

Tasting Monterey

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



STORE HOURS

A Taste of Monterey
Cannery Row
Sun-Thu 11am-6pm
Fri-Sat 11am-8pm*

Food service begins at
11:30am daily

*No new member tastings
after 6pm

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GRAFTING & CLONING GROWING THE IDEAL GRAPE

You've probably heard the terms "grafting" and "cloning" related to the cultivation of wine grapes but, even if you know the biological definition of each, are you aware of how critically important the techniques are in the grape growing world?

For example, have you ever wondered why you've tasted a wine that is a particular outstanding varietal wine, yet it's produced from a growing area you would have expected something much less from? Yup, this could easily be based on grafting and/or cloning.

Both are common agricultural practices, but each application in the wine world is unique and vital in the overall equation of producing a fine glass of wine. So, what are we really talking about? Pour yourself a glass, and start picturing the two most basic elements of wine: vines and grapes....Now we can begin.

Even though spring hasn't yet arrived, most of us are expectantly awaiting its arrival. And this is also the time of year wine grape growers may be contemplating grafting new vines in their vineyards.

The technical definition of grafting is a horticultural technique where tissues from one plant are combined with another so the two join together. It's actually a very common technique used for horticultural and agricultural purposes. To describe the process in more simplified wine terminology: grafting is a way to blend characteristics of one vine with those of another.



One vine is normally selected for its root qualities and is referred to as the "stock" or "rootstock." The vine combined with it is called the "scion", and is selected for its stem, leaf, flowering and fruit characteristics.

The beneficial advantages of grafting have been understood for centuries; even if it initially sounds like a complicated affair. For example, apple and cherry trees would never have been domesticated if people had not figured out how to graft.

With vineyards, grafting is extremely important as it explains how vintners are able to experiment with vines in order to find the ideal match for differing climates and soil conditions...as even though there can be similarities between different growing regions in the world, no two spots will ever be precisely the same.

Further illustrating this point is that many grapevines aren't actually grown on their own roots, as most are grafted onto different grapevines with stronger rootstocks. So, what's cloning?

Cloning is tied to grafting as the selection of the scion, mentioned earlier, is essentially the concept of cloning grapes. So why would a grower or winemaker want to clone a grape? Well, there are numerous reasons. For example, there are literally hundreds of different clones of Pinot Noir, and each clone has certain qualities different from another.

We, as the ultimate end-tasters of the wines, may not be able to differentiate between the different clones, but the growers/winemakers of those wines would definitely be able to describe to us how that particular clone or clones used in their wine was specifically picked for the grape they wanted to grow and the wine they wanted to produce.

This is certainly no easy choice for them to decide. At times, entire growing regions



Continued Inside

MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

GIFFT - 2015 Red Blend



The Monterey growing region is known for having some of the most varied terroir in all of California, and because of this, we are able to grow all the varieties in our GIFFT Red Blend in the Scheid family's estate vineyards throughout Monterey County. Due to the maritime influence of the Monterey Bay, this area has the longest growing season in California with fog in the morning, winds in the afternoon, and cool nights. The winds that sweep through the vineyards each day also bring a natural cooling effect, allowing extra "hang time" on the vine for the grapes. Increased hang time leads to more intense flavor development and enhanced richness of fruit.

Delightful aromas of ripe cherries, black fruit and vanilla make this red wine blend very approachable. Lively flavors of plum, blueberries and cassis greet the palate while notes of anise linger on the finish. A smooth, silky mouthfeel sits on a medium-bodied, rounded frame that finishes with a touch of sweet oak vanilla.

100% Pinot Noir

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2022

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

NACINA - 2014 Riesling



Every year their grandfather Tudor used to make wine for his friends and family. It's a tradition. The Tudor family has been growing grapes and lavender – and making wine on the Island of Hvar in Croatia – for over 2,000 years. The Tudors began growing grapes in California early in the 1900's and continue to operate one of the largest table grape vineyards in the country. In 1997, Dan began his quest and discovered Monterey County's potential as top-flight winegrowing region. Its vast microclimates and terroir allow for over 40 different grape varieties but it was Pinot Noir that Dan pursued. Dan's first cousin Christian Tudor, committed to preserving the family tradition, teamed up with Dan to start Tudor Wines and create handcrafted wines.

Astonishingly fresh with intense yet delicate notes of melon, honey, and well-spiced ripe grapefruit. Enormous concentration, plush flavors of ripe apricot and pear, perfectly balanced by acidity and long finish.

100% Riesling

12.0% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2018

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

COASTVIEW - 2009 Syrah (Club Red)



Coastview's mission is to faithfully translate the unique character inherent in the Coastview Vineyard. Its limestone and granite soils, 2200 ft. elevation and terraced hillsides yield wine of exceptional character and interest. Their viticultural practices are guided by needs of the vineyard to get the balance of fruit, flavor and a sense of the terroir. The steep hillsides and low vigor soils help naturally balance the vine and create wines of concentration and uncommon interest. The winemaking practices are a combination of classic Bordelaise and Burgundian techniques combined with all the advances in modern enology for consistently high quality and vineyard expression. Coastview uses the very best tools, barrels and knowledge available to honor this amazing site.

In the glass, this Syrah is a deep garnet. The nose offers dark berries that seem to follow the promise made by the deep rich color. On the palate, this wine has good density. It is nimble and bright offering cinnamon notes and nice acidity. It is drinking exceptionally well and offers a graceful example of the results of appropriate aging. This wine is an excellent pairing choice for char-friendly steakhouse offerings and also for dark chocolate.

100% Syrah

13.4% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2019

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

GIFFT - 2016 Pinot Grigio (Club Blanc)



The grapes are picked in the cool, early morning hours, then brought to the winery where they are gently whole-cluster pressed, chilled, and racked clean to a refrigerated stainlesssteel tank. The juice is then slowly fermented in 100% stainless steel at a cool temperature to preserve the bright aromatics and fresh fruit flavors.

GIFFT Pinot Grigio bursts with lively pear and tropical fruits, balanced by crisp acidity and an elegantly refined freshness. Featuring ripe stone fruit and citrus aromas, this wine showcases melon, nectarine and Meyer lemon flavors that finish light and refreshing.

100% Pinot Grigio

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2019

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued



can make the mistake of putting too much faith into an idea and end up growing the wrong clone(s) of certain varietals, thinking they would achieve great success only to later be thoroughly disappointed.

This proved to be historically true in the case of Oregon's Willamette Valley. Initially, growers there planted Pinot Noir clones suited to Californian warmer growing climates and conditions. However, after experiencing disappointing results, growers switched to Burgundian cooler climate clones, which in hindsight probably did have some growers shaking their heads since the climate of

this area of Oregon has much more in common with France's Burgundy region than Sonoma County. The end result has been that Oregon now produces outstanding Burgundian-style Pinots.

Lucky for us, Monterey growers and vintners long ago figured out fantastic Pinot Noir clone matches not only for Monterey County AVAs, but also to a finer detailed degree of grafting different clones on a vineyard by vineyard basis...how horticulturally impressive is that!?

Growers in Monterey County and in the wine regions of the world will continue to strive to try and discover how to ever-improve their wines. Planting new vines will not do this alone, but rather it will be achieved through the wonders of grafting and cloning in the eternal quest to grow the ideal grape. While they experiment and take their nobly wine-stained risks, the rest of us will sit back and wait to savor the future bottled beauties.

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

RECIPE

Chicken and Bacon Shish Kabobs

Ingredients

1/4 cup	soy sauce
1/4 cup	cider vinegar
2 tablespoons	honey
2 tablespoons	canola oil
10	large mushrooms, cut in half
2	green onions, minced
3	skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cut into chunks
1/2 pound	sliced thick cut bacon, cut in half
1 (8 ounce)	can pineapple chunks, drained



Directions

In a large bowl, mix the soy sauce, cider vinegar, honey, canola oil, and green onions. Place the mushrooms and chicken into the mixture, and stir to coat. Cover, and marinate in the refrigerator at least 1 hour.

Preheat grill for high heat.

Remove the mushrooms and chicken from the marinade and shake off excess. Pour the marinade into a small saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 10 minutes; set aside.

Wrap the chicken chunks with bacon, and thread onto skewers so that the bacon is secured. Alternate with mushroom halves and pineapple chunks.

Lightly oil the grill grate. Arrange skewers on the prepared grill. Cook 15 to 20 minutes, brushing occasionally with remaining soy sauce mixture, until bacon is crisp and chicken juices run clear.

VISITING Varietals



PETITE SIRAH

Pronunciation: peh-TEET sih-RAH

Petite Sirah earned its name from the small size of the berries and not the name of the wine. Petite Sirah is one of the biggest, most powerful and tannic wines produced in America. Until the early 1960's, Petite Sirah was one of the most popular grape varieties planted in California. Since that point in time, it's fallen from favor, while the popularity of Cabernet Sauvignon continues to grow. However, over the past decade or so, there has been a resurgence in the popularity of Petite Sirah in California, as well as Monterey County, as plantings have continued to increase.

Petite Sirah is the American name for the Durif grape. Durif takes its name from Dr. François Durif, who created the new grape variety when he successfully crossed Syrah with a grape called Peloursin. At the time the experiments were taking place, Dr. Durif was searching for a way to make Syrah more resistant to powdery mildew. While the new, resulting vine was more resistant to disease, due to the compact way the fruit grew in bunches, the grape clusters are so tight, they were susceptible to bunch rot.

Flavor Profile: Petite Sirah produces inky dark, purple colored wines that offer flavors of black pepper, blackberries, blueberries, spice and licorice. Do not confuse this grape with wine produced from the similarly named Syrah variety. They are not the same grape, and they do not deliver similar taste sensations. Petite Sirah wines are often, massive, intense, chewy, masculine wines that when they are young, provide massive amounts of tannin and high levels of acidity. Wines made from Petite Sirah have the ability to age and improve for decades.

CHEESE

Varietals



TÊTE DE MOINE

Tête de Moine is a type of cheese manufactured in Switzerland. It was invented and initially produced more than eight centuries ago by the monks of the abbey of Bellelay, located in the community of Saicourt, district of Moutier, in the mountainous zone of the Bernese Jura, the French-speaking area of the Canton of Bern.

Traditionally, the cheese is prepared for eating in an unusual way: the cheese is carefully scraped with a knife to produce thin shavings, which is said to help develop the odour and flavour by allowing oxygen to reach more of the surface.

There are two explanations for the origin of the name Tête de Moine, which translates literally as “Monk’s Head”. The name was first documented in the records of Mont-Terrible, a Department established by the French when they annexed the region from 1793 to 1799 at the time of the French Revolution. The first theory is that it is a mocking name bestowed by French occupation soldiers who compared the method of serving the cheese to shaving the top of a skull to create a monk’s tonsure. The second explanation is based on tales from the Jura region which refer to the number of cheeses stored at the cloister “per tonsure”, or per resident monk.

Texts from as far back as 1192[1] attest to the cheese-making skill of the monks of Bellelay. Over time, the Tête de Moine was used by tenant farmers as payment to land owners, as well as figuring in legal settlements, being offered as a gift to the prince-bishops of Basel, and even serving as currency.

Tête de Moine is made from unpasteurized, whole cow’s milk and is a semi-hard cheese. It is cylindrical in shape, with a height typically equal to 70 to 100% of its diameter. The average weight of a Tête de Moine is 850 g, but some specimens can weigh as much as 2.5 kg. It is aged for a minimum of 2½ months on a small spruce plank, and is typically paired with a dry, white wine.

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