

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

WINTER REFERRALS



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



Scan QR to...



DIVERSIFYING Monterey County's VINEYARDS

When you're considering investing, you are often told that it's a good idea to diversify your portfolio, as you'll be able to spread out your funds a little by speculating on risks and falling back on a few safe bets. A comparison to a wine growing region provides an illustrative analogy and Monterey County is a perfect example to explore further. We have our staples that will never go out of style, such as the Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays sourced from the Santa Lucia Highlands, but we also have growers cultivating varieties that are not such safe bets. Tannat, anyone?



True, differing conditions can drastically alter the varietal landscape of any wine grape growing region, but unique regions such as Monterey County offer opportunities for growers and winemakers to hedge their bets and risk planting varieties that would be scoffed at by others.

So, is there diversification in Monterey County's varieties? You betcha! The Monterey County Vintners and Growers Association (MCVGA) states on their website that 42 different varieties are currently grown in County vineyards, 24 red varieties and 18 white varieties. Trust us...42 different varieties for one county is impressive (and there are even a few not included on MCVGA's list).

Just how diverse are we? Let's consider the reds first. What are some of the most delicate varieties to grow? That group includes Pinot Noir and Malbec, amongst others. A list of relatively durable grapes to grow includes Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Zinfandel. Yup, Monterey County has them all.

How about Italian red varieties? We've got Barbera, Nebbiolo and Sangiovese. Portuguese? We have Tinta Cao, Touriga Nacional and Touriga Francesca. Other wide-ranging varieties? Well, to name just a few...Carignane, Petit Verdot, Tempranillo, Valdiguie...and we're leaving out numerous others. Yeah, we've got the red varietal spectrum pretty well covered.

Moving on to white varieties...we have just a couple to offer here in the county. Of course, you already know our most popular: Chardonnay, Riesling and Sauvignon Blanc. And perhaps you are aware of the County's more historic varieties such as Chenin Blanc, Pinot Blanc and different variations of Muscat. But how about some of the lesser-known off-varieties such as Albarino, Marsanne, Roussanne, Semillon, Tocai Fruilano or Viognier? Yup, we have them too!

The reason we are able to have such diversity in our county is attributable to a canyon, and not just any canyon! We're talking about a sub-marine canyon underneath Monterey Bay, the canyon that causes the phenomena dictating our climate, the canyon that provides the opportunity for our varietal diversity - the "Blue Grand Canyon."



If you've spent much time on the Peninsula, living or even just visiting, you have probably heard of the Grand Canyon-sized expanse beneath Monterey Bay. Like many, you probably initially just thought the locals telling you this were exaggerating, but they were not. The canyon out there really is comparable in size and depth (60 miles long and 2 miles deep- fourth largest marine canyon on the planet) to Arizona's famed canyon, and it is one of the world's deepest.

The deep and cold waters of the Bay have direct effects on the weather patterns throughout Monterey County, thereby impacting the wine growing areas (namely through fog, wind, lack of rain in the growing

season and moderate temperatures year round). The Blue Grand Canyon is also unique, as it's the only marine canyon to directly influence weather patterns of a major wine growing region. Good stuff! But, let's get a little more into how it influences weather patterns in the county.

The impact of the Blue Grand Canyon on Monterey County has been named the "Thermal Rainbow." The coolest areas of the county are those nearest the Bay in the north, while the warmest areas are farthest away from the Bay towards the south. It's not odd for there to be a 40 degree temperature variance between the north and south of the county on a summer day...a 40 degree difference in the same county!

Continued Inside

RESERVE WINE SELECTIONS

COMANCHE - 2015 Chevera Pinot Noir



Winery: Comanche Cellars is an ultra-tiny (under 1k cases) winery named after Comanche, owner Michael Simon's horse when he was ten years old. This trusty childhood companion was an important part of a young life, and his name is a loving tribute to this old friend. In his honor, Comanche Cellars wines are boldly flavored steeds, built to go the distance, with sure-footed speed and confidence. Simons is proud that Comanche's name and shoes are on every bottle of his wine. Maybe those horseshoes will bring you some good luck!

Vineyard: Perched high above the Arroyo Seco valley floor, with a sweeping view of the Salinas Valley. The vineyard is named for the owner, Frank Stanek's, two granddaughters, Charlotte and Eva.

Tasting Notes: Aromas of sweet raspberries, fern, juniper, Asian Five Spice and raindrops on slate meet bold flavors of pomegranate and blackberry tea, roasted chestnuts and fine Jamaican tobacco wrapper in is this big-boned, complex and arresting wine. The tannins are muscular, yet plush, with maple walnut fudge on the beautiful finish.

Comanche
2015 Chevera
Pinot Noir

Alcohol
14.6%

AVA
Arroyo Seco

Composition
100% Pinot Noir

Cases Produced
134

Aging Potential
6-7 years

JOULLIAN - 2014 Family Reserve Syrah



Winery: Bordeaux grapes, the inspiration for Joullian Vineyards, led their founders to choose Carmel Valley for its warm, temperate climate and reputation of producing rich and flavorful wines. In order to add further complexity and elegance to the lush flavors of these hillside vineyard wines, they grow multiple clones of each grape variety at different elevations, exposures and soil types.

Vineyard & Winemaking: The 2014 Carmel Valley Estate Family Reserve Syrah marks a dozen vintages from the tiny one acre parcel of the "Estrella River" clone, grown at the highest point (1400') in their estate vineyards. Rigorous pruning and cluster thinning to two clusters per shoot 3 weeks prior to veraison limited the production to 2.1 tons/acre. They sought color, concentration, structure and length on the palate without one-dimensional raisin/jam flavors and they achieved their goal. They crushed into a small tank, inoculated with a Rhone Valley yeast isolate, and alternated punchdowns and pumpovers for extraction and balance. After 4 days cold soak, they pressed directly to barrel where the wine completed malolactic fermentation. They racked barrel-to-barrel every 3 months to elevate the ripe blueberry, licorice and red cassis flavors, while minimizing Syrah's tendency towards gaminess. The final blend was aged in 10% new Center of France thin-stave barrels and bottled unfiltered/unfiltered - so consider decanting off a touch of sediment after several years.

Tasting Notes: A classically styled, cool climate Syrah with color that won't fade anytime soon. Expressive and perfumed to start, with undertones of leather saddle and charcuterie. Root beer and cedar abound on the juicy palate. Bright acidity, hearty tannin, and full-body ensure this wine could stand up to any steak. Distinctly Syrah but with an even-handed balance that is neither overly jammy nor gamey.

Joullian
2014 Family Reserve
Syrah

Alcohol
14.5%

AVA
Carmel Valley

Composition
100% Syrah

Cases Produced
199

Aging Potential
7-8 years

FOLKTALE - 2015 Arroyo Seco Chardonnay



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: The Chardonnay begins with fruit from the "Le Mistral" Vineyard, directly adjacent to the Arroyo Seco River located in the Arroyo Seco AVA of Monterey County. The vineyard's proximity to the river creates a warm microclimate and features deep, sandy soil with alluvial fan components and scattered cobblestone which provide the unique mineral terroir. The unique soil matrix of this vineyard contributes to the signature creamy, tropical character of the Folktale Chardonnay.

Tasting Notes: The 2015 Chardonnay is rich and well balanced. Toasted marshmallow, light butterscotch, and soft notes of tropical fruit like pineapple, guava, and banana. These notes come together to create a palate with flavors of sweet cream, vanilla, and buttery toast, balanced with a lively acid and rich minerality. The Folktale Chardonnay is a diverse wine that will pair perfectly with cream sauces, seafood, and white meats. Enjoy chilled and often.

Folktale
2015 Arroyo Seco
Chardonnay

Alcohol
14.5%

AVA
Arroyo Seco

Composition
100% Chardonnay

Cases Produced
980

Aging Potential
5-6 years

Cover Article Continued

This rainbow provides for cool evenings and mornings throughout the county. Warming temperatures then occur as the day progresses, with the interior regions of the county experiencing a much more significant increase in temperature (as those living nearer the coast and those living in the interior both know very well!).

Cooling air from the bay is drawn inland and the guardian mountain ranges of the Salinas Valley, the Gabilans (eastern border) and Santa Lucias (western border) create a wind tunnel effect. These afternoon winds are persistent and can approach up to 30 miles an hour. During the warmest summer months the winds provide a form of air conditioning which cools down the fruit and extends the growing season... explaining why Monterey County has one of the longest growing seasons anywhere (this applies for all other fruits and veggies as well).

Even though the impacts of the Thermal Rainbow are encountered in every AVA in the County (the Chalone AVA arguably being the least touched based on its somewhat isolated and protected location), each AVA experiences slightly different effects. This can dictate which varietals will be planted in each AVA, although through various vineyard management techniques and practices, such as grafting certain clones of varietals, our growers are constantly striving to diversify their vineyards.

As comprehensive as our list of varietals grown in the county truly is, there are still many other varietals from around the world that could be planted...let's hope that our growers and winemakers keep experimenting!

-Bryce Ternet

Contributing editor and author of three books. See <http://www.facebook.com/pages/M-Bryce-Ternet> for more.



VISITING Varietals



GRENACHE

Pronunciation: gruh-NAHSH

Grenache noir is the world's most widely planted grape used to make red wine, sometimes made into a stand-alone varietal, frequently as a Rosé, but most often as a backbone of red blends.

Used as a component in some Northern Rhône reds, nearly exclusively for Rhône rosés and as the primary component in nearly all Southern Rhône red blends, Grenache is probably most notable as the base varietal for Chateaufort du Pape, Cotes du Rhône and Gigondas. In spite of its fame coming from French wines, Spain is most likely this grape's origin.

Particularly important in the areas of the Languedoc and Rousillon, there are also variants with different colored berries: white Grenache Blanc, and pink Grenache Rose or Grenache Gris.

In the New World, Australia has extensive plantings of Grenache and has been very successful making full-bodied Grenache-dominated red blends. Until surpassed by plantings of Merlot in the past decade, Grenache was the third most planted red variety in California after Zinfandel and Cabernet Sauvignon.

The Grenache grape is relatively low in both pigment and malic acid, and oxidizes readily. Although some 100% varietal wines are produced from Grenache, particularly in Spain's Rioja and from some "old vines" plantings in California, it is mostly used to "fill out" red blends and soften harsher partners, such as Syrah and Carignan.

On its own, Grenache makes fleshy, heady, very fruity wines in their youth. They tend to age rapidly, showing tawny colors and prone to oxidation or maderization after only a relatively short time in bottle. The general character and mouthfeel of Grenache wines are more distinctive and identifiable than any particular aromas or flavors.

RECIPE

Cornish Game Hens with Garlic and Rosemary

Ingredients

4	Cornish game hens
1	lemon, quartered
4	sprigs fresh rosemary
3	tablespoons olive oil
24	cloves garlic
1/3 cup	white wine
1/3 cup	low-sodium chicken broth
4	sprigs fresh rosemary, for garnish
	salt and pepper to taste



Directions

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F.

Rub hens with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Lightly season hens with salt and pepper. Place 1 lemon wedge and 1 sprig rosemary in cavity of each hen. Arrange in a large, heavy roasting pan, and arrange garlic cloves around hens. Roast in preheated oven for 25 minutes.

Reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees F. In a mixing bowl, whisk together wine, chicken broth, and remaining 2 tablespoons of oil; pour over hens. Continue roasting about 25 minutes longer, or until hens are golden brown and juices run clear. Baste with pan juices every 10 minutes.

Transfer hens to a platter, pouring any cavity juices into the roasting pan. Tent hens with aluminum foil to keep warm. Transfer pan juices and garlic cloves to a medium saucepan and boil until liquids reduce to a sauce consistency, about 6 minutes. Cut hens in half lengthwise and arrange on plates. Spoon sauce and garlic around hens. Garnish with rosemary sprigs, and serve.

CHEESE

Varietals



GRUYÈRE

Pronunciation: groo-YAIR

Gruyère is a smooth-melting type of swiss cheese that's made from whole cow's milk and generally cured for six months or longer.

Named for the town of Gruyères in Switzerland where it was originally made, gruyère cheese is a firm cheese with a pale yellow color and a rich, creamy, slightly nutty taste.

It features a few small holes or "eyes" characteristic of swiss cheese, which are formed by gas bubbles released by the bacteria that are used in making the cheese.

But gruyère has fewer eyes, and smaller ones, compared with other varieties of swiss cheese.



Gruyère is a great table cheese, which means any cheese that can be eaten in slices, like on a sandwich or as part of a cheese platter. It also happens to be an excellent melting cheese, which is why gruyère is one of the two main cheeses (emmental is the other one) used in preparing the traditional fondue recipe.
















It's also (again, sometimes combined with emmental, sometimes not) the cheese used to make the croque monsieur, that classic French grilled cheese sandwich that is a staple of Parisian bistros everywhere.

VISIT US ONLINE

WWW.TASTEMONTEREY.COM

MIX & MATCH

ANY OF THE CURRENT OR PREVIOUS CLUB WINES TO RECEIVE **25% OFF 12 BOTTLES** OR **20% OFF 6**

PRIVATE RESERVE CLUB	PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2018	REGULAR PRICE*	12-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*	6-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*
 Comanche 2015 Chevera Pinot Noir		\$42.00	\$31.50	\$33.60
 Joullian 2014 Family Reserve Syrah		\$40.00	\$30.00	\$32.00
 Folktale 2015 Arroyo Seco Chardonnay		\$35.00	\$26.25	\$28.00
DECEMBER SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2018			
 Rocklin Ranch 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon		\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
 Garnet 2013 Chardonnay		\$19.00	\$14.25	\$15.20
 Garnet 2014 Pinot Noir		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
 Rocklin Ranch 2014 Chardonnay		\$19.00	\$14.25	\$15.20
NOVEMBER SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 01/31/2017			
 Scheid Vineyard 2014 50/50		\$28.00	\$21.00	\$22.40
 Montoya 2015 Chardonnay		\$17.00	\$12.75	\$13.60
 Montoya 2013 Pinot Noir		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
 Scheid Vineyard 2014 Pinot Blanc		\$26.00	\$19.50	\$20.80
OCTOBER SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 12/31/2017			
 Robert Mondavi 2015 Bourbon Barrel-Aged Cabernet Sauvignon		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
 Joullian 2015 Chardonnay		\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
 Joullian 2013 Sias Cuvée Zinfandel		\$29.00	\$21.75	\$23.20
 Robert Mondavi 2015 Private Selection Chardonnay		\$17.00	\$12.75	\$13.60
		TO ORDER, CALL TOLL-FREE: 888-646-5446		
		*PRICES LISTED REFLECT PRICE PER BOTTLE. NO OTHER DISCOUNTS APPLY.		