

Tasting Monterey

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

STORE HOURS



A Taste of Monterey
Cannery Row
Sun-Thu 11am-7pm*
Fri-Sat 11am-8pm*

Food service begins at
11:30am daily

*No new member tastings
after 6pm

JULY
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Wine with a Burger ???

Yes, you can do it! Summer is finally here. Most of us will feel summer's call to fire up the grill soon. And, chances are pretty good that before long you're going to feel a craving for America's favorite warm weather indulgence: the good old hamburger.

I've actually heard this line uttered before, and I'm sure you have as well: If you insist on having wine with a burger, there's no reason to crack open anything but whatever not-so-pricy red you have available. Of course, the "all-American" way is to have a beer with your burger instead...but let's counter by arguing, and firmly arguing, that there's no need to downgrade your wine selection just because you're serving burgers...and wine is less filling as well! So, let's take a closer look.



For our discussion, we are going to stick with consideration of the traditional principal substance of a classic burger: ground beef. So, if we are just considering beef and bun, we could compare our vino choices to what they would be for a traditional steak. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and even Chardonnay come to mind. But, there aren't too many people that stick with a plain burger, so let's go a step further.



We all know that hamburgers come in many shapes and forms, and this is precisely where you should consider pairing your wine - the "fixins" (toppings). As with other foods (e.g. fish), how you complement your hamburger could be what you remember most about your tasty burger. And, while Cabs and Merlots could still be options, there are many other avenues to explore.

Let's start off with what is likely the most common burger topping or condiment of them all: ketchup (this allows us to also consider tomatoes in the same discussion). Tomatoes are naturally tannic, acidic, and in the form of ketchup, we have sweetness added. Pairing a slightly acidic and/or slightly sweet wine with low tannins, while keeping in mind the backbone of the burger, the beef, could turn out to be a delectable venture. Sangiovese and Aussie-style bright Syrahs are solid choices in the red category. A white such as Albariño or even off-dry Rieslings or Gewürztraminers can be good calls; a semi-dry rosé would likely not disappoint.

Mustard is perpetually popular as well, and keep in mind that mustard comes in many differing forms - yellow, brown, spicy, deli-style...so consider this as well when you pick your wine. Chardonnay can be wonderful with mustard. If you're a barbeque sauce on your burger type, the tangy spice of the sauce could pair nicely with a Zinfandel or a fruity, full-bodied Syrah.

Another thought - how about a slightly chilled red wine? Some traditionalists out there may never consider such a thing, but some red varietals actually are surprisingly nice with a slight chill to them, which will bring out fruitiness in some reds. This is also a bonus for red-lovers, as in hot weather it will be refreshing. Varietals to try include Gamay Noir (as in J.Lohr's Valdiguié and French Beaujolais wines), Merlot and Malbec.

Of course, many don't even consider a burger to be a burger without a slice of melted cheese on it. The addition of cheese may or may not have grandiose impacts on a burger's ultimate showing, all depending on the choice of cheese. For example, a mild cheddar combined with other flavor elements may not really leave much of an impression more than adding some gooeyness to the meat. However, add something powerful like blue cheese, and due consideration is definitely required! Consider that dry-style Rieslings are a nice match to blue cheese in the white category, and red wine lovers may want to reach for a Cab or a Zin.

The addition of sautéed mushrooms will add earthiness to your burger. One can also find earthy characteristics in a multitude of red varietals, especially in some Pinot Noirs, so have

Continued Inside

MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

PARETO'S - 2014 Pinot Noir



The vineyards of Pareto's Estate are located in the Monterey appellation on California's central coast. This area is known for having the longest growing season in California, lasting on average about two weeks longer than other regions. Pareto thanks the early morning fogs and gusty afternoon winds for this fortunate phenomenon – it wreaks havoc on women's hairdos but the grapes love it.

Located in the cool climate region of Monterey, these vineyards are known for foggy mornings and cool afternoon winds that lengthen the growing season allowing the intricate fruit flavors develop. These conditions produce wines of intense varietal character and bright fruit flavors.

Flavors of cherries, plums, vanilla, tobacco and smoke.

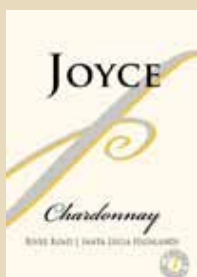
100% Pinot Noir

13.9% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2019

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

JOYCE - 2015 River Road Chardonnay



The Santa Lucia Highlands lies on a southeast facing mountain range consisting of sand and gravelly loam soils. Dramatic maritime influences coupled with long hang time provide ideal conditions for Chardonnay.

These Chardonnay grapes were hand harvested in the cool early morning hours, and then gently whole cluster pressed and transferred to a mix of stainless steel barrels (15%) new French oak (15%), and neutral French oak (70%). The Chardonnay juice was then inoculated and through a slow, cold fermentation, which lasted between 28-36 days. Once primary fermentation was complete, the wine went through 100% malo-lactic fermentation before a small sulfur addition was made and the wine was left to age 'Sur Lie' for 10 months.

In the glass the 2015 Joyce River Road Chardonnay displays white pineapple, mandarin, orange and lemon curd. The mid palate is rich in texture but gains focus through the finish with bright acidity and a hint of racy minerality.

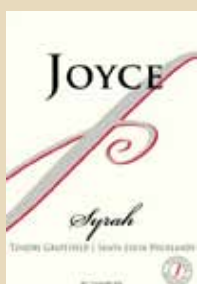
100% Chardonnay

14.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2020

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

JOYCE - 2014 Tondré Syrah (Club Red)



Planted in 1997, the Tondré Grapefield has quickly earned a reputation as one of the top producing vineyard sites in the Santa Lucia Highlands. Protruding southeast facing slopes, strong marine influences and ancient glacial soils consisting of decomposed granite, gravel and sandy loam are the basis for exceptional quality.

These Syrah grapes were hand harvested in the cool early morning hours. 80% of the grapes were destemmed while 20% were kept intact as whole clusters. The grapes were placed in small open top fermenters where they were cold soaked for 45 days before fermentation began naturally. Primary fermentation lasted between 12-14 days before the must was pressed. The wine was then transferred to 100% neutral French oak barrels where it finished malolactic fermentation. Once ML was complete a small sulfur addition was made and the wine was left to age sur lie for 13 months before being bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

In the glass, the 2014 Joyce Tondré Santa Lucia Highlands Syrah shows aromas of blueberry, cranberry and dried herbs. The palate is rich showing blueberry cobbler, baking spice, dried rosemary and sage. The finish is laced with fine tannins and a streak of fresh acidity that frames the wine's elegant and vibrant finish.

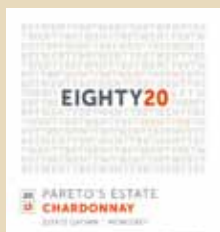
100% Syrah

14.2% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2020

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

PARETO'S - 2015 Chardonnay (Club Blanc)



At Pareto's Estate, their wines are 100% estate grown. Estate grown means that the grapes are grown on their vineyards and are crushed each vintage at their winery. Nobody else gets to touch them. Nobody. Yes, they are control freaks.

Grown predominately in the cool climate area of Monterey, where the cool afternoon winds lengthen the growing season, allowing the intricate fruit flavors to develop while preserving crucial acidity. The result is a crisp, fresh wine with a long, lush, tropical finish.

Citrus and tropical fruit flavors are balanced with light notes of vanilla and toasty oak. The round palate leads into a long finish with a touch of butterscotch.

100% Chardonnay

13.8% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2019

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued

fun and experiment. Adding onions? Whether you grill them first, on their own, makes a huge difference. Grilled onions will caramelize and will exhibit sweetness, while raw onion slices will increase acidity and add to the presence of spice.

Lettuce? It's not even worth a mention on its own, as lettuce's most common taste is that of water, and any wine will taste just fine next to water. Pickles? Actually, if you're having wine with your burger, pickles are one topping you may want to avoid altogether or at least significantly limit. Too much pickle on your burger can rob your palate of the mélange of flavors it may experience otherwise, wine or no wine involved.

So, there we have it. Of course, the most important thing is for you to enjoy whatever wine you personally prefer with your burger. However, the next time you fire up the grill and toss on some burgers, we recommend that you consider the whole sensory package of the hamburger experience before you pop open just any bottle of red wine you happen to have around!

- Bryce Ternet

Contributing author for *A Taste of Monterey* and is the author of three books. See www.mbryceter.net for more.



VISITING Varietals



SYRAH

Pronunciation: Sih-RAH

Let's clear something up right away: Syrah and Shiraz are the exact same wine. When Syrah (Sih-Rah) arrived in Australia from its birthplace in France, Australian winemakers took to calling it Shiraz (Shi-RAZ), instead of the grape's original name, Syrah. We like to chalk this renaming up to the Australian accent and their penchant for making many common words more fun to say, like how they call a barbecue a barbie.

No matter what you call it, Syrah is one of the darkest red wines on the market. Darker than Cabernet Sauvignon, this wine is so dark that if you were to hold a glass of the wine up to the light, you'd have a very hard time seeing through it. Syrah is a wine with a large amount of mouth-drying tannins, and it is known to be full-bodied, which means it feels heavy in your mouth; the wine features flavors such as berries, pepper, tobacco, and even smoked meat. While Syrah is the perfect accompaniment to meat, it really goes well with anything, so drink it with any food you enjoy eating. A great bonus to drinking Syrah is that due to the high level of tannins present in the wine, Syrah has one of the highest level of health-benefiting antioxidants.

Syrah came to prominence in the eighteenth century in the Rhone Valley of France. While many other regions of the country were busy making blends containing several different red grapes, the Northern Rhone set upon creating a red wine solely from Syrah. It was there in the town of Hermitage that Syrah became famous, and still today Syrah from this town fetches some of the highest prices in the world..

RECIPE

Inside-Out Cheeseburger

Why put the cheese on top of the burger when half of it just melts off? Instead, form the burger around the cheese, so you can char the meat and safeguard the more delicate flavors. Use any mixture of hard or semihard cheeses-Emmentaler and Gouda or Asiago and Parmigiano-Reggiano also pair well.

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

¼ cup	shredded Cheddar cheese
¼ cup	shredded Gruyere cheese
1 pound	90% lean ground beef
1 tablespoon	Worcestershire sauce
1 1/2 teaspoons	paprika
¼ teaspoon	freshly ground pepper

Method:

1. Preheat grill to medium-high or preheat the broiler.
2. Combine Cheddar and Gruyere in a small bowl.
3. Gently mix beef, Worcestershire, paprika and pepper in a large bowl, preferably with your hands, without overworking. Shape into 8 thin, 4-inch-wide patties. Mound 2 tablespoons of the cheese mixture on each of 4 patties, leaving a 1/2-inch border. Cover each with one of the remaining patties. Crimp and seal the edges closed.
4. To grill: Lightly oil the grill rack (see Tip below). Grill the stuffed patties over medium-high heat, about 4 minutes per side for medium-well. (Be sure not to press the burgers as they cook or they'll split open and the cheese will ooze out.) To broil: Cover a broiler pan with foil and coat with cooking spray. Broil the stuffed patties in the upper third of the oven, about 4 minutes per side for medium-well. In either case, let the burgers stand for 5 minutes before serving.

To oil a grill rack: Oil a folded paper towel, hold it with tongs and rub it over the rack. (Do not use cooking spray on a hot grill.)



CHEESE

Varietals



AMERICAN CHEESE

"Foul! American cheese is not cheese!", the cheese police cry out. And they have a point. American cheese—even the "fancy" stuff you can get sliced at the deli counter—is not exactly cheese. But here's the thing. Saying "American cheese is not cheese" is like saying "meatloaf is not meat." Just as meatloaf is a product that is made by blending real meat with texture- and flavor-altering ingredients, so American cheese is a product made by blending real cheese with texture- and flavor-altering ingredients. In fact, percentage-wise, there's a good chance that there's more milk and cheese in your American cheese slices than there is meat in your meatloaf!

We're not going to try to convince you that American cheese is the greatest culinary gift this country has bestowed upon the world (it's not). We're not going to try to convince you that American cheese is just as complex in flavor as a great cheddar or Tomme (it isn't). We're not even going to try to convince you that if you don't like American cheese, you probably just haven't had a great cheeseburger or grilled cheese (though you probably haven't). But we are going to try to clear up some misconceptions about what American cheese really is.

The process itself was invented in Switzerland, in an effort to reduce cheese waste; scraps from various batches of cheese could be melted together and formed into a new, delicious product. In 1916, Canadian-American entrepreneur and cheese salesman James Kraft perfected the technique in the US, patented it, and started selling the very first process American cheese. It soon became immensely popular due to its long shelf life and easy shipping. And to all you cheese snobs out there, let's cut a deal, okay? You stop telling me what fancy-pants cheese to put on top of my cheeseburger, and we won't ask you to put American Singles on your cheese plate.

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	Pareto's 2015 Chardonnay	\$14.00	\$10.50	\$11.20
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	Indigené 2013 Philanthropist	\$21.00	\$15.75	\$16.80
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