

# Tasting Monterey

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

**COMING EVENTS**

*Last Fridays Wine Bar*



**November 27**

5:00pm-8:00pm\*  
Join us 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

**NOVEMBER REFERRALS**



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



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## THANKSGIVING WINE

It's Thanksgiving time again and this day of the year dedicated to food and family is a great time to open some Monterey County wines. But which ones? Trying to match the perfect wine with a Thanksgiving spread can truthfully be difficult. The traditional Thanksgiving meal presents a wide array of flavors, challenging even the best sommeliers.

But wine has never been a key component of Thanksgiving fare. There were no wine bottles on the tables of the Pilgrims and Native Americans. However, of course, that doesn't mean that our contemporary culture doesn't consider wine important to a day devoted to gluttony in the company of family. But don't stress about it too much. While it'd be great to have the perfect wine(s) to open, most people are going to be more excited about the moment the turkey is carved.

Trying to pair wines can get tricky for Thanksgiving dinner. Consider the diversity of typical Thanksgiving favorites: roasted poultry, succulent ham, buttery mashed potatoes with creamy gravy, green bean casserole topped with fried onion crisps, breaded stuffing, fruity cranberries, earthy yams, and pumpkin pie. Some of these individual items pose pairing difficulties on their own. Combine them all together and we have a real challenge!

So we recommend you keep the corks in those special occasion bottles. If you have the means and desire, please proceed. But considering how you're going to really have a hard time finding a great fit anyway, for most of us sticking with a few good bottles of wine will be sufficient.

So let's explore which types may be your best bets for both white and red wines.

### Thanksgiving White Wines



Pulling out a Chardonnay is oh so tempting. After all, it tends to be a crowd pleaser. But we recommend you consider something a little different, Gewurztraminer. Yup, that wine varietal that begins with a "G" which is often mispronounced. Gewurztraminer wines are aromatic and slightly spicy, sometimes off-dry with hints of lychees and nutmeg. Often these wines will have sweetness to them in one way or another, but it really works with Thanksgiving based on the wine's general lightness and versatility. Paired with turkey and sage stuffing, sweet potatoes and even pumpkin pie, Gewurztraminer will prove a surprising great partner. Trust us on this one.

Gewurztraminer grows well in cool climates, so Monterey County is a natural home to this varietal originally from the Alsace region of northeast France (which was once part of Germany, explaining the German name).

If you don't have Gewurztraminer on hand, Riesling is another great option. Actually, this is the perfect time to pull out any of those interesting white varietal wines you may have in your rack. Here in Monterey County, our wineries produce quite a few of these different white wines such as Viognier, Pinot Blanc, and Chenin Blanc.

### Thanksgiving Red Wines

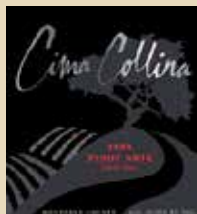
All these rich food flavors must call for the biggest and boldest Cabernet Sauvignon.



*Continued Inside*

# MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

## CIMA COLLINA - 2008 Chula Viña Pinot Noir



The Chula Viña Vineyard is located on a protected bench in the eastern hills overlooking the Salinas Valley, aka, The Gavilan foothills. This vineyard was planted by the Pisoni vineyard crew in 2000 and is a sloping site comprised of decomposed granite. While the cooling fog keeps Chula Viña fruit from ripening too quickly, its protected location assures the strong ocean-influenced winds do not stunt the vines' progress. In combination with the warm afternoon sun and well-drained soil, these factors provide a setting for the cultivation of complex fruit. This is a blend of Dijon 777, 115, Pommard and a special clone from the La Tache region of France that is called "Chula". Each clone offers its own unique distinction: 777 is rich, dark and tannic; Pommard offers classic Pinot structure and cherry aromas; 115 spice; Chula, earthiness and plums.

Purely Pinot Noir in character, the wine shows off black cherry and spice aromas that return in the flavor. Notes of toasted oak, smoke and spice are well integrated into the wine.

100% Pinot Noir

555 Cases Produced

14.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2017

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

## MONTOYA - 2014 Chardonnay



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

This wine is carefully crafted from their best vineyards in the Arroyo Seco appellation of Monterey County. Barrel Fermented and sur lie aged; the Montoya Chardonnay has a golden straw color with fresh fruit aromas of ripe pear and apple. Delicious flavors of stone fruit and melon complemented by nuances of toasty oak come through the finish. The perfect companion to

grilled salmon and sautéed sea bass.

100% Chardonnay

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2018

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

## MONTOYA - 2013 Pinot Noir (Club Red)



The Montoya Pinot Noir 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.

Grapes for the Montoya Pinot Noir were selected from Monterey where rich soils and cool ocean breezes produce delicious, full flavored wines. Montoya's new release offers rich, long lasting flavors of raspberry and black cherry which leads to a smooth finish. This light-bodied classic may be enjoyed immediately or laid away for future enjoyment.

100% Pinot Noir

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2018

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

## CIMA COLLINA - 2013 Chula Viña Chardonnay (Club Blanc)



The 2013 vintage was marvelous, even perfect, weather for Monterey Chardonnay. The weather was relatively dry throughout the year which produced small, well-formed clusters, and the weather was the best one could hope for – not too hot, not too cold – and produced high-quality, flavorful wine grapes with nice acidity.

This wine was tank-fermented – an "unoaked" Chardonnay allows the wine to express its character and subtleties without the masking effect of oak. This process also preserve the freshness and acidity of the wine, creating a versatile and food-friendly libation. It is a pure varietal expression of Chardonnay with flavors of ripe apple, lemon, honeydew melon and a distinct minerality.

100% Chardonnay

269 Cases Produced

14.4% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2016

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

## Cover Article Continued

gnons you have stored in your wine rack...right? Well, no, actually. You'd be best served keeping the corks in those bottles. Mostly because Cabernet Sauvignon is not going to ever really pair well with turkey, but it's also just not recommended as the wine could easily go unnoticed in this mélange of flavors. Instead, think of lighter, fruitier reds for your Thanksgiving feast. Young Pinot Noirs, Zinfandels, Merlots - all would be good choices. Or, how about something different, such as a light, fruity red wine which you would serve slightly chilled? This could work for some Pinot Noirs and definitely works for Beaujolais-style wines.

Hopefully now you have some good ideas for your Thanksgiving Day wine selection. Keep it light and keep it simple. Just let the wine contribute to the festive day's setting instead of being at its forefront. And let's all be thankful this Thanksgiving for having discovered the great bounty of Monterey County wines!

**Bryce Ternet** - is a contributing editor and is the author of: "The Stevenson Plan, A Novel of the Monterey Peninsula."



## VISITING Varietals



### CHARDONNAY

**Pronunciation:** Shar-doh-nay

You don't have to be a Chanel-clad clubhouse member to love Chardonnay. Why? Because Chardonnay is the most diverse - and most planted - white wine grape in the world. It's used for everything from rich Sonoma Chardonnay to the light-and-zesty 'Blanc de Blancs' Champagne. Get to know the wide variety of styles of Chardonnay and pinpoint the one that's perfect for you.

**Flavor Profile:** If you like the idea of butter in your glass, you'll love the classic style of oak-aged Chardonnay wine. On the other hand, if words like "Pinot Grigio" make you feel woozy with love, then your perfect Chardonnay is the unoaked kind. How can a single grape offer such a variety of flavors? Well, in addition to the difference in wine-making (oak vs. no oak), ripeness has a lot to do with flavor. A very ripe Chardonnay will have flavors more towards tropical fruits like pineapple, guava and mango. A barely ripe Chardonnay will have green apple and lemon flavors

**Food Pairing:** Pair Chardonnays in the leaner lighter style with roasted chicken or seafood; the more voluptuous heavily oaked Chardonnays pair well with pasta dishes made with cream or cheese, with lobster or other rich seafood and with Asian dishes that include coconut milk.

## RECIPE

### Stuffing- Stuffed Onions

#### Ingredients

8	small yellow onions (about 2 1/4 lb.)
1 1/2 cups	organic chicken broth, divided
1/2 cup	butter, divided
2	celery ribs, thinly sliced
1/4 cup	finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1 tablespoon	finely chopped fresh sage
2 1/2 cups	fresh French-bread breadcrumbs, toasted
1 teaspoon	kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon	freshly ground black pepper

#### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Cut a thin slice from bottom (rounded end) of each onion, forming a base for onions to stand. Cut 1/2 inch from sprout end of each onion, and discard. Peel onions. Remove and reserve center of each onion, leaving 2 layers of onion as a thick shell. Finely chop 1 cup reserved onion centers. Reserve remaining onion centers for another use, if desired.
2. Place hollowed onions in a 2-qt. baking dish, and add 1 cup broth. Cut 2 Tbsp. butter into 8 pieces, and place 1 piece in each onion. Cover with aluminum foil, and bake at 425° for 25 to 30 minutes or until shells are tender. Remove from oven to a wire rack, and cool 20 minutes.
3. Pour liquid from onions into a measuring cup, and add broth (about 1/4 cup) to equal 1 cup. Reduce oven temperature to 350°.
4. Melt 4 Tbsp. butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat; add celery and 1 cup chopped onion, and sauté 5 minutes or until tender. Stir in parsley and sage, and cook, stirring constantly, 1 minute or until fragrant. Stir in breadcrumbs, salt, pepper, and 1 cup reserved broth mixture. Remove from heat.
5. Fill hollowed onions with stuffing, and place in a shallow 9-inch baking dish or pie plate. Add remaining 1/4 cup broth to pan. Bake at 350° for 30 to 35 minutes or until stuffing is golden brown and thoroughly heated. Transfer to a serving platter. Stir remaining 2 Tbsp. butter into cooking liquid, and spoon over onions.



CHEESE

Varietals



COMTÉ

**Pronunciation:** kohm-TAY

You don't have to be a Chanel-clad Here's one that is perhaps new to you: Comté cheese. This creamy, nutty-tasting French cheese absolutely deserves a spot in your fridge. Here's why!

Comté is a great snacking cheese, whether we're talking an afternoon snack with crackers or as part of a fancy dinner party cheese plate. It has this nutty, earthy flavor and a creamy texture that I really love — it's one of those cheeses that always has me coming back for more.

But I've also found that Comté is a great cheese for cooking. Those same nutty flavors work well in a bowl of mac and cheese, sprinkled over veggies, or folded into a plate of eggs. It's a fairly firm cheese, so it can be sliced, cubed, or grated as needed.

I'll also give Comté bonus points for being long-lasting — a characteristic that always gets bonus points in my kitchen.

Comté is a raw milk cheese made from the milk of pasture-fed cows, and the milk for each round of cheese can only come from within a few miles of the cheese maker. This means that each round of cheese has a very distinct terroir — that certain stamp of flavors and aromas that marks it as coming from a very particular place. Furthermore, the milk is delivered to the cheese maker daily and has to be used immediately, so cheeses also get a seasonal stamp. Summer Comté and winter Comté, Comté from the mountains and Comté from the plains — each will be different and no two wedges will be quite the same.

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	Montoya 2014 Chardonnay	\$14.00	\$10.50	\$11.20
	Montoya 2013 Pinot Noir	\$17.00	\$12.75	\$13.60
	Cima Collina 2013 Chula Viña Chardonnay	\$24.00	\$18.00	\$19.20
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	Marin's 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon	\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
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