

Tasting Monterey

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

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Aromas & Bouquet

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE

When you're wine tasting, you undoubtedly hear the terms aroma and bouquet tossed around. You've perhaps even considered them to be one in the same, as they are used so interchangeably. And, while they are indeed related, there is a distinct difference between the two.

Before we address this difference, let's briefly review a couple of overarching topics. First off, why does wine have such unique scents to begin with? The answer to this question is rooted in biology: it's believed that aromatic compounds are tools that aide in a vine's survival by attracting insects to assist in pollination and birds and other animals to eat the berries and disperse seeds.

This same trick seems to have attracted Homosapiens as well! Our sense of smell and detection of aromas when we drink wine is in fact how we taste wine; the flavors each of us recognize and individually distinguish determines if we are particularly fond of a specific wine or not. All of those flavors you detect in a wine, whether it be fruity, floral, earthy, woody, herbal, vegetal or mineral qualities are all perceived through what we detect with our combined olfactory senses.

And, yes, every individual's sense of smell and palate differs, and each of us may explain a similar flavor differently. This explains why two people sampling the same wine may describe aromas they perceive differently.

Wine aromas can be broken down into three main categories: primary, secondary and tertiary aromas. Primary aromas are associated with a specific grape varietal used to produce a wine, often called "varietal aromas." Secondary aromas are developed during the process of pre-fermentation and fermentation and are referred to as "vinous aromas." Lastly, tertiary aromas develop during the post-fermentation phase in the wine-making process when the wine is maturing either in a barrel or later in a bottle.

In official wine terminology, the primary and secondary aromas are really the only actual "aromas," and tertiary aromas are actually considered to be a wine's "bouquet." So, an easy way to think of it is that aromas are associated with the wine before its aged or bottled. Any scents/flavors acquired after that due to changes in the wine's chemistry, imparted scents from aging material (e.g. oak barrels) are all part of a wine's bouquet. The process of the wine aging first in barrels and then later in bottles is in fact blending aromas to make new aromas, and this is also casually referred to at times as creating a wine's "perfume."



Of course, this explains why a premium wine that has been allowed to sufficiently age will offer a complex bouquet and a young, immature wine will be lacking in bouquet. Developing a bouquet takes time and is an evolution; this explains why you've heard that a bottle of wine will never taste precisely the same as one identical to it if you open them at different times. We do not mean to say that a wine is boring while it is young. In fact, during the fermentation process and immediately afterward at the start of its creation, a wine's overall aromas change more rapidly than at any other point during its existence.

While we're talking tasting wine, let's mention that wine served at warmer temperatures will offer more detectable aromas than wine that's served cooler. And, that person at the wine bar that loves to over-exaggerate their wine-swirling by claiming that they want to "get some air into the wine" to open it up? Well...they are actually not wrong at all, even if they are perhaps a little over-zealous. Aerating a wine will certainly do good things to it, and don't be at all afraid to use your decanters at home that are patiently awaiting your attention.

Professional wine-tasters will often smell a wine before they swirl and then sniff again, as some subtle aromas can be overwhelmed with rapid aeration. And, it's actually recommended to take a few quick sniffs rather than one prolonged one, as your olfactory senses will be more likely to pick up differing scents in this manner.

Continued Inside

RESERVE WINE SELECTIONS

JOULLIAN - 2015 Roger Rose Chardonnay



Winery: Joullian Vineyards was created by the Joullian and Sias families of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, with the goal of producing estate-crafted wines with the complexity, finesse and ageability characteristic of the finest wines of the world. Recognizing the need for estate control, the partnership embarked upon a long-term plan and soon engaged Ridge Watson, with international winemaking experience, to seek and develop the unique combination of land, vineyards and winery facilities necessary for fine wine production.

Winemaking: The wine was barrel fermented with multiple Burgundian yeast strains and they encouraged simultaneous malolactic fermentation in half the wine to minimize one dimensional butterscotch-like flavors and boost natural fruit, spice, texture and vineyards "terroir" characteristics. They use only tight grained French oak barrels from stave wood that is cured 3 years to reduce overt "oakiness" while enhancing bouquet, fruit, typicity and mouth feel. The 2015 Chardonnay is simply a delicious combination of experienced grape growers, winemakers, and coopers keeping quality foremost in mind.

Tasting Notes: Brilliant, straw-gold color. Vibrant, perfumy Asian pear, Fuji apple, citrus blossom and roasted grain-hazelnut perfume the nose. Ripe lychee, Fuji apple, pear and white nectarine flavors melt into a "silky" textured mid-palate that finishes with nuances of crème brulee and a perfectly toasted baguette.

Joullian
2015 Roger Rose
Chardonnay

Alcohol
14.2%

AVA
Arroyo Seco

Composition
100% Chardonnay

Cases Produced
175

Aging Potential
5-6 years

TUDOR - 2013 The Highlands Project Pinot Noir



Winery & Vineyard: Nacina means "The Way" in Croatian. The Tudor family has been growing grapes on the Dalmatian Coast's island of Hvar for hundreds of years. In 1917 Dan "Dinko" Tudor boarded a steamer from the Istria Peninsula to Ellis Island, NYC. Settling in Delano, California he followed his passion of growing table grapes building one of the largest vineyard operations by the 1960's. First cousins, Christian Tudor and Dan Tudor started Tudor Wines in 2000. This Nacina wine is a tribute to a tradition of always following one's own path and passion in life.

Winemaking: 2013 was a long cool growing season allowing the pinot noir to retain its acidity while developing deeply complex flavors. Fermented in open top tanks and punched down by hand the perfect balance of tannin and fruit extraction is achieved. This wine will continue to develop in the bottle for several years. Enjoy with a wide variety of foods, including rich and savory French and German dishes.

Tasting Notes: Rich with dense, expressive dark berry, spice, toasty oak with cedar and cinnamon notes. This pure pinot shows mid palate intensity and a long full range of deep, persistent flavors.

Tudor
2013 The Highlands
Project Pinot Noir

Alcohol
13.4%

AVA
Santa Lucia Highlands

Composition
100% Pinot Noir

Cases Produced
1,000

Aging Potential
6-7 years

SCHEID - 2011 Reserve Claret



Winemaking: Upon delivery to the winery, the grapes were destemmed, crushed, and fermented in small lots in open top fermenters. Over the next two weeks, the firm cap of skins and seeds that bubble up and form on the surface during red fermentation was gently punched down two times a day. Punching down gives the skins as much contact with the fermenting wine as possible, allowing the color and the phenols from the skins to be transferred to the wine, resulting in rich and complex tannins. The varieties were barreled separately into small oak barrels and aged 34 months before bottling. Throughout the aging process, each barrel was checked weekly and only the most highly rated barrels made it into the finished blend. The final selection was bottled unfiltered to preserve the tannin structure and aromatics.

After bottling, the wine was laid down for an additional 26 months before release.

Vineyard: The vineyard rows for each of the five varieties are chosen and marked at the beginning of the farm year, but Scheid hedge their bets by designating far more for the Claret program than they actually need. These rows are given first-class attention throughout the growing season. Each variety is handpicked at optimum ripeness and maturity and several different lots of each variety are made, often from different vineyards. This gives them a range of options and the luxury of choosing only the very best for inclusion in the final Reserve Claret.

Tasting Notes: The 2011 Claret is a sophisticated assemblage characterized by concentrated flavors of black currants and ripe plums with notes of leather and cedar. The dense flavors and balanced tannins of this full-bodied wine integrate perfectly for a long, layered finish. Drinking beautifully now, the 2011 is built for cellaring and will continue to develop over the next decade or more.

Scheid
2011 Reserve Claret

Alcohol
14.5%

AVA
Monterey

Composition
40% Cabernet
Sauvignon, 29% Petit
Verdot, 13% Cabernet
Franc, 9% Merlot, 9%
Malbec

Cases Produced
550

Aging Potential
8-10 years

Cover Article Continued



So, what are typical primary and secondary aromas that we notice in certain wines? There is grassiness and herbs in Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc. Floral aromas are often associated with Riesling and Gewürztraminer. Berries are commonly detected in many red wine varieties; black pepper/spice is also a primary aroma in some. Citrus elements are common in many white wines.

Typical tertiary aromas, which we now know to refer to as "bouquet characteristics" as they develop in the post-fermentation process, include: mushroom, caramel, coffee, leather, smoke, prune, toast, roasted nuts, smoke, butter, chocolate and cedar. A few aromas included on this list are direct results of a wine's contact with oak during the aging process prior to bottling. Can you guess which ones?

We would be remiss to not also address another term that is often lumped together with any discussion of aromas that is not so pleasant to our sense of smell and taste. This would be the subject of odors, which are scents perceived as unpleasant and can also indicate a fault in a wine. Vegetal aromas were previously mentioned, whose presence in a wine's presentation do not overtly signal a fault, but too much veggie in a wine is rarely perceived as beneficial, very rarely.

You'll often hear a winemaker say that while they have a vintage bottled, they are holding off on releasing it as long as they can. For those eager to try their new exciting-sounding wine, it may at first be confusing to hear that a winemaker doesn't want their wine to be sampled just yet. However, keep in mind that the winemaker is only trying to safeguard their work- they want their wine to be given a chance to develop as much as possible before being opened.

As mentioned earlier, unless they are of spectacular quality, young wines will lack in bouquet. Mass produced wines are not intended to offer endearing bouquets and are designed to be enjoyed for what they are; not having this element present in a wine envisioned to offer a flourishing bouquet is a grave injustice! A winemaker, after all, is a bit of an artist who wants their best work on display.

RECIPE

Garlic Prime Rib

Ingredients

| | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 (10 pound) | prime rib roast |
| 10 | cloves garlic, minced |
| 2 | tablespoons olive oil |
| 2 | teaspoons salt |
| 2 | teaspoons ground black pepper |
| 2 | teaspoons dried thyme |

Directions

Place the roast in a roasting pan with the fatty side up. In a small bowl, mix together the garlic, olive oil, salt, pepper and thyme. Spread the mixture over the fatty layer of the roast, and let the roast sit out until it is at room temperature, no longer than 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 500 degrees F (260 degrees C).

Bake the roast for 20 minutes in the preheated oven, then reduce the temperature to 325 degrees F (165 degrees C), and continue roasting for an additional 60 to 75 minutes. The internal temperature of the roast should be at 135 degrees F (57 degrees C) for medium rare.

Allow the roast to rest for 10 or 15 minutes before carving so the meat can retain its juices.



VISITING Varietals



CABERNET FRANC

Pronunciation:
KA-behr-nay FRAHN

Cabernet Franc is a black-skinned French wine grape variety grown in most wine producing nations. The variety is most famously known as the third grape of Bordeaux and can be found in many of the world's top Bordeaux Blend wines. Cabernet Franc most commonly appears in blended red wines, where it adds herbaceous accents of tobacco and dark spice.

Cabernet Franc is commonly compared to Cabernet Sauvignon, which is not without justification; the Cabernet Sauvignon variety is the result of a cross between Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc. (Recent DNA profiling has also shown that Cabernet Franc is also one of Merlot's parents). But in the vineyard, Cabernet Franc ripens at least a week earlier than Cabernet Sauvignon. While it has thinner skin and lower acidity, it is also known for its hardiness and often grown as an "insurance" grape.

Cabernet Franc prefers cool, inland climates such as the Loire Valley. The towns of Chinon and Saumur are important bastions of varietal Cabernet Franc wines, which are prized for their aromas of ripe berry and sweet spices. Lighter examples from these appellations generally exhibit graphite and red licorice notes, with darker wines showing more cigar and leather aromas.

Outside France, Cabernet Franc is grown in Italy, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and the Americas. In Canada, Cabernet Franc is produced as a dry red wine, but perhaps more interestingly as an icewine in Ontario. Further south, in the United States, it is grown in California, Washington and Long Island, frequently under the Meritage banner. Argentina and Chile also produce limited quantities of varietal Cabernet Franc wine.

CHEESE

Varietals



MANCHEGO

Pronunciation: man-CHAY-go

Manchego is a cheese made in the La Mancha region of Spain from the milk of sheep of the manchega breed. Official manchego cheese is to be aged for between 60 days and two year.

Manchego has a firm and compact consistency and a buttery texture, and often contains small, unevenly distributed air pockets. The colour of the cheese varies from white to ivory-yellow, and the inedible rind from yellow to brownish-beige. The cheese has a distinctive flavour, well-developed but not too strong, creamy with a slight piquancy, and leaves an aftertaste that is characteristic of sheep's milk.

The moulds in which the cheese is pressed are barrel-shaped. Traditionally, manchego cheese was made by pressing the curd in plaited esparto grass baskets, which left a distinctive zig-zag pattern (known as pleita) on the rind. Today the same effect is achieved by the mould, the inside of which has a design in relief that imparts to the finished cheese an embossed pattern similar to that of woven esparto grass. The top and bottom surfaces of the cheese are impressed with a design of an ear of wheat.

During the maturation process, manchego cheese develops a natural rind. The regulations permit this to be washed, coated in paraffin, dipped in olive oil, or treated with certain approved transparent substances, but require that it must not be removed if the cheese is to be marketed as PDO.
















Cheeses that meet the DO requirements carry a casein tab that is applied when the cheese is in the mould and bear a distinctive label that is issued by the Manchego Cheese Denomination of Origin Regulating Council; this carries the legend queso manchego, a serial number, and artwork depicting Don Quixote de La Mancha.

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