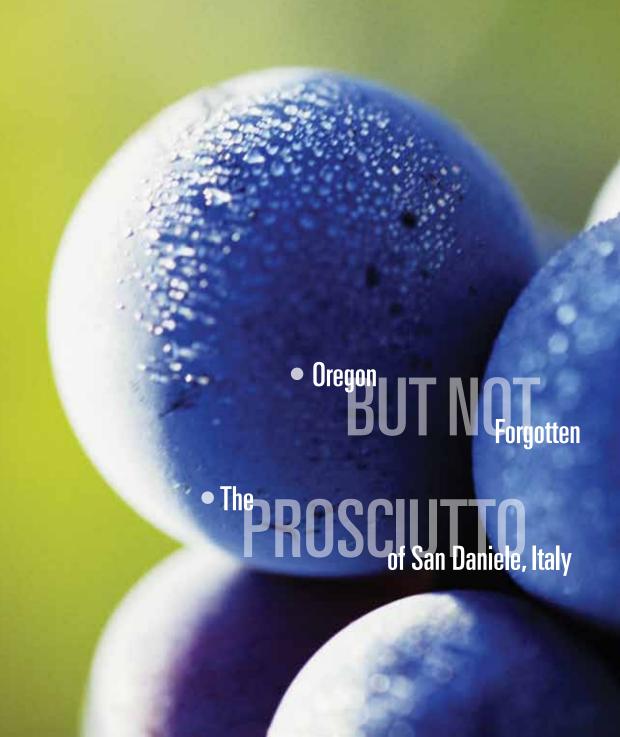
# THE AMERICAN WINE SOCIETY WING SUMMER 2012



## National Conference PORTLAND, OREGON

## November 8-10, 2012

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The AWS rate is good Nov. 1 through Nov. 14, so come early / stay late and explore the great wines regions of Oregon and Washington.



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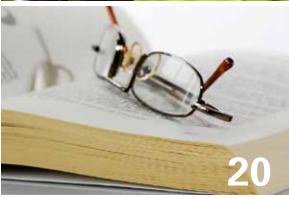












he 2012 AWS Conference in Portland, Oregon may seem miles away, both figuratively and literally, but given the popularity of this annual event, it's never too early to start planning. Oregon is a world-class wine state with 15 approved wine-growing regions and more than 300 wineries producing 72 varieties. The state contains some of the most diverse and beautiful landscapes anywhere, ranging from the green, rolling hills of Willamette Valley to the high mountain ranges in the southern part of the state. In this issue of the Journal, we'll provide a sample of what the Pacific Northwest has to offer, hopefully serving as an appetizer. The main course is Nov. 8-10 in Portland!

New to the Journal, native Oregonian Gary Peterson shares some of the "sights and sounds" of the wine industry in his state, focusing on the terroir of the Oregon Wine Trail. Tracy Ellen Kamens, Ed.D., DWS, CWE relates her recent journey to Oregon, which included visits to both downtown Portland and the Willamette Valley. She provides selected tasting notes for seven local wines.

Ellen Landis, CS, CSW, whose regular column, "21 Wines to Watch" remains a reader favorite, offers her wine recommendations, which include four Oregon wineries. Ellen continues to find high-value, worthwhile wines suitable for every palette.

On the home winemaking front, expert Ian Hugh Scott asks the important question, "Is Degassing Important?" Carbon dioxide can often create a little fizz in the finished product. What's your view on the subject?

Whenever possible, we like to feature research articles written by AWSEF scholarship recipients. In this issue we welcome Gordon Walker, who examines a "novel yeast prion state" and its effect on stuck fermentation.

And last, but certainly not least, longtime AWS member and Journal contributor Gene Spaziani, writes about the famous prosciutto ham of San Daniele in Italy. Like a fine wine, the age-old process of curing this ham takes time -- from eight months up to two years in some cases. Is it worth the wait?

Stay thirsty,

Jim Rink



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> Publisher John Hames

> > Jim Rink

## **Contributing Writers**

Tracy Ellen Kamens, Ed.D., DWS, CWE, Ellen Landis, CS, CSW, Richard Leahy, Gary W. Peterson, Jim Rink, Ian Hugh Scott, Gene Spaziani, Gordon A. Walker

Jim Rink 2881 S. Lake Leelanau Drive Lake Leelanau, MI 49653 rink@americanwinesociety.org

Unsolicited manuscripts or other information will not be returned unless accompanied by return postage.

PO Box 279 Englewood, OH 45322 888-AWS-9070 (fax) 937.529.7888 executivedirector@ americanwinesociety.org

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group, the AWS is devoted to educating people on all aspects of wine. Its members include wine novices, experts, grape growers, amateur and professional winemakers, chefs, wine

## **AWS ACTIVITIES**

AWS Chapters: Local community groups of AWS members sponsor programs, usually cooking demonstrations, viticulture conferences, amateur wine-judging events, and other chapter does not exist in your area, the national office will be glad to assist in forming a chapter. All that is needed are a few interested wine lovers. Meeting can be informal and held in member' homes or in other settings, such as restaurants and wineries.

AWS Regional Events: Organized by regional vice-presidents, include statewide wine judging, contests, special tastings, regional wine conferences, regional picnics and dinners.

AWS National Conference: Held each fall—a two and one-half day national conference and extravaganza of wine. Attendees become part of a tradition that has drawn wine-lovers, winemakers and gastronomes together every November for over 45 years. Prominent American and international speakers conduct seminars and lectures on all aspects of wine appreciation, wine production, grape growing and cuisine. Members experience fine food at connoisseur luncheons and dinners, tastings of hundreds of wines and royal treatment by

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## but not forgotten: memories of Portland by Tracy Ellen Kamens, Ed.D., DWS, CWE



recent journey to Oregon included the opportunity to visit both downtown Portland and the Willamette Valley. While wine regions exist in Oregon's other valleys, namely the Umpqua and Rogue, the Willamette Valley has achieved the most fame, producing spectacular wines. Although we have since left the area, the memories of its wines are certainly not forgotten and I would highly recommend the trip.

Despite its youth as a wine-producing state, Oregon has become nearly synonymous with quality wine. Yet, only a few decades ago, early settlers were laughed at by their peers. In 1966, newly minted UC Davis graduate David Lett was determined to plant a vineyard and begin making wine here, shunning the advice of his professors. Finding what he felt to be suitable land in the Dundee Hills of Oregon's Willamette Valley, David established The Eyrie Vineyard in 1970, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Shortly thereafter, David was joined by other wine pioneers, setting the stage for this nascent wine region. Seeing similarity between their terroir and that of Burgundy (heartland of Pinot Noir), they went about crafting wines that emulated this icon while respecting their own unique soils and climate. Perhaps the most ringing endorsement of their success was the investment made by top Burgundy négociant and producer, Maison Joseph Drouhin, when it established Domaine Drouhin in Willamette in 1988. Today, Oregon ranks as the fourth largest in U.S. wine production and its wines are highly acclaimed both nationally and abroad.

In fact, Oregon Pinot Noirs are considered to be among the best in the New World, and, although David passed away in 2008, his son, Jason, continues to carry on his father's legacy, having studied in Burgundy for many years before taking the helm.

Situated only one hour south from Portland, the Willamette Valley is blessed with varied, volcanic soils and a cool climate, which help produce world class Pinot Noir.

The overall valley is divided into six subappellations: Dundee Hills, Ribbon Ridge, Eola-Amity Hills, McMinneville, Yamhill-Carlton District and Chehalem Mountains, each with its distinct properties. In addition to Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris, Riesling and sparkling wines are earning favorable reputations. To a lesser extent, some pro-

ducers work with Rhone varieties - Syrah and Viognier - most of which is sourced from the warmer Rogue Valley in southern Oregon. Regardless of their grape varieties, most of Willamette's wineries are open to the public for tastings and sales and readily welcome visitors.

Thus, we arrived in Portland on a Wednesday evening, ready for a long weekend of wonderful food and



wine. From the airport, downtown Portland is easily accessible via public transportation (the TriMet's Max Red Line can have you downtown for only \$2.40/adult) and, once there, easily navigated on foot, trolley or bus. As a relatively major city, Portland has a wide range of neighborhoods as well as museums, historic sites and other points of interest. Due to our limited time in town, our cultural visit was restricted to the Rose (gratis) and Japanese gardens (\$9.50/adult), both of which were beautiful. Of particular beauty, the Japanese Garden presents an amazing view of Mount Hood.

East of the city, visitors can escape to the "wilderness" and enjoy white water rafting, hiking and other outdoor activities. We spent a half day rafting down the Clackamas River (www.riverdrifters.net; \$50-\$60/ adult), which was full of fury, replete with Class 4 rapids, but a lot of fun. We then returned to Portland and splurged on dinner at Paley's Place Bistro & Bar (www.paleysplace.net). Under the direction of Chef Vitaly Paley, who recently competed (and won) on the TV show. Iron Chef America. this hometown favorite specializes in locavore cuisine, with a wine list to match. We were impressed by the food as well as with the excellent customer service and knowledgeable waitstaff, who not only expertly advised us on our wine choice, but also on the cheese selections at dessert.

Saturday morning found us at the weekly craft market (known locally as the Saturday Market, www.saturdaymarket.org), which hosts hundreds of vendors peddling their wares from candles and clothing to jewelry, pottery and glass art. A visit to the Portland Farmers' Market (www.portlandfarmersmarket.org) came next, where we stocked up on local produce, fresh strawberries, smoked fish, artisan bread and a host of other homegrown food. The main reason for this latter stop was that, instead of staying at one of the region's plentiful hotels or bed and breakfasts, we had opted to rent a cottage in Carlton (www.carltoncottages.com)

while staying in the valley. This arrangement provided us with a good excuse to pick up a few bottles of wine each day to enjoy with dinner prepared on the grill at "home," without the worry of driving while intoxicated.

Carlton, we were told, is the "center of the Willamette universe." Compared to New York City (or even Portland), it is a very small town, but there is some merit to that statement. Carlton is dotted with a number of wineries and tasting rooms, along with several restaurants and a wine and cheese bar. The Horse Radish (www. thehorseradish.com). Aside from being a great place to buy Oregonian and international cheeses, The Horse Radish features live music on Friday and Saturday nights and not just local bands; on the night we were there, the talented, musical duo was from Arizona.

Excited at arriving in the valley, we walked to the Zenas Wines' (www. zenaswines.com) tasting room. Zenas produces three of its four wines with fruit sourced from the Del Rio Vineyards in the Rogue Valley and its Riesling with Willamette Valley fruit. The Southern Oregon wines include a Meritage (Bordeaux-style blend). Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Named for Zenas Howard, an early (1856) settler in the Roque Valley, his descendents currently own the winery.

We then headed out to Anne Amie (www.anneamie.com), which was formally known as Chateau Benoit Winery. Since the property's purchase by Dr. Robert Pamplin, in 1999, he has sought to elevate the quality and reputation of the winery and is producing primarily Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris and Pinot Blanc on its L.I.V.E. certified sustainable vineyards. Located at the top of a hill, the tasting room provides stunning views

EVARDS of the vineyards and Pacific Coast Range. WINE JOURNAL : SUMMER : 2012 | 7



We kicked off the following morning at Penner Ash (pennerash.com), which turns its attention to both Burgundy (Pinot Noir) and Rhone (Syrah and Viognier) varieties. Founded by winemaker Lynn Penner-Ash in 1998, along with husband Ron, Penner-Ash has evolved from an initial 125-case production to 9,000 cases annually. Another hilltop tasting room, the vistas are quite incredible as one walks amidst the lush landscaping.

From Penner-Ash, it was off to Adelsheim (www.adelsheim.com). Among the early pioneers, Ginny and David Adelsheim established their winery in 1971 and several of its labels feature portraits of family members and friends of the winery. The tasting room, which was renovated in 2009, offers outdoor seating, where one can enjoy a bottle of wine with a picnic lunch (we picked up our meal ahead of time at the Filling Station in Carlton).

Our next stop was Daedalus Cellars (www. daedaluscellars.com), a small, family owned and operated winery which concentrates on Pinot Noir, but also makes small amounts of Pinot Gris, Riesling, Chardonnay and Grüner Veltliner. Additionally, Daedalus produces a second label, Jezebel, with grapes sourced from throughout the state for wines intended to be drunk early in their life. Their small tasting room is conveniently located on the main drag (99 W in Dundee).

Exclusively devoted to Pinot Noir, the vinevards of White Rose Wines (www.whiterosewines.com) were planted in 1980. This high-elevation site on top of the famous Dundee Hills, permits views of Mount Hood in the distance. Owned by Greg Sanders, the winery has developed several small production, single-vineyard wines. With many named for Greg's children, these wines have attracted top scores from the Wine Advocate among other publications.

We capped off the day at Carlton Winemakers' Studio (www.winemakersstudio. com), which is a joint venture among several different wine producers. Launched in 2002, the studio is currently home to ten artisan vintners and serves as a great incubator for up and comers; past alumni include Penner-Ash, Soter Vineyards and Ribbon Ridge Vineyards. The facility itself is designed to maximize daylight and is produced from recycled and sustainable materials. On the day of our visit, we tasted wines from several producers including Hamacher Wines and Andrew Rich.

The second full day of tasting began at Bergström Wines (www.bergstromwines.com). Founded by John and Karen Bergström, the couple's five children and spouses now co-

own the winery with their parents, with son Josh Bergström presently serving as winemaker. Known for ultra premium wines and an emphasis on vineyard expression, Bergstrom produces several limited production, vineyard-designate Pinot Noirs.

The next stop on our itinerary was WillaKenzie Estate (www.willakenzie.com), where we were greeted by co-owner, Ronnie LaCroute, who graciously provided us with a tour. As Ronnie likes to remind folks, "Dirt matters." Therefore, it is no surprise to learn that the name WillaKenzie stems from a type of soil that originates from the pushed up sea floor found in the Yamhill-Carlton and Ribbon Ridge areas. Among the larger properties we visited, WillaKenzie is situated on a 420-acre, former cattle ranch and practices sustainable viticulture.

We concluded our tastings at Amity Vineyards (www.amityvineyards.com), where we met with owner, Myron Redford, who began making wine in the Eola-Amity appellation (the southernmost Willamette AVA) in 1974. Myron's extremely diverse portfolio at Amity spans from his EcoWine® range of organic and sulfite-free wines to reserve and single-vineyard wines.

## **Editor's Note:**

Since some time has elapsed since Tracy's visit to Oregon, she has provided updates on the most current vintages in parentheses on page 9.

## SELECTED TASTING NOTES Anne Amie, Cuvée A Amrita 2007 Willamette Valley, OR, \$16

(Current vintage available at the winery: 2010, \$12)

Named for the Buddhist equivalent of ambrosia, Amrita is a blend of white varieties and corresponding percentages that change with each vintage. The 2007 brought together Pinot Blanc (47 percent), Muller-Thurgau (25 percent), Chardonnay (15 percent), and Riesling (13 percent). Aromas of tropical fruit and grass give way to a dry palate with citrus and herbal flavors. 1,700 cases produced.

### Adelsheim, Pinot Blanc 2007

and notes of citrus and minerality.

Willamette Valley, OR, \$22 (Current vintage available at the winery: 2010 Bryan Creek Vineyard, \$22) This Pinot Blanc shows citrus, mineral and pear aromas. On the palate, it is dry with medium acidity, medium body

### Daedalus, Lia's Vineyard Chardonnay 2006

Chehalem Mountain, OR, \$25 (May be available at the winery as a Library Wine) After spending 500 days on the lees, along with 18 months in neutral oak, this wine displays aromas and flavors of yeast, citrus and toothpick.

### White Rose Wines, White Rose Estate 2006

Dundee Hills, OR, \$75

(Current vintage available at the winery: 2009, \$70) Produced from 30 year-old vines, cropped at only 1 ton per acre, this wine is very concentrated on both the nose and palate. Aromas of floral and earth give way to more fruity flavors of raspberry and cherry. Nearly 200 cases produced.

## Bergström, de Lancellotti Vineyard Pinot Noir 2007

Chehalem Mountains, OR, \$65

(Current vintage available at the winery: 2010, \$65)

The de Lancellotti Vineyard bottling shows floral, raspberry and stone aromas and flavors, which combine with an earthy undercurrent that persists throughout its long length. 455 cases produced.

### WillaKenzie Estate, Pierre-Léon Pinot Noir 2006

Willamette Valley, OR, \$38

(Current vintage available at the winery: 2009, \$42) With a beautifully perfumed nose accompanied by a note of fresh raspberries, this wine continues to deliver on the palate with raspberry, earth, minerality and an undercurrent of wet leaves.

### Penner-Ash, Syrah 2006

Oregon, \$32

(Current vintage available at the winery: 2009, \$32) Produced in the northern Rhone Valley tradition, this Syrah is co-fermented with 1.5 percent Viognier. The nose is a mix of plum, berries and floral. Its dry, medium - bodied palate has a nice, ripe tannic grip with flavors of plum, spice and leather, culminating in long length.

## Amity Vineyards, Late Estate Harvest Riesling 2004

Willamette Valley, OR, \$15 (375 ml)

(Current vintage available at the winery: 2007, \$20)

This late harvest Riesling offers peach, apricot and honey aromas on the nose, joined by developing and floral notes in the mouth. A true dessert wine, it provides significant sweetness on the palate, which is beautifully balanced with vibrant acidity.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Tracy Ellen Kamens, Ed.D., DWS, CWE combined her passion for teaching with her love of wine, co-founding Grand Cru Classes, a wine education business based in the metro New York area. Now, also serving as education and certification consultant for the Society of Wine Educators (SWE), Tracy is truly living la vida vino. Her wine credentials include the Certified Wine Educator credential from the Society of Wine Educators, the Wine & Spirits Education Trust's Diploma of Wine & Spirits (with Merit) and she is an AWS Certified Wine Judge. Tracy holds a Doctor of Education degree from the University of Pennsylvania and a B.S. degree from Cornell University. She can be reached at: www.ltsAWinederfulLife.com or tracy@GrandCruClasses.com

## Home Winemaking Is Degassing Wine Important?

There seems to be some controversy about whether degassing your homemade wine is necessary. In one camp are those who say that it is vital to creating a wonderful wine that you'll enjoy in the months and years to follow. In the other camp are those that suggest that degassing is not that important, that the amount of carbon dioxide that remains when you bottle your wine is negligible. They assume however that you will be bulk aging your wine for a few months, which will supposedly allow the carbon dioxide gases to dissipate.

I'm with the first camp and it has been my experience that degassing wine is important. I'm not worried about pressure build up in the bottle due to the presence of carbon dioxide, but rather I'm concerned about taste and visual appearance. Who wants to pour wine for guests that foams up in the glass?

Degassing is an important consideration for those winemakers who will be entering their wines into competitions. Wines are not judged on taste alone, but also on appearance and odor. If the wine has a haze like look to it caused by the presence of carbon dioxide, it will not score well.

Most people who make wine these days use wine kits - kits that come with grape juice and grape juice concentrate. These kits are made in such a way that the winemaker can bottle his or her wine in 4 to 8 weeks, if he or she wants to. Of course, bulk aging the wine will benefit it, but many are not interested in the characteristics that might develop in a year or two - they want to enjoy their wine now! For those winemakers, degassing the wine is very important. For winemakers that plan on bulk aging their wines under an air lock, degassing may not be as vital as much of the gas should dissipate during the bulk aging process. However, there are times when simply bulk aging the wine will not be enough to rid it of

excess carbon dioxide. Cooler temperatures and high air pressure may result in wine with excess carbon dioxide if not degassed.

Although it is unlikely the winemaker will completely eliminate carbon dioxide from his or her wine, having too much of it can affect the taste of the wine negatively. In water, carbon dioxide is perceptible to our taste buds when it is present in a ratio of 200 mg per liter. In small amounts, it can act as an enhancer of the tannins in wine but too much carbon dioxide can produce off tasting still wines.

There are several ways to degas wines, including manual vigorous stirring, using a device attached to an electrical drill and using a vacuum pump. I've covered some here that will be especially helpful to those who make wine from commercial wine kits.

Follow along with lan's regular home winemaking activities at his blog.

homewinery.info/blog

## **About The Author**

lan Hugh Scott has been making his own wine for years. As well as wines from commercially available kits, he has discovered the pleasures of experimenting with other ingredients such as black currants, strawberries, blueberries, and even ginger and parsnip!



## The Prosciutto of San Daniele, Italy



he prosciutto ham of San Daniele in Italy is considered the most highly regarded, uncooked, air-cured ham by most ham aficionados of the world. Production is concentrated in the area around the tiny town of San Daniele about 13 miles northwest of Udine in the province of Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, located in the northeast corner of Italy.

Most of the inhabitants are involved in the curing of the famous ham. They inherited a tradition that goes back many centuries, to the period of the Romans and other peoples who lived in even earlier days in the strip of land between the coastal plain and the towering peaks of the Carnic and Julian Alps.

The delicacy, appeal and quality of San Daniele ham is due to a unique combination of three elements: the age-old experience of the processors, the complicated and timeconsuming technique used in curing the ham, and the premium breeds of hogs that are raised in the surrounding countryside that supply the raw material. However, the processors attribute the ham's natural goodness to the highly favorable climactic conditions in the production zone and especially the air currents flowing south from the mountains or north from the Adriatic.

Processing begins on the farms where the hogs are raised. The animals must be traditional breeds of hybrids with the same characteristics. The growers select the best pigs at an early age and feed them a special diet, the ingredients of which are prescribed by law. Breeders maintain strict controls over the animals at every stage of their growth. When slaughtered, the hogs must be at least nine months old and weigh an average of 352 pounds. Processors choose only hams weighing at least 24 pounds and freezing is absolutely forbidden.

As soon as the fresh hams reach the plant, the producer sorts them according to weight and size. In the curing of hams, salt acts primarily as a cleanser, drawing out much of the liquid and all the impurities that would harm the meat's keeping capacity. Great care is taken to avoid using too much salt, which would dry out the ham. As a result, Prosciutto di San Daniele respects modern dietary emphasis on lower sodium levels. Italian law prohibits the use in curing of any type of chemically derived substance, which means that only sea salt is employed in processing San Daniele ham.

After salting, processors press the hams so that they assume a slightly flattened shape. Pressing ensures that the ham will develop the proper consistency and texture. Afterward, the hams are stored for about three months, during which time they trim the hams, and then coat them with a paste made of lard and processed cereals to prevent the meat from drying too quickly during the following eight months.

The producers hang up the hams in special

rooms where humidity is controlled and air currents are allowed to circulate freely. Inspectors check the hams repeatedly during the eight months of aging. Toward the end of the process, these master craftsmen insert long needles of horse bone into the meat and then sniff it. The nose knows from long experience whether the hams are properly and completely cured from the nature of the odor acquired by the needle. Hams that fail to pass the smell test are discarded. The surface of those that do pass the examination will be marked with a brand showing a stylized design of a ham with the letters "SD" in the center. The design is contained in a circle formed by the words "Prosciutto di San Daniele."

The San Daniele Ham Consortium, a producer's association founded in 1961, oversees production, inspecting and analyzing hams in every phase of processing. The government assigned the consortium its oversight role in legislation enacted in 1970 and amended and expanded in 1990.

Prosciutto di San Daniele is a light food, ideal as an appetizer, satisfying as a snack and a delicious addition to many simple or complex dishes. It has a rich, but delicate aroma and flavor, as well as a slightly sweetish flavor that delights and never cloys.



Most oenophiles who visit Oregon, especially the Portland area, are aware of the magnificent wines produces here, especially the Pinot Noirs of the Willamette Valley. Now that does not take into account the many other Oregon wine regions also producing exceptional wines, and some specialty grapes, in the northern, mid and southern parts of Oregon. However, for this article, we will limit ourselves to the Willamette Valley and its unique geographic characteristics, which have made it one of the most recognized wine growing regions in the world today.

The early settlers who traveled the Oregon Trail found in Oregon fertile valleys, an abundance of water and mild climate, all of which are needed for healthy crops. Grape vines were planted and wine produced as early as the 1800s here in Oregon, but there was no organized production until the year 1966. It was then that pioneer winemaker David Lett and wife Diana planted Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris plants in the Dundee Hills of the Willamette Valley. Lett had Grape vines of the Willamette Valley are mainly planted on hillsides above the silt clay loams, where the temperature stays a little warmer and there is less chance of frost. The soil itself can be a mix of volcanic and sedimentary soils on the slopes, as opposed to the wet, rich valley floors. The climate is very similar to that of Burgundy, matching sunlight hours, climate and rainfall. You can find as many opinions to location of vines and soil preference as you can wineries. One thing for sure, the Willamette Valley is one excellent Pinot Noir producing area.

The Pinot Noir grape is well known as being one of the most difficult to grow. It's susceptible to disease and less tolerant of windy, hot, dry and harsh conditions, unlike some of its more acclimated cousins: Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. It has even been said that "God made Cabernet Sauvignon but the devil made Pinot Noir."

## lerroir on the

studied viticulture at U.C. Davis and what followed was a guest he described as an epiphany. He studied the Oregon climate and soils and geography and knew the Willamette Valley was meant for Pinot Noir.

A defining creation of this appellation is the product of the historic Missoula floods, some 12-15,000 years ago. The resulting floods from a glacier put the Willamette Valley under 300+ feet of water, leaving layers of sediment on the valley floor. The results are the Dundee Hills, which remain a "Jory" soil, named after the Jory family, which settled here in 1852 after enduring the Oregon Trail.

David Lett and his wife produced and bottled their first Pinot Noir in 1970. It would be several years before he was believed to be correct, but once his truth became known, the wine growers followed and the vineyards started to grow and still are today. David Lett is revered as Papa Pinot to this industry, and for good reason. Those that followed in the 1970s to produce their exceptional Pinot Noirs include such well known names as Dick Erath, Ponzi, Sokol Blosser, Adelsheim and many others, all of whom are still producing wines of distinction today in those wineries.



Let's take a look at some of the more notable Pinot Noir producers in the Willamette Valley, and their award-winning wines. Keep in mind, if we were to attempt to enlighten you with them all, this would in fact become a novel or a series, so keep in mind these are a few picked at random.

We will be taking a look at the wineries of Newberg and the Dundee Hills. This region is easily reached, within a half hour drive from downtown Portland, and makes an excellent destination to explore area wineries from a hotel or bed and breakfast. The town of Newberg offers us some wonderful choices for wineries to visit and wines to taste. The following are some of the well known producers from this area.

## THE DUNDEE HILLS

Founded in 1971. Adelsheim Vinevards is one of the oldest and highly respected vineyards in the state of Oregon. David and Ginny Adelsheim planted their first Pinot Noir vines, which over the years have produced many outstanding vintages. Today, Winemaker David Paige sources most of his grapes from a handful of area vineyards in the Chehalem Mountains. If you have the opportunity to visit this winery, or find their wines in a wine list, their 2009 Adelsheim Pinot Noir would be an excellent choice with your dinner or for your wine cellar.

Anam Cara Cellars is an example of a newer, family run vineyard that in the past eleven years has taken an old orchard property and magically transformed it into a vineyard that is producing exceptional, high quality Pinot Noir. Nick and Sheila Nicholas, along with children Mark and Heather, all work to produce what is guickly becoming one of the best wines of the region. Nick has planted his 25 acres in mostly Pinot Noir, with Riesling and Gewürztraminer each on an acre. His Pinot Noir is of Dijon Clones 114, 115, 667



and 777. If you have the opportunity to taste the 2009 Pinot, you will be in for a treat. If you visit the tasting room, you should leave with his '09 Estate and Nicholas Pinot Noir.

ArborBrook Vineyards is another family owned producer of high quality Pinot Noir. Their vineyard is located in the Chehalem Mountain range on a southern flank, established in 2001, and with the assistance of highly trained viticulturists, along with consulting winemaker, French-trained Laurent Montalieu, they produce some of finest Pinot Noir of the region. The process used in creating their wines includes hand sorting and a state-of-the-art EuroSelect

will have, tasting an estate Pinot Noir from this vineyard, but one would never go wrong with "Heavenly."

The Sokol Blosser vineyard was established in 1971, and their first vintage was produced in 1977. Bill and Susan Blosser selected the Dundee Hills of Oregon for the close resemblance of climate to Burgundy, France. Its 87 acres of vines produced in the iron rich, welldrained, red Jory soil, produces the world-class Pinot Noirs of today. A taste of their Pinot Noir will bring your senses rushing, with layers of flavor.

## Uregon Wine Trail by Gary W. Peterson

destemmer that uses rubber fingers instead of the usual crushing jaws of some destemmers. By employing these methods, more whole berries are collected, and again sorted to ensure only quality berries are processed. The end result is experienced in the glass, with true Willamette Valley Pinot Noir flavor in every sip Sampling any of their Pinots is a pleasant experience, especially their 2010 Origin 1866, and 2010 Estate 777 Block.

The town of Dundee and the nearby Dundee Hills were made famous by the early pioneers of Oregon Pinot Noir. David Lett of Eyrie Vineyards, Bill Blosser and Susan Sokol Blosser of Sokol Blosser Vineyards and Dick Erath of Erath Vineyards established themselves here. There have followed an impressive group of vintner/owners to this area and the wineries of this area are respected and well known for their quality wines.

Located in the Red Hills of Dundee, the Eyrie Vineyards are actually four separate vineyards, Eyrie, Stonehedge/Daphne, Rolling Green and Three Sisters. When you taste or purchase an Eyrie Vineyard Reserve Pinot Noir you will be drinking a Pinot Noir produced exclusively from the original 40-year-old vines, the oldest in Oregon. The estate wines are produced from the newer three vineyards, planted in the 1980s and excellent in their own. There really isn't an accurate enough description of the experience you

Erath vineyards, first cultivated over 40 years ago, are planted in over 23 varieties by Dick Erath, prominently featuring Pinot Noir. Dick imported French clones in 1974 and started producing exceptional Pinot Noir that continues to flourish. The Pinot Noirs from this winery consistently rate in the 90s from top reviewers. Their Single Vineyard and Estate Pinot Noir are wines of beauty, finesse and exceptional taste.

These are just a few of the many outstanding wineries producing excellent Pinot Noir and other varieties here in the Willamette Valley. The quality of wine produced in this region is at least partly due to its unique climate and soil composition. I encourage you to personally experience the terroir of the Oregon Wine Trail this November, during the 2012 AWS Conference in Portland. It just may rekindle your pioneer spirit.

## **About The Author**

Gary Peterson is a wine consultant, eCommerce businessman, and freelance writer for two national travel magazines, as well as a national wine magazine. He also has a wine/travel blog, works as a photojournalist and is an avid world traveler.

## **RESEARCH SUMMARY:**

## **Novel Prion State Affects Fermentation** Dynamics of S. cerevisiae Wine Isolates

by Gordon A. Walker and Linda Bisson

## **Background**

ine is one of the most important beverages in global commerce and human culture, but many oenophiles take the heroic contribution of the yeast Saccharomyces cerevisiae for granted. Grape



juice, or must, is an extremely harsh environment for a tiny single-celled organism. With the staggering diversity of microbial competition, varying nutritional content, inhibitory plant compounds, low pH, and high osmolyte concentrations, it is a wonder that yeasts actually complete the conversion of sugar into alcohol via fermentation<sup>1</sup>. Generally, with sound enological practices such as proper sanitation, temperature management, and nutrient additions, most fermentations will go to completion<sup>2</sup>. However, wine makers are occasionally puzzled by unexplained sluggish or arrested fermentations that will not finish regardless of the methods utilized.

These fermentations can represent a significant loss depending on the grapes, production volume, and level of spoilage that can occur. In summarizing my research in this article, I will pose a potential mechanism for how sluggish and arrested fer-

mentations might become established in a winemaking context by the induction of a novel yeast prion state known as [GAR+].

## Introduction to the [GAR+] Prion State

S. cerevisiae displays an extremely strong preference for fermentable hexoses (glucose/fructose) over any other carbon sources. This phenomenon is known as glucose-associated repression of alternative carbon sources [3]. This is tied to the cellular response known as the Crabtree effect, where yeast favors fermentation over respiration even in the presence of oxygen [4]. Producing alcohol through fermentation works to give yeast a competitive advantage over other microorganisms. Genes for importing and metabolizing glucose are strongly up-regulated while genes involved in utilizing other carbon sources are down-regulated in the presence of available sugar<sup>3</sup>. Yeast strains that harbor a novel, dominant, meta-stable, transmissible, prion known as [GAR+] can bypass the biologically hard-wired glucose repression response and utilize alternative carbon sources despite the presence of glucose [5]. Prions are proteins capable of at least two distinct conformations, one of which is self-perpetuating or infectious.

Unlike mammalian disease-associated prions such as Kuru, Scrapie, or Mad Cow, yeast prions are dynamically reversible and can actually be beneficial to the cell under certain environmental conditions<sup>6,7</sup>. Yeast will induce these prions through the ac-

tivity of chaperone proteins that respond to stressful external stimuli such as temperature by refolding target proteins. Yeast use prions as a "bet-hedging" mechanism, to increase the evolutionary fitness of a population<sup>6</sup>. Sub-populations within a larger yeast population will spontaneously undergo conformational changes in target proteins to switch on a prion. This kind of switch can bypass complex regulatory networks, fundamentally altering cellular processes on a global scale without greatly affecting gene expression. These prion switches allow for subsets of the larger yeast population to sample new survival strategies via dynamic and heritable prion states. Cells harboring [GAR+] show a growth advantage over parental [gar-] cells in certain conditions, however in the context of wine preliminary studies suggest that [GAR+] may be detrimental to the fermentative capacity of the yeast harboring the prion.

The [GAR+] prion is novel because it is manifested through the association of two proteins, is non-amyloid in character, and has a predictable set of biological conseguences<sup>5,7</sup>. While the exact mechanism of the prion shift is still not fully understood, it is clear that [GAR+] is manifested through the association of the major plasma membrane ATPase, Pma1 and a transcription factor, Std1<sup>5</sup>. By microarray and proteomics the only major cellular change that results from the induction of [GAR+] is a massive (36 fold) down-regulation of the sugar transporter Hexose Transporter 3 (HXT3)5. The HXT3 gene has been extensively characterized in our lab, and there is evidence that strains lacking HXT3 will arrest when challenged with ethanol during fermentation<sup>8</sup>. This led us to hypothesize that the induction of the [GAR+] prion might be a potential explanation for otherwise unexplained arrested or sluggish fermentation.

## **Experiment Approach**

My initial interest in this prion in the context of wine strains came from observing significantly higher rates of [GAR+] induction in relatively "wild" wine isolates when compared to the previously characterized laboratory strains. We induce the [GAR+] prion in yeast by exposing them to a medium with glucosamine, a non-metabolizable analog of glucose, and glycerol as an alternative carbon source. Cells grown on this medium display a distinct lag in growth, upwards of 5 days, as they must induce the [GAR+] prion to bypass the glucose-associated repression of glycerol utilization. My research is focused on characterizing and attempting to understand the physiological consequences of harboring the [GAR+] prion. Prion positive cells display a range of unusual behaviors, such as cellular clumping, highly variable colony morphology, and most relevant, a reduced fermentative capacity; meaning that [GAR+] yeast ferment slower, are unable to dominate microbial competition, and do not finish the conversion of sugar into alcohol.

Last fall I conducted a preliminary test of our hypothesis by carrying out fermentations in Chardonnay must with UCD932 in the parental prion negative [gar-] state and prion positive [GAR+] state. The [gar-] yeast fermented vigorously and displayed typical kinetics, reaching dryness after three weeks. The [GAR+] yeast, however displayed sluggish fermentation kinetics from the very start, eventually arresting at 3° Brix. The lees from each fermentation were visualized under a microscope and plated. The [gar-] yeast clearly dominated the microbial competition, while the lees from the [GAR+] fermentation abounded with a myriad of viable bacteria. Additionally, [GAR+] yeast in the lees remained viable while the [gar-] yeast did not. From this and other evidence we believe that harboring [GAR+] may increase the survivability of cells, although the mechanism of how that occurs is still unclear.

### **Discussion**

I hypothesize that the striking differences observed in fermentative capacity between the parental prion negative [gar-] and prion positive [GAR+] cells are due to a change in activity of Pma1; which is responsible for actively pumping protons out of the cytoplasm and maintaining pH homeostasis within the cell. The activity of Pma1 is absolutely essential for the dominance of S. cerevisiae in fermentation. The loss of pH homeostasis and cell wall integrity is what ultimately kills the veast at the end of fermentation. Based on comparative physiological assays measuring acidification between [gar-] and [GAR+] yeasts, I propose that [GAR+] form of Pma1 has reduced proton flux. This reduced activity would dramatically affect all





aspects of yeast metabolism, particularly amino acid uptake, fermentation of sugars, and ethanol tolerance. While cells harboring [GAR+] might have a survival advantage, and an ability to bypass glucose repression, the presence of this prion appears to negatively affect the fermentation performance of a yeast population. It is also possible that cells harboring [GAR+] are sampling different modes of carbon metabolism and may be producing a different set of metabolites during fermentation.

Intriguingly we have noted that a variety of common wine microorganisms can induce the [GAR+] prion at high frequencies in wine strains. I screened bacteria isolated from stuck fermentations and observed that several were extremely strong inducers of [GAR+] in lab and wine yeasts. I have since tested a myriad of microorganisms isolated from must and wine and found a significant number of bacteria representing different clades that can strongly induce the prion state in wine yeast. Since slug-

aish and arrested fermentations are most common with "native" or "natural" (i.e. no, or minimal sulfur additions) fermentations, it makes sense that unregulated bacterial growth could lead to the establishment of a sluggish or arrested fermentation. Bacterial induction of [GAR+] in a yeast population and a consequent reduction in fermentative capacity provides possible mechanism for how microbial spoilage could be the cause of, and not just the result of, a sluggish or arrested fermentation.

I will continue to investigate the genetic differences underlying the varied frequency of [GAR+] in different strain backgrounds and continue characterizing how the [GAR+] prion actually affects fermentation dynamics in the context of wine. I am also working to better understand the microbial interactions that can interfere with normal fermentation via induction of [GAR+] within a yeast population. My ultimate goal is to help develop methods for winemakers to identify and deal with [GAR+] yeast during fermentation. I hope to develop strains that will be resistant to induction of the [GAR+]prion and robustly dominate microbial competition during fermentation. Support from AWSEF has been instrumental in advancing my research, and I would especially like to thank the South Carolina AWS Regional Scholarship awarded in honor of Hal Kohn and in memory of Bill Tuller and Bjorn Thogersen.

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## **About The Author**

Gordon Walker is originally from Cambridge, MA, received a BS in biochemistry and molecular biology from UC Santa Cruz and is now a biochemistry doctoral candidate in the Bisson Laboratory in Viticulture and Enology Department, at UC Davis. He is a 2011 AWSEF scholarship recipient, an active member of AWS and ASEV and participates in UC Davis outreach programs. Outside of his passion for fermentation and applied yeast based research he is an avid biker, chef, and NAUI certified Dive Master.

## newornoteworthy

## LATE HARVEST COFFEE?

Nestlé's premium coffee brand Nespresso has developed a technique similar to that used to produce fine wine, to create its new limited edition Grand Cru coffee Naora.

Specially selected Colombian Castillo coffee bean 'cherries' are left to mature on the plant until the last possible moment, giving them a distinct taste. The 'late harvest' technique requires tight control of growing conditions to ensure the beans are picked when they have reached optimum maturity.

Nespresso has worked with the National Federation of Colombian Coffee Growers to perfect the technique, which was heavily influenced by oenology. Colombian Castillo coffee cherries were chosen for their ability to over ripen while still staying attached to the coffee plant. Their maturity gives the Naora blend its distinctive black currant and blueberry taste. The 'late harvesting' technique means they can absorb the maximum amount of nutrients during growth which helps create a better aroma.

## **CONSUMER WINE AWARDS**

A new wine competition allows consumers -- not certified wine judges -- to pick their favorite wines. Winners in this year's Consumer Wine Awards at Lodi competition ranged from big Cabernets to delicate white wines "with the judges following their own palates." The program is presented by the Lodi Tokay Rotary Club and benefits their contributors to local and international charities.

"There is truly something for every wine lover at every variety, price and style," the directors said. Platinum winners include Lodi Klinker Brick Syrah, which also garnered the Vino Farms Trophy for

best sustainably grown grapes; Cupcake Vineyards Red Velvet blend of Zinfandel and Merlot; Hagafen Napa Valley Riesling; Deliverance, a coffee-flavored Syrah-based fortified wine from Graveyard Vineyards in Paso Robles; and Fenestra Winery's "Conjugation," a classic Bordeaux blend from Livermore. That wine cost \$40, in the high range, with a \$3.99 red blend from Barokes Wines in southeast Australia at the "best buy" end.

The Consumer Wine Awards at Lodi recognizes and celebrates the fact that every person has unique physiological and sensory differences that profoundly affect wine and food preferences. The consumer evaluators assessing the wines in each category are the very consumers who are most inclined to buy and enjoy the wines of that category. Consumers interested in becoming evaluators for the CWAL, visit www.consumerwineawards.com.

## MAIL ORDER WINES BY THE GLASS

TastingRoom.com is announcing the addition of four new wineries to their exclusive Wines by the Glass program, which lets consumers buy single servings of luxury wine and have them delivered.

Consumers can now enjoy luxury wines by the glass from the world's most prestigious wineries including Williams Selyem, Patz & Hall, Duckhorn, and Alpha Omega. The wineries join the acclaimed Silver Oak announced earlier this month. TastingRoom.com's exclusive Wines by the Glass product lets consumers enjoy a single serving of luxury wine whenever and wherever they want, avoiding the inconvenience and expense of opening a whole bottle. This marks the first time consumers can purchase such highquality wines by the glass. Much as they do in high-end restaurants, wine lovers can now have glasses of wine delivered to their homes.

"Wines by the Glass offer convenience and choice at a fraction of the cost of an entire bottle," says TastingRoom.com CEO Tim Bucher. "Now there's no need to open a whole bottle when all you want is a glass or two."

The wine is delivered in 100ml bottles that are perfect replicas of the original, both inside and out. The wine is transferred directly from 750ml to 100ml bottles using a patented transfer technology to ensure the flavors and aromas of the wine are perfectly captured. Each of these new wines are available as a single serving or in 4-Packs delivered in an elegant box. View the entire program here: www.tastingroom.com/ winesbytheglass/

## WINE PICKS & PAIRINGS MOBILE APP

A new wine app developed by sommelier Natalie MacLean allows shoppers to walk into a liquor store, take out their smartphone, point and click at the bar code on a bottle label and receive the tasting notes, score, pairings and recipes for that wine.

Available for the iPhone, iPod Touch, Blackberry and Android phones, this free app can search 150,000 wines at liquor stores across the country. You can even find out how many bottles are in stock of each wine at your local store, as well as nearby stores, via GPS real-time inventory search. You can also track your purchases in a virtual cellar, create a wine journal and share your wines and pairings on Twitter and Facebook.

For more information, visit: www.nataliemaclean.com/mobileapp/

## 21 Wines to Watch

Bergström | Cumberland Reserve Pinot Noir Willamette Valley, Oregon

Provocative earthy aromas envelope the dried cherry, wild raspberry, mushroom and exotic spices that saturate the palate. Precise and deftly balanced with dazzling acidity uplifting the forest floor notes that abound through the minerally finish.

Food Pairing: Wild mushroom sauté on toast points

SRP: \$42

www.bergstromwines.com

Groom wines | 2010 Colby Red | California

This luscious California Cuvee is a succulent blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, Shiraz, Merlot and Petite Sirah. Aromas of berries abound, and red and black fruits dance in harmony on the palate with a dash of vanilla spice. Supple and smoothly textured, and oh-so easy to quaff.

Food Pairing: Short rib sliders

SRP: \$11

www.colbyred.com

Reustle Prayer Rock Vineyards | 2011 Estate Grüner Veltliner Umpqua Valley, Oregon

Aromatic white pepper notes greet the nose and scream Grüner! Stunning example of a new world Grüner, with white pepper intertwining deliciously with fresh peach, notes of green bean and lettuce leaves, and a generous squeeze of lime. Balanced and lifted on the palate with a gratifying minerally finish.

Food pairing: Rock Shrimp/Vegetable stir fry accented with fresh herbs and white pepper

SRP: \$24

www.reustlevineyards.com

Spelletich Family Winery | 2007 SPELLwine Sangiovese Lodi County, California

Fresh wild berries and dried cherries wow the nose and juicy red and black fruit flavors remain consistent on the palate amid exotic spices and rustic overtones intertwining throughout. Nicely textured and well balanced, finishing lively and clean.

Food Pairing: Capellini Pasta with savory Italian sausage and sun dried tomatoes

www.spellwine.com

Gloria Ferrer Caves & Vineyards | 2007 Brut Rose | California

This 92 percent Pinot Noir, 8 percent Chardonnay sparkling wine is provocative with its alluring freshly kneaded dough aromas permeating the senses. Two years aging on the yeast is distinctly and beautifully showcased. Layers of strawberry, melon and fresh raspberry swirl delectably on the palate with a sprinkling of lemon zest providing an added lift. Elegant, bright and well balanced with zingy acidity and a finish that sings.

Food Pairing: Crab gnocchi dusted with Parmesan cheese

SRP: \$42

www.gloriaferrer.com

Willamette Valley Vineyards | 2008 O'Brien Vineyard Pinot Noir Willamette Valley, Oregon

Earthy, evocative aromas rise from the glass and further engulf the senses at first sip. A sensual Pinot Noir boasting black cherry, raspberry, chocolate and crème de cassis liqueur flavors wrapped around silky tannins. Finely structured, elegant and pure with a dash of spice on the soaring finish.

Food Pairing: Ginger-Soy marinated salmon

SRP: \$100

www.wvv.com

Trenza Winery | 2009 Paragon Vineyard Trenza Blanco | Edna Valley, California

This sassy blend of Grenache Blanc and Albarino is deliciously mouth-watering with its irresistible aromas wafting from the glass. Fresh and focused with lively acidity on mid palate where juicy clementine and tangerine flavors take center stage, surrounded by spice notes and well defined minerality – brilliant!

Food pairing: Fresh oysters on the half shell

www.trenzawinery.com

Davis Bynum | 2010 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir Russian River Valley, California

Fragrant red cherries on the nose pave the way for a delectable mouthful of juicy cherries, sun ripened red raspberries, a hint of forest floor and subtle spices. Beautifully balanced on the palate with a silky texture and pleasing oak nuances on the lingering finish.

Food Pairing: Mushroom risotto

www.davisbynum.com

Loacker | Tenute 2009 "Yedra" Müller Thurgau | Alto Adige, Italy

Delicate floral aromas invite you into the glass and the fresh and fruity quality of this grape (a cross between Riesling and Sylvaner) whisks you away like an awakening spring day. Graceful, balanced and airy on the palate with flavors of crisp pear, quince and a hint of spice; a smooth and satisfying quaff with perky acidity.

Food pairing: Pan fried sole with capers

SRP: \$26

www.loacker.net

Hearst Ranch Winery | 2009 Tempranillo "Chileano" | Paso Robles, California

Dense, concentrated black fruit draws you into the glass where you'll be wowed by the plush texture, vanilla bean, aromatic brown spice and rich flavors of black berry, black plum and strawberry filling the mouth deliciously. Well-structured with a nice level of acidity perfectly offsetting the dense fruit.

Food pairing: Hearty Oxtail Soup

SRP: \$30

www.hearstranchwinery.com

Trinchero | 2009 Central Park West Vineyard Petit Verdot

St. Helena - Napa Valley, California

Intoxicating aromas of freshly picked herbs and a bouquet of violets blast out of the glass with this valley floor vineyard Petit Verdot. The fresh herbs frame the dark plum and cassis fruit handsomely. Features firm, refined tannins and a plush, round texture through the finish.

Food Pairing: Herb encrusted leg of lamb

SRP: \$50

www.trincheronapavalley.com

Nord Estate Wines | 2008 Trio "B" Vineyard Red Wine Cuvee Napa Valley, California

This well-crafted blend of 51 percent Cabernet Franc, 34 percent Cabernet Sauvignon and 15 percent Petit Verdot showcases perfumed, violet floral aromas that pave the way for the bodacious chocolate covered cherries and blueberries generously filling the palate. Velvety smooth, complex and balanced through the show stopping finish.

Food pairing: Marinated tri-tip roast

SRP: \$48

www.nordvineyards.com

Wolf Family Vineyards | 2008 Phaedrus | St. Helena - Napa Valley, California

This delectable blend of 77 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 10 percent Cabernet Franc, 9 percent Malbec and 4 percent Petit Verdot showcases black cherry, cassis and milk chocolate flavors harmoniously intermingling with roasted coffee bean and a touch of tobacco. Rich, balanced and pure with a subtle hint of vanilla gracing the finish.

Food Pairing: Flank steak with a creamy gorgonzola sauce

SRP: \$45

www.wolffamilyvineyards.com

Two Shepherds | 2010 Saarloos Vineyards Grenache Blanc Santa Ynez Valley, California

From the intoxicating aromas of fresh apple and citrus blossom to the brilliant depth of apple, stone fruit and lemon lime flavors on the minerally driven palate, this bone dry Grenache Blanc is pure and fresh with acidity that really packs a punch. Aged in neutral oak that lets the beauty of the variety shine through; stunning.

Food Pairing: Filet of Sole Almondine

www.twoshepherdsvineyards.com

Inspiration Vineyards | 2009 Palindrome Vineyards Syrah Dry Creek Valley, California

Aromas of violets and fresh wild berries will surely make your mouth water with this Syrah made of 93 percent Syrah and 7 percent Viognier. Made in the Cote Rotie style, this wine fills the mouth with rich dark berry fruit, meaty bacon highlights, pipe tobacco spice and a subtle floral note, all intertwining beautifully. Artfully crafted with a backbone of firm tannins that suggests its age worthiness, too.

Food Pairing: Lamb chops with a Syrah demi-glaze

SRP: \$36

www.insparationvineyards.com

Rosehall Run Vineyards | 2009 Rosehall Vineyard Chardonnay Prince Edward County, Ontario, Canada

A lively Chardonnay that delivers bright citrus infused fresh apple scents to the nose, and the lip-smacking palate boasts apple, fresh herbs and a splash of grapefruit juice. Uplifting acidity and minerality frame the pretty package that finishes with charm and persistence.

Food Pairing: Lobster bisque

SRP: \$35

www.rosehallrun.com

Donati Family Vineyard | 2008 Ezio | Paicines, California

This balanced, delightful blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Vedot and Malbec opens with a medley of red and black fruit aromas rising from the glass. Medium bodied, round and supple with juicy raspberry, blueberry, tart black plums flavors accented with a thread of earth and tobacco entwining deliciously on the palate and lingering through the pretty finish.

Food Pairing: Beef Wellington

SRP: \$40

www.donatifamilyvineyard.com

Sineann | 2010 Sauvignon Blanc | Marlborough, New Zealand

Nicely crafted by Sineann Winery in Willamette Valley, Oregon from grapes grown in Marlborough, this SB proudly screams the sense of place. Gorgeously aromatic with gooseberry and citrus notes, followed by classic grassiness and an accent of Jalapeno on the finish. Vivid and focused, entirely thirst quenching and delicious.

Food Pairing: Savory goat cheese tart

SRP: \$20

www.sineann.com

Foppiano Vineyards | 2009 Estate Petite Sirah | Russian River Valley, California

Powerful and densely concentrated Petite Sirah with decadent ripe berry aromas that broaden on the palate with layers of boysenberry, blackberry, black cherry, licorice, and accents of vanilla bean and chocolate adding depth and complexity. Impressively crafted, and clearly a cellar worthy wine.

Food Pairing: Hearty beef stew

SRP: \$20

www.foppiano.com

Fulkerson | 2010 Estate Dry Traminette | Finger Lakes, New York

Gorgeous perfumed aromas of honeysuckle and roses leave you more than satisfied; but jump into the glass for more joy is forthcoming. The lively lychee and mandarin orange notes meld harmoniously with fresh herbs and tisane tea spice, and a hint of petroleum on the finish contributes another nice dimension.

Food Pairing: Asian chicken salad

SRP: \$12

www.fulkersonwinery.com

Coyote Moon Vineyards | Frontenac | New York State appellation, New York

This cold hardy grape fills the senses with aromatic fresh wild strawberries and plums on the nose, and the generous spice-accented plummy, berry fruit holds delightfully through the juicy mouth filling palate. Full flavored and well balanced with gentle tannins a subtle suggestion in the background, and a finish that is smooth and satisfying.

Food Pairing: Pork loin with plum sauce

SRP: \$24.95

www.coyotemoonvineyards.com

## **About The Author**

Ellen Landis, a published Wine Writer, Certified Sommelier and Wine Consultant, is involved with many aspects throughout the world of wine. As wine director and sommelier at Landis Shores Oceanfront Inn (Half Moon Bay, CA), which she co-owns with husband and chef Ken Landis, she coordinates and hosts wine events to help further educate wine aficionados. She was also a sommelier at the Ritz Carlton for 4 years. Ellen has traveled extensively to many wine regions throughout North America and overseas. Visit her blog at www.ellenonwine.com.

## BOOK REVIEW St. Estephe: The Wines of a Great Bordeaux Commune By David Copp | Review by Richard Leahy

David Copp's new book on the St. Estephe commune of famous Bordeaux's Haut Medoc district is a welcome addition to the literature on Bordeaux and its wines. Copp, a member of the London-based Circle of Wine Writers, explains that he wrote this book on St. Estephe chiefly because of "the number of excellent value-for-money cru bourgeouis that are now available" from this commune, due to large scale investment in the region of late.

Copp explains that he was first in St. Estephe as a student in 1956 and while some fifty years later, the region looks much the same, the wines have changed, retaining their deep color and firm structure but "they have become decidedly more approachable when young and more charming and confident in maturity. They are better quality wines made to a higher standard and stand proudly next to those of their more famous neighbours. Indeed, wines that used to be described as 'rustic' are now considered 'polished': wines that were 'plebeian' are now considered 'aristocratic': wines that were thought 'worthy' now dare to be 'exciting.'"

Accordingly, "As the UK develops its food and wine culture and home entertaining becomes even more popular, so the demand for more distinctive wines within the £7-15 price band, is expected to grow," and Copp spends the book building a strong case for why consumers already predisposed to Bordeaux should seek out the wines of this commune for quality, regional nuance and value, especially compared to classified growths from elsewhere in the Haut Medoc.

Copp demonstrates several strengths as a wine writer: a skilled telescopic view of the subject, taking you through the long history of the region, in just enough detail, to a guide to the soils and grape varieties of the commune, to close-up profiles of many of the commune's chateaux, with personal interviews, tasting notes, and frequent specific observations on their techniques in the vineyard and winery.

I learned many new things from reading this book. From the section on "soil, climate and grape varieties" we learn that the soils of St. Estephe are more diverse than those of its neighbors, and the grape composition of its wines varies widely. An interesting unique feature of St. Estephe's geology is how the local bedrock known locally as calcaire a asteries (limestone embedded with starfish drip) feeds water to long vine roots in hot dry conditions and helps explain why St. Estephe wines excel in vintages like 2003 where other communes' wines can suffer drought stress. We also learn that grape varieties are now being planted in concert with the soil types on the properties; Cabernet Sauvignon is favoured on the "gravel piles" with the best drainage, while Cabernet Franc and Merlot perform better on the lower clay soils, and Petit Verdot is making a comeback. I was surprised to learn that because of this, at some properties, like Ch. Petit Bocq, the percentage of Merlot can equal or excel that of Cabernet Sauvignon, as I had assumed it was Cabernet-dominant across the board in St. Estephe.

Copp explains this book as an "Attempt to describe the people and personalities that have brought about the improvements in Stephanois wines, and how they are going about making them better still," so most of the book features Copp's choice of the commune's best value chateaux, organized geographically, followed by a glossary and bibliography. There is diversity in his subjects, not just moving across the commune geographically, but in the contrast between old, renowned chateaux like Cos d'Estournel, Montrose and Calon Segur, and new properties, or older properties with new owners; Copp has as much respect for dedicated newcomers as established families intent on doing their best.

Copp gives enough specific detail on each of the chateaux so that you know the ratio of grape varieties planted, the history of the ownership, their approach to winemaking and the markets, and a sense of the people involved, without overwhelming or boring you.

Some of his vignettes are charming personal insights; "As far as I know, Brahm Hame is the smallest producer of chateau bottled wine in St Estephe. But its owner Joel Pradeau is one of the proudest...all he could buy for his savings was a single hectare which he purchased in 2004 and has worked ever since." Or take Charles Pasquier, the consultant oenologist at Ch. Tour de Pez, who competes in the grueling Bordeaux-Paris cycling race. "He sees winemaking like a long distance cycle race for which you have to prepare thoroughly. Once the race starts, you have to pace yourself intelligently to stay up with the leaders."

Copp gives marketing the attention it deserves in his profiles; Herve Duboscq of Chateau Haut Marbuzet "was well ahead of his time in understanding the potential of direct marketing and Henri has followed in his late father's footsteps. 'Nothing is quite as important to me as a good customer,' he avers."

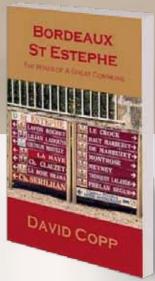
I also appreciate how Copp says enough about the wines, without making the book sound like it's about what he likes to drink, as some New World wine writers are wont to do. He almost always captures a fine nugget of a quote from the owner, winemaker or vineyard manager to illustrate the chateau's vision or style in some way.

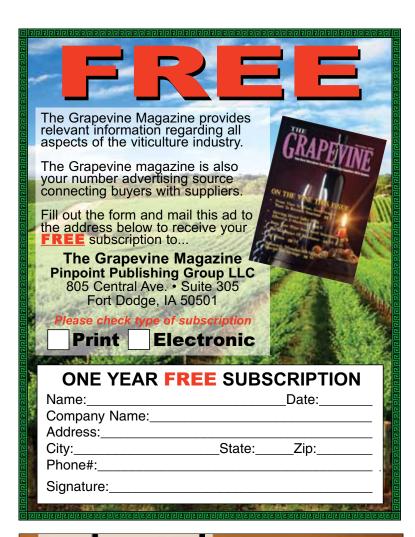
This book will be an indispensible guide for consumer or trade claret lovers who want to visit St. Estephe and make a personal connection with the chateaux profiled here, but will also work well for New World readers who are keen to seek out good recommendations for high quality, reasonably priced Haut Medoc claret with the terroir of "a great Bordeaux commune." The book includes a glossary, bibliography, index and acknowledgements.

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## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Richard Leahy is an AWS member and former East Coast Editor of Vineyard & Winery Management magazine. He has just published his own book, Beyond Jefferson's Vines, about the Virginia wine industry, through Sterling Epicure.





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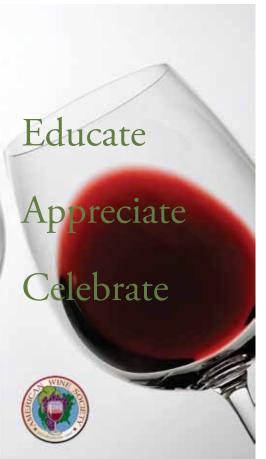
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