the wind was made even narrower by rain and a cold snap in October. However, fruit quality from this vintage remained high, and the cooler weather translated to beautifully balanced wines with vibrant acidity and fresh flavors.

Classic and elegant, Irony Monterey Chardonnay offers enticing aromas of citrus, honey, vanilla and caramel. The palate is rich and full with flavors of apple, lemon-lime and toasty oak leading to a long finish. Enjoy Irony Chardonnay paired with roast chicken, light cheeses, pasta in cream sauce and grilled shrimp.

100% Chardonnay

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2015

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued

From a physiological perspective, the amount of water a grapevine receives affects photosynthesis and therefore vine growth and berry development. While other factors such as climate, humidity, and soils play important roles as well, a typical grape vine requires 25-35 inches of water a year, occurring during the spring and early summer months of the growing season. Those of us in California promise you, our friends on the other side of the country, that we do not typically receive this much rain at this time of the year. The majority of our rainfall occurs in the middle of the winter months, when the vines are dormant.



Thus, some irrigation is a necessity for most vineyards. Although, as mentioned earlier, wine quality can be increased when irrigation is carefully managed and restricted. The optimal situation is for the vine to receive water during the budding and flowering period, but then much less during the ripening period of the grapes. But if the vine is too stressed from lack of water, the opposite of producing quality fruit can occur if the vine essentially shuts down in response. So the availability of irrigation means that if drought conditions emerge, water is available for the vine to maintain a balance between water stress and fruit development.

It really comes down to what a grower once told me: "Farming is hard." Considering that we are just discussing water availability amongst a whole array of other decisions a winery must make when growing their grapes, I have to agree.

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

EVENTS

VINTNER'S BISTRO *Night*

May 29th, 2014

Join us for a spectacular ocean view 3-course dinner at A Taste of Monterey. Customize your culinary experience by selecting a delicious soup or salad, extraordinary main course and finish with a delectable dessert. Choose from a large selection of local wines and beverages available for purchase from our menu. Enjoy learning about the unique and world-class wines of Monterey County from our roaming guest vintner, Joyce Vineyards. Take advantage of special savings on select wines by the bottle to bring home.



SOUP OR SALAD

Creamy Asparagus Soup
Parmesan Shortbread, Lemon Olive Oil

Chilled Papaya Soup
Pisco, Lime, Cardamom

Butter Lettuce and Spring Vegetable Salad

Asparagus, Baby Carrots, Radish, English Peas, Tangerines, Feta, Wheat Berries, White Balsamic Vinaigrette

Spring Panzanella Salad

Baby Arugula, White Beans, Swank Farms Heirloom Tomato, Sourdough, Red Onion, Lemon Basil Vinaigrette

MAIN COURSE

Free Range Chicken Saltimbocca
Mascarpone Polenta, Samfaina, Tomato Jam, Natural Jus

Pan Roasted Bistro Steak
Celery Root and Potato Gratin, Oxtail Croquette, Prune Ketchup, Broccolini, Crispy Shallots

Central Coast Cioppino
Littleneck Clams, PEI Mussels, White Shrimp, Market Fish, Saffron-Roasted Tomato Broth, Garlic Crostini

DESSERT

Triple Chocolate Mousse Cake
Raspberries, Caramel Sauce, Sea Salt

Strawberry Mascarpone Tart
Port Glaze, Basil Ice Cream

Chef's Selection of Ice Creams

\$5 WINE CLUB MEMBER

Special



Chivo Birria Tostada

Slow braised goat, avocado crema, slaw, queso fresco and cilantro on a fried corn tortilla.

Birria is made using a base of dried, roasted peppers. This gives birria both its characteristic savoriness and its variety, as different cooks choose different peppers to use for the broth base. Birria is served by combining a bowl of broth with freshly chopped roasted meat. One method of presentation is for the diner to fill a corn tortilla with meat, onions and cilantro, seasoning with fresh squeezed lime juice, then dip it into the broth before eating it. The broth itself may be eaten with a spoon or by drinking from the bowl. In our case, we will be serving it as an open faced tostada.

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 bay view tasting room on Cannery Row.

JOYCE
VINEYARDS

Only \$29.⁹⁵
Tax, Gratuity & Beverages
Not included

**Call 831-646-5446
for Reservations**



PRIVATE RESERVE
Monterey Wine Club

3 Reserve Wines / Quarterly
For More Info, Call:
(888) 646-5446

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

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 complimentary tastings.

NEWSLETTER STAFF

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

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**

MAY SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 07/31/2014	REGULAR PRICE*	12-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*	6-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*
	Hahn 2012 SLH Chardonnay		\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
	Irony 2011 Merlot		\$14.00	\$10.50	\$11.20
	Hahn 2012 SLH Pinot Noir		\$35.00	\$26.25	\$28.00
	Irony 2011 Chardonnay		\$14.00	\$10.50	\$11.20
APRIL SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 06/30/2014			
	District 7 2011 Pinot Noir		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
	Linessack 2010 Roussanne		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
	Tre Gatti 2011 Baldo Rosso Syrah		\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
	District 7 2011 Chardonnay		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
MARCH SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 05/31/2014			
	Muirwood 2011 Vaquero Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon		\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
	Joyce 2012 Joyce Steele Chardonnay		\$19.00	\$14.25	\$15.20
	Scheid 2010 Triple Layer Red		\$26.00	\$19.50	\$20.80
	Wrath 2012 Ex Anima Chardonnay		\$19.00	\$14.25	\$15.20
PRIVATE RESERVE CLUB		PRICES EXPIRE 05/31/2014			
	Pelerin 2009 Pelio Pinot Noir		\$42.00	\$31.50	\$33.60
	Cima Collina 2012 Tondre Chardonnay		\$50.00	\$37.50	\$40.00
	Travieso 2008 Amaranta Syrah		\$33.00	\$24.75	\$26.40

TO ORDER, CALL TOLL-FREE: 888-646-5446

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