

Tasting Monterey

A WINE ENTHUSIAST'S QUARTERLY 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

SPRING REFERRALS



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



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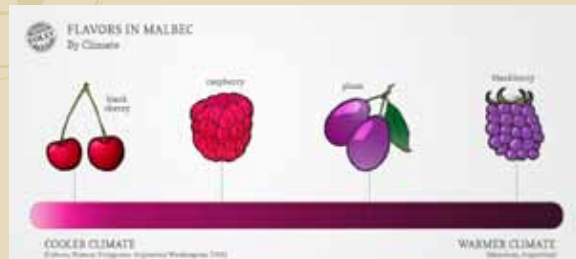
The Allure of Malbec

Non-traditional varietal wines are kind of in these days... as you've probably noticed. Shelves are stocked with not just Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, or red blends, but with varietals many people are not so familiar with. This includes varietals such as Mourvedre, Tempranillo, Cabernet Franc, Grenache, and...Malbec.

In its homeland of France, one would never see Malbec as a varietal wine. Sacrebleu! Quelle horreur of a thought! But here in California (including Monterey County) and Argentina, Malbec varietal wines are more than proving themselves. In fact, whereas just a few years ago Malbec was a lesser known varietal, it is quickly growing in popularity and now stands amongst its Bordeaux brothers of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.

Malbec's fruit is thin-skinned, robust in tannins, colored inky dark, sun-loving, and fragile to grow...quite a combination in the viticultural world. Wines produced from Malbec are dark and rich with boldly purple hues. Malbec wines typically have intense aromas of dark berries, cherries, and plums.

As for the grape's origins, a popularly held belief is that the Malbec grape originated in the northern Burgundy region of France and that it was originally named Côt. However, the grape found its traditional home southwest of Burgundy in the Bordeaux region, where it is commonly blended primarily with famed Bordeaux red varietals Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, and with lesser-known Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, or Carmenère.



The year 1956 was fateful for the Malbec grape as it was the year that France suffered from a particularly nasty growing season laced with killer frost that decimated 75% of the notoriously frost-sensitive Malbec crop...75%! This proved to be detrimental to Malbec's sustained popularity in Bordeaux's vineyards; however, in the Cahors region, slightly southeast of Bordeaux, the grape was replanted with a fury and it continues to be the dominant varietal of the region. In fact, Cahors is the only AOC (roughly our equivalent of AVA) requiring Malbec in its red wines—70% minimum. Cahors' Malbecs are often blended with Merlot or Tannat in order to round out the region's infamously robust wines. Malbec continues to be grown and blended into succulent Bordeaux blends, however less so as in decades past. But Malbec was not content to rest in Europe and like a curious traveler the grape made its way across the Atlantic and landed in both North and South American vineyards.

Argentina has arguably become Malbec's truest home (no disrespect to la France!). The grape literally thrives there and it's quite possible that the grape found its favorite terroir in Argentina. While Malbec has lost fame and acreage in France in the last fifty years, it has experienced the opposite in Argentina, where it is the most widely-planted red grape varietal and has become something of a national grape.

Closer to home, Malbec is gaining in popularity in California's wine growing regions, Monterey included.



Continued Inside

RESERVE WINE SELECTIONS

HELLER ESTATE - 2013 *Malbec*



Vintage: The 2013 growing season marked the second solid year of serious drought conditions across California with Carmel Valley seeing under 5 inches of rainfall. Otherwise great growing season with little to no frost events in the spring and a long, hot summer, the limited rainfall severely impacted Heller's overall yields in most every variety. Albeit sparse, the quality of what was harvested was one of the best in 10 years. Well ripened and concentrated on flavor due to the small berry size which increased ratio of skin and seeds to pulp.

Vineyard: Overlooking the Cachagua region of Carmel Valley, ("Cachagua" is believed to be an Indian derivative of the French "cacher" and the Spanish "agua" – "hidden waters"), and framed by the dramatic surrounding hills, lie the beautiful vineyards of the Heller Estate Organic Vineyards. The vineyards are planted with Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Pinot Noir, Petite

Sirah, Malbec and Petit Verdot at an altitude of 1200 – 1500 feet.

Tasting Notes: Nicely layered, integrated nose with fruit forward notes of fresh picked plums and blackberries as well as subtler notes freshly tilled earth and bay laurel. Bright explosive mouth feel with tart cherry, plum and cassis. It has medium body with soft tannins and a crisp fruity finish.

Heller Estate
2013 Malbec

Alcohol
15.4%

AVA
Carmel Valley

Composition
100% Malbec

Cases Produced
134

Aging Potential
7-8 years

STOKES' GHOST - 2014 *Petite Sirah*



Story: James Stokes was a British sailor who jumped ship in Monterey in 1833, passing himself off as a doctor with medicine stolen from the boat. Despite killing a significant number of patients, Stokes was appointed personal physician to Governor Jose Figueroa. Within a year, the governor was dead. Stokes' sons confronted him over his crimes and he ingested poison, falling lifeless at their feet. The adobe home in which Stokes lived still stands and every so often a man dressed in 1800s garb is seen climbing the stairs and passing through walls.

Vineyard & Winemaking: The Petite Sirah grapes in this wine were harvested at night in the southernmost reaches of the Monterey appellation, an ideal location for growing this dramatic, heart-stopping variety. Upon arrival to the winery, the grapes were crushed and fermented in small lots to extract the full flavors and tannin structure for which Petite Sirah is so well known. The wine was then pressed and racked at dryness for oak aging.

Tasting Notes: Inky and dark, this Petite Sirah is brimming with black cherries, blackberries and cassis flavors. Violet notes and hints of white pepper enchant while intense, jammy fruit stains the teeth. Stokes' Ghost is full-bodied with balanced tannins and a finish that lingers on the palate. This rich, deep wine is just what the doctor ordered.

Stokes' Ghost
2014 Petite Sirah

Alcohol
14.0%

AVA
Monterey

Composition
100% Petite Sirah

Cases Produced
199

Aging Potential
7-8 years

FOLKTALE WINERY - 2015 *Pinot Noir*



Winery: In 2015, a band of artists, craftspeople, and lovers of life brought their wandering imaginations and lofty aspirations to a magical piece of land in Carmel, California. Out in the sunny valley, they cultivated grapevines and gardens to craft beautiful wines and experiences to delight the senses. They named this place Folktale Winery & Vineyards. Folktale was inspired by the idea that in every great bottle of wine, there is a story. It is filled with uniqueness of place, a year of sun and rain, and the art and craft of winemaking. The story is about their people, their guests, and their passion. This is a love story, and the best love stories never end.

Vineyard: Folktale set out to make a Pinot Noir that showcases the flavor and complexity of Monterey County wine. To do this, we utilized fruit from three different vineyards, all of which are in the Arroyo Seco AVA. Misson Ranch is located on a hill with rich, loamy soils that provides minerality. The Francioni-Griva vineyard is more exposed to the wind, creating harsher growing conditions that produces small, concentrated, flavorful berries. The Cedar Lane vineyard is tucked into the Arroyo Seco valley, warm and insulated from the wind. This blend of terroir features minerality from Mission Ranch, warm, ripe character from Cedar Lane, and complexity from Francioni-Griva. All three vineyards are farmed and harvested sustainably.

Tasting Notes: This Pinot Noir is the essence of the Arroyo Seco in a bottle. Its rich and complex characters should be given an opportunity to open up by swirling in the glass or decanting. Rich mineral notes begin the bouquet with slate and graphite, soon opening to rich notes of black cherry, cola, and soft earth. Hints of light black pepper, leather, and vanilla balance everything out. On the palate, bright and lively acid is balanced by a nice minerality, leading to a long, rich finish. This wine is exceptional on its own, or paired with your favorite hard rind cheese, mushroom dish, or dark chocolate.

Folktale
2015
Pinot Noir

Alcohol
14.5%

AVA
Arroyo Seco

Composition
100% Pinot Noir

Cases Produced
1,140

Aging Potential
5-6 years

Cover Article Continued



Since 1995, the acreage of planted Malbec grapes throughout the state has increased by an estimated 800%!

The Malbec grape remains largely used as a blending grape. It is globally popular as an addition to Bordeaux-style blends with its color, body, and depth; but the grape has seen a resurgence in recent years for its use as a single-varietal wine and continues to catch the attention of wine-makers and wine-drinkers alike. For instance, our showcased Malbec from Heller Estate Vineyards is sure to awaken your palate. It also proves that Carmel Valley presents the proper terroir to pull

it off (which is not actually the most surprising, as we've known some of our best wineries have been sourcing other outstanding Bordeaux reds from this AVA.)

Enjoying a nice glass of Malbec on its own may not be the preference for some, as it can be overwhelming to tender palates. If so, hold off until you have a hearty meal in front of you to complement your bold glass of Malbec. The French are renowned for their intrinsic ability to pair wine with an appropriate corresponding dish; the Argentines have their own noble traditions with regards to their "nationalized" grape. Order a steak in Buenos Aires and a glass of red wine, and it will assuredly be a glass of dark Malbec that is poured for you. Whether you choose to pair it with food, or enjoy it on its own, we hope you enjoy this Monterey County Malbec!

RECIPE

Spicy Rapid Roast Chicken

Ingredients

- 1 (3 pound) whole chicken
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Directions

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F.

Rinse chicken thoroughly inside and out under cold running water and remove all fat. Pat dry with paper towels.

Put chicken into a small baking pan. Rub with olive oil. Mix the salt, pepper, oregano, basil, paprika and cayenne pepper together and sprinkle over chicken.

Roast the chicken in the preheated oven for 20 minutes. Lower the oven to 400 degrees F and continue roasting to a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees F, about 40 minutes more. Let cool 10 to 15 minutes and serve.



VISITING Varietals



SANGIOVESE

Pronunciation: san-joh-VAY-zeh

Sangiovese (or Nielluccio in Corsica), a dark-berried vine, is the most widely planted grape variety in Italy. Virtually synonymous with the red wines of Tuscany, and all the romanticism that goes with the territory, Sangiovese is the core constituent in some of the great names in Italian wine. Italy's love affair with Sangiovese – and indeed the world's – is generations old, though recent grapevine research suggests the variety is not as ancient as once thought.

At the dawn of the 21st Century, Sangiovese equated to roughly one in every 10 vines on the Italian peninsula. The quality of Sangiovese wine can be notoriously variable but, in the 1980s, drastically improved winemaking techniques saw a significant shift toward more quality-oriented releases. Sangiovese has numerous clones and is consequently known by many synonyms in its native Italy.

Good-quality Sangiovese is prized for its high acid, firm tannins and balanced nature. Savory flavors of dark cherries and black stonefruit are characteristic, and may be backed by secondary notes of tomato leaf and dried herbs. The use of oak has become more popular and this coaxes richer flavors from the grapes, tending toward plum and wild raspberry.

In Tuscany, Sangiovese is the sole grape variety permitted in the prestigious Brunello di Montalcino DOCG and provides the backbone to Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and the popular wines of Chianti. One of Sangiovese's more modern incarnations is in the so-called "Super Tuscans", which are made under the Toscana IGT category. These wines allow winemakers more freedom to blend indigenous Italian grapes (principally Sangiovese) with Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Merlot.

CHEESE

Varietals



MAHÓN

Pronunciation: mah-HONE

Mahon is a Spanish cheese from one of the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean, Minorca. Although widely exported, many people aren't familiar with Mahon. Next time you go into a cheese shop, take a break from the other famous Spanish cheese (Manchego) and ask for Mahon (pronounced mah-HONE) instead.

Mahon is made from cow's milk. Both raw and pasteurized versions are sold, although the pasteurized tends to be less flavorful, so keep an eye out for raw milk versions.

Young Mahon (aged less than 4 months) is semi-firm and mild. The cheese can be buttery, tangy and salty. Wheels of Mahon that have been aged 4 months or more take on a saltier, herbal, more complex flavor and a noticeably tangy finish. Wheels that are aged for a year or more have a texture similar to Parmesan and an intense caramelized, salty flavor.

Mahon has a natural rind. Young wheels of Mahon (and, usually, pasteurized versions) have rinds that are an eye-catching orange color. As the cheese ages, the color of the rind fades to gold, brown or rust colored. The shape of the cheese is square, with rounded edges.

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MIX & MATCH

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PRIVATE RESERVE CLUB	PRICES EXPIRE 05/31/2018	REGULAR PRICE*	12-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*	6-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*
 Heller Estate 2013 Malbec		\$47.00	\$35.25	\$37.60
 Stokes' Ghost 2014 Petite Sirah		\$35.00	\$26.25	\$28.00
 Folktale Winery 2015 Pinot Noir		\$45.00	\$33.75	\$36.00
MARCH SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 05/31/2018		
 Ryder Estate 2015 Cuvée 348 Cabernet Sauvignon		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
 Marin's Vineyard 2016 Viognier		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
 DeTierra Vineyard 2014 Puzzler		\$28.00	\$21.00	\$22.40
 Ryder Estate 2015 Estate Cuvée 348 Chardonnay		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
FEBRUARY SELECTIONS		PRICES EXPIRE 04/30/2018		
 Craftwork 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
 Hahn 2016 SLH Chardonnay		\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
 Hahn 2016 SLH Pinot Noir		\$30.00	\$22.50	\$24.00
 Craftwork 2016 Sauvignon Blanc		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
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 Pierce Ranch Vineyards 2016 Albariño		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
 Joyce Vineyards 2014 Estate Pinot noir		\$40.00	\$30.00	\$32.00
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