

Tasting Monterey

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



NEW FALL STORE HOURS

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

Food service begins at 11:30am daily

Closed Thanksgiving and Christmas day

*No new member tastings after 6pm

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 would 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!

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.

Let's explore which types of wines 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 Grigio, and Rosé.



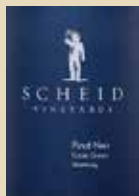
Thanksgiving Red Wines

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

Continued Inside

MONTHLY WINE SELECTIONS

SCHEID VINEYARDS - 2014 Pinot Noir



More than any other varietal, Pinot Noir expresses the nuances of site, growing conditions and clonal selection. At Scheid, they grow 17 different Pinot Noir clones on six different vineyards, all located within the cool climate area of Soledad and Greenfield. What does it mean by clone? Grapevines in general, and Pinot Noir vines in particular, are genetically unstable and can mutate slightly over time. Each grape variety, therefore, is made up of many subtypes, called clones. These clones can result in different flavors, intensity, color, etc. Crafting multiple small lots of Pinot Noir wine each vintage allows Scheid to choose the most distinctive barrels and showcase them in their Estate Grown Pinot Noir. The 2014 vintage is a blend of fruit from four of Scheid's estate vineyards.

Loads of bright red fruit aromas, vibrant fresh raspberry and juicy cherry flavors lead the way. Accents of delicate rose petal, warm vanilla, soft oak spice, and graceful tannins wrap up in a long, supple finish.

100% Pinot Noir

14.2% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2020

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

MISSION TRAIL VINEYARDS - 2017 Chardonnay



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.

This wine was specifically crafted to highlight its complexity in all realms; aroma, flavor and mouthfeel. It is a remarkable and exotic Chardonnay, highlighting apple, pear, citrus, orange blossom and jasmine. It was bottled unaltered, contributing to a creamy mid-palate and a lingering finish.

100% Chardonnay

14.3% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2022

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

LINE SHACK - 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon (Club Red)



Founded in 2003, Line Shack Winery was the realization of over two decades of Balentine family winemaking experience. With this venture, owner/winemaker team Bob and Daphne Balentine set out to produce affordable, world-class wines from California's Central Coast, particularly from the new San Antonio Valley AVA in Southern Monterey County. The San Antonio Valley is the site of California's second mission, Mission San Antonio, where some of the first wine grapes were ever planted in California. This region provides warm days followed by cool nights, enabling fruit to achieve extended hang time and maximize its true varietal characteristics.

Jammy and fruit forward in style with flavors of black cherry, currants & red licorice and aromas of mocha, leather, violets & vanilla. Medium tannins and a toasty lingering finish.

85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Petite Sirah

14.8% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2024

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

SCHEID VINEYARDS - 2017 Sauvignon Blanc (Club Blanc)



Here's what Scheid thinks: "Chardonnay can be enhanced by wearing a bit of oak, but Sauvignon Blanc should be buck-naked. It is the unoaked, let-it-all-hang-out style of Sauv Blanc that allows her sassiness and vivacity to shine. She's delish as an apéritif, crazy food-friendly and flavorful as all get-out." They craft their Sauvignon Blanc to be a classic Monterey style – not New Zealand, not Napa, and certainly not a wannabe Chardonnay.

The 2017 vintage has a pale straw color with an expressive nose of zesty citrus, green apple, and delicate white flowers. With a lively array of melon, guava and citrus flavors that glide across the palate and a crisp acidity. Scheid's Sauvignon Blanc is crafted to showcase its sassiness and vivacity.

100% Sauvignon Blanc

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2022

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued

Sauvignons 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 Monterey 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

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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NOVEMBER SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 01/31/2018	REGULAR PRICE*	12-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*	6-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*
	Scheid Vineyards 2014 Pinot Noir		\$36.00	\$27.00	\$28.80
	Mission Trail Vineyards 2017 Chardonnay		\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
	Lineshack 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
	Scheid Vineyards 2017 Sauvignon Blanc		\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
OCTOBER SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 12/31/2018			
	Joyce 2016 Tondré Syrah		\$28.00	\$21.00	\$22.40
	Noble Vines 2017 152 Pinot Grigio		\$14.00	\$10.50	\$11.20
	Ryder 2015 Cuvée 348 Merlot		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
	Joyce 2016 Submarine Canyon Chardonnay		\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
SEPTEMBER SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 11/30/2018			
	Muirwood 2015 Vaquero Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon		\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
	District 7 2016 Sauvignon Blanc		\$16.00	\$12.00	\$12.80
	District 7 2016 Pinot Noir		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
	Muirwood 2016 Vineyards Zanetta Vineyard Reserve Chardonnay		\$22.00	\$16.50	\$17.60
PRIVATE RESERVE CLUB		PRICES EXPIRE 11/30/2018			
	Scheid 2012 Reserve Claret		\$65.00	\$48.75	\$52.00
	Mer Soleil 2016 Reserve SLH Chardonnay		\$32.00	\$24.00	\$25.60
	Kori 2013 SLH Pinot Noir		\$40.00	\$30.00	\$32.00

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