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# The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS



## MARTIN'S JOURNAL

**As we all know, a survey can be devised to "prove" anything we want.**

For example, a recent survey "revealed" that nine out of ten consumers think non-cork closures "sometimes or often cheapen a bottle of wine."

What that "finding" doesn't tell us is what percentage of people answered "sometimes" and what percentage answered "often," as it's fairly obvious that two categories were combined to develop the perception of a landslide vote in favor of using traditional corks.

One other thing you should know about the survey: It was conducted on behalf of a consortium of Portuguese cork producers. Surprise, surprise.

Here at Vinesse, we've been supporting the use of cork alternatives for years. We were way ahead of that curve. Our only interest is in assuring that each bottle of Vinesse wine is fresh and flavorful, regardless of how it's sealed.

Corks will continue to dominate the marketplace for years to come, but fear not the non-cork closure.



*Martin Stewart Jr.*

## Hope Springs Eternal as a New Grape-Growing Season Begins

By Robert Johnson

*It has been said that an optimist is the human personification of spring.*

No wonder I love this season so much. Sure, part of it has to do with the fact that I do not enjoy being cold. Cellar temperature at a winery is about as low as I like to go.

But mainly I love spring because it signals the beginning of the winegrape-growing season. As those tiny buds begin to appear on grapevines, hope springs eternal (as they say) for the right kind of weather at the right period of the growing cycle to assure top-quality fruit for the men and women who transform that fruit into the wines we love so much. And that does require a good deal of optimism.

In this issue of *The Grapevine*, you'll read about the critical transition period from winter to spring in wine country, and what the farmers

do to make sure the growing season gets off to a good start. That story comprises our "Cellarmaster" feature.

In her column on page 2, Vinesse Wine Steward Katie Montgomery takes us to a truly unique vineyard in the Sonoma County burg of Glen Ellen, where the owner has mapped out at least 26 different varieties of winegrapes, including some you've never heard of. When you talk about making "wine of a place," Old Hill Ranch could be the definition.

Our "Appellation Showcase" feature takes us a little northwest of Glen Ellen to the Russian River Valley. We'll look at the geologic developments through time that shaped this wonderful growing region.

We'll go even further afield in our "Wine Touring Tips" feature, which this month transports you to the Hawke's Bay area of New Zealand's north island.

And that's just a taste of what you'll find inside this issue. As always, we hope you enjoy the newsletter, and we hope you enjoy your featured wine selections.



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### OUR MISSION:

To uncover and bring you wine gems from around the world, which you're not likely to discover on your own, and which enhance your wine enjoyment.

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-  Free subscription to VINESSE's Cyber Circle Community
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-  Random giveaways of wine and accessories
-  Wine Finders Reward — identify a future wine selection and earn a reward
-  Perfectly matched recipes for featured wine selections



***H**ow important is vine age in determining a vineyard's terroir? It's an interesting question, since we normally approach this topic from the other direction — as in: how the terroir impacts the vines.*

"When I tell buyers that Old Hill is probably the oldest vineyard in Sonoma, their eyes light up," says Will Bucklin, winemaker at the Bucklin winery and vineyard manager for Old Hill Ranch. "But when I'd tell them that the vineyard is a field blend that consists of over 26 grape varieties and — more than anything, even the vines' age — it is the nature of the field blend that dictates the terroir of Old Hill, they seem less impressed."

Will needed visuals.

And he had a simple idea that evolved into a two-year project: Why not document each and every vine in his field-blend, and make a map showing their locations in the vineyard? Such a map would help people understand the uniqueness and complexity of the vineyard, document the vineyard's makeup for historical purposes, lead to a better understanding of what the founders of the vineyard were thinking, and create a knowledge foundation for better farming of the vineyard.

"When I returned from making wine in Oregon to help start our family's

winery, I wanted to learn everything I could about our vineyard," Will says. "On my first trip to the library history annex, I couldn't believe what I uncovered."

### ZIN BECOMES A STAR

Old Hill Ranch was founded by William McPherson Hill in 1852. It was the first vineyard in Sonoma to be planted with non-Mission varieties, and it was recognized in the 1860s as a source of some of California's finest wines. More recently, wine historian Charles Sullivan called Old Hill the source of "California's first really famous Zinfandel."

While Old Hill Ranch has always been recognized as a Zinfandel "field blend" containing a number of varieties, the true extent of the varietal mix was uncovered only when Will finished his survey of the vines.

Bucklin's new Old Hill Vineyard Map, entitled "Anatomy of a Vineyard," can be viewed online at [Buckzin.com](http://Buckzin.com).

"The more intimate you become with a vineyard, the better grapes you can grow and the better the wine that can be produced," says Will. "We can now literally tend this vineyard vine-by-vine and treat each vine differently based on the needs of the variety."

### AN AMAZING MIX

While Zinfandel is by far the most widely planted variety at Old Hill Ranch, Will also found Alicante Bouschet, Petite Sirah, Carignane Noir, Grand Noir, Barbera, Grenache, Mourvedre, Trousseau, Tannat, French Colombard, Cinsaut, Charbano, Palimino, Catawba, and various types of Muscat, among others.

It is this unique blend of grapes in the vineyard, Will believes, that makes his Bucklin Old Hill Ranch Zinfandel such a unique wine. The interplay among the various varieties, combined with the extreme age of the vines, makes for a wine that is not so much "Zinfandel" as it is "Old Hill Ranch."



## TOURING TIPS

***New Zealand is larger than most people think. Because it's situated next to the massive continent/country of Australia on the world map, New Zealand appears diminutive, but its land mass actually is equivalent to that of California or Japan.***

Because there's a lot of ground to cover, and because there are two separate islands to navigate, the best way to experience "New Zealand Wine Country" is to zero in on one specific area. Among our favorites is Hawke's Bay, an easy drive from Auckland, where visitors can immerse themselves in New Zealand's culture while enjoying the unique elixirs of the area's vintners.

Hawke's Bay is one of the hottest and, by extension, sunniest areas of the country. This provides for a long grape-growing season that enables farmers to harvest perfectly ripened fruit.

Winemaking in the area dates back to the 1850s and the arrival of the first European settlers. By the 1920s, several estates had gained recognition

far beyond New Zealand's shores — including Mission Estate, Te Mata Estate, McDonalds Winery and Glenvale Winery (now known as Esk Valley Winery). Today, some 40 wineries in the area welcome guests for tasting.

Of course, each winery is unique, and each is influenced by its physical surroundings. A tour of Hawke's Bay wine country can take you to coastal areas influenced by the Pacific Ocean, alluvial plains, river valleys and sweeping hillsides.

Grape growing in Hawke's Bay extends from Nuhaka in the north to Takapau in the south, with many of the vineyards and wineries situated around the Heretaunga Plains and its surrounding river valleys.

Traveling from the north, the Esk Valley serves as a beautiful front door to the region. To the northwest, the picturesque Dartmoor Valley has its own microclimate with a mix of river gravels and calcareous soils. And the closer one gets to the Ngaruroro River terraces from Maraekakaho, west of Hastings, the larger the stones get — a factor that influences the grape flavors.

The greatest growth area in recent years has been central Hawke's Bay, where the limestone-rich hills are proving to be perfect for grape growing.

Wine lovers are bound to encounter countless bottlings they'll want to take home, since the diverse microclimates accommodate the growing of numerous varieties. Among reds,

Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Syrah, Pinot Noir and Malbec are favored by many vintners. White variety stars include Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon, Gewurztraminer and Pinot Gris. Some winemakers also craft sparkling wines and dessert-style wines.

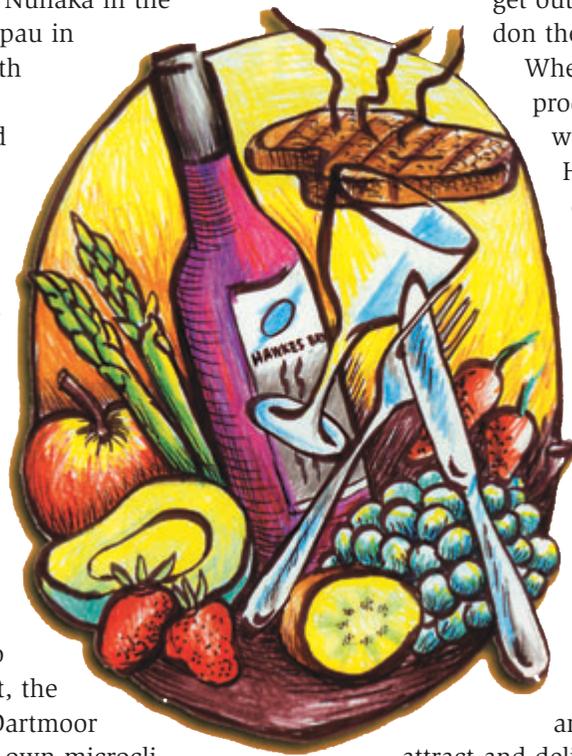
Hawke's Bay is an agricultural and gastronomic hub, with produce growers providing restaurateurs with fresh ingredients year-round. The town's weekend farmers' markets provide a great reason for visitors to

get out of bed early and don their walking shoes.

When not squeezing produce or sipping wine, visitors to Hawke's Bay can enjoy the local beaches, go fishing, swim with dolphins, take a hot-air balloon ride, paraglide off Te Mata Peak or hike on one of 17 heritage trails. And no matter where one turns in the town of Hawke's Bay, fascinating art deco architecture will

attract and delight the eye.

*To learn more about Hawke's Bay, log on to the local tourism website at [hawkesbaynz.com](http://hawkesbaynz.com).*



## APPELLATION SHOWCASE

**W**hile a number of grape varieties are grown in Sonoma County's Russian River Valley, the two most often cited as the "stars" of the region are Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

The Chardonnays are clearly world-class. Although slightly leaner than those of the neighboring Alexander Valley, their fruitfulness can sustain months in oak barrels, creating wines of great depth and complexity.

Yet as good as the Chardonnays are, they must share the spotlight with the Russian River bottlings of Pinot Noir. Whereas most red wines focus on flavor, Pinot Noir is all about texture — the sensual, succulent, juicy, fleshy, slides-down-your-throat mouthfeel that mere words cannot fully describe.

It is a textural delight that can be found only where morning river fogs moderate the afternoon temperatures so that fruit maturity is achieved without loss of depth and suppleness.

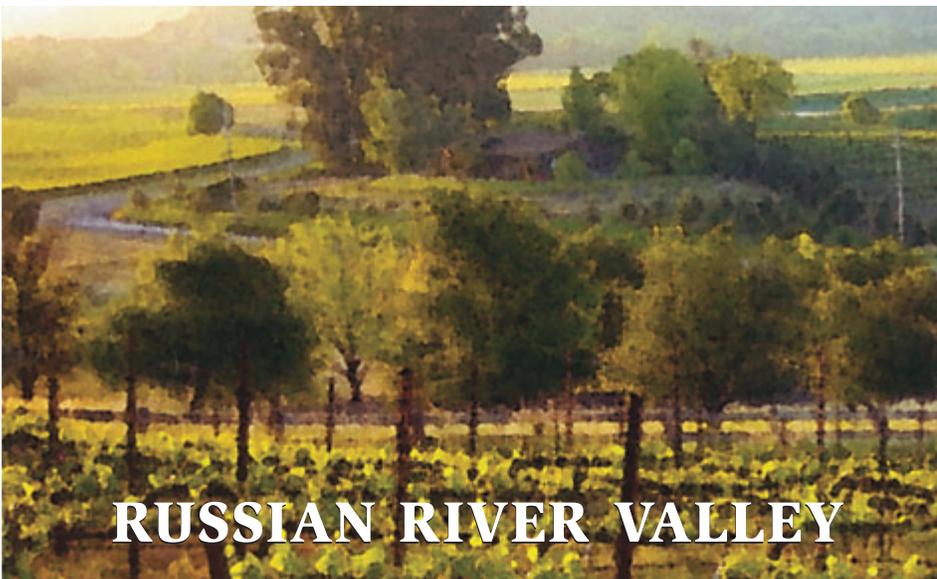
The Russian River Valley climate is sculpted by the regular intrusion of cooling fog from the Pacific Ocean a few miles to the west.

The fog usually arrives in the evening, often dropping the temperature 35 to 40 degrees from its daytime high, and retreats to the ocean the following morning. This natural "air conditioning" enables the grapes to develop full flavor maturity over an extended growing season while retaining their all-important natural acidity.

The geologic history of the Russian River Valley is both active and recent. The western-most portion of Sonoma County is bisected by the San Andreas Fault, and the continued uplifting and the resultant erosion caused by the ever-shifting land has given rise to a number of related soil types, with goldridge fine sandy loam being the primary type.

The uplifting also resulted in the Russian River changing course, cutting a path down the valley and across what are now the coastal hills, and leaving deep deposits of eroded beds of alluvial gravel, sand and clay in terraces along its course.

Each of the various soil types has a sometimes subtle, sometimes profound effect on the grapes growing upon them, and they help "define" the Russian River Valley appellation.



**RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY**

## VINESSE STYLE

**T**he Hershey Bar certainly has its place (especially when making s'mores!), but when that confection just won't do, here are a few "stylish" chocolate bars that are worth their weight in cacao...

- **Amedei Porcelana.** A nice any-occasion bar from Italy, it has an aroma that's similar to espresso and tobacco, and flavors reminiscent of roasted beans and coffee.

- **Lindt Excellence.** The perfect bar for someone who's looking to "take the next step" in chocolate — much as wine educators suggest Pinot Gris or Chenin Blanc as a "bridge" from White Zinfandel to white wines. Made in Sweden, it has a sweet, buttery aroma that won't make you forget about the Hershey Bar, but will prompt you to ponder "what else" may be out there.

- **Dolfin Noir.** Another nice "transitional" chocolate, this one from Belgium. It has a fruitful aroma and sweet flavors of fruit and roasted coffee. (We also like it because its name sounds wine-like.)

- **Chocolat Bonnat Madagascar.** Here's a bar that complements Cognac, perhaps because of its somewhat "winey" quality. It's a French confection with good roastiness and a rich, buttery mouthfeel.

- **Domori Carenero Superior.** Ever notice how the aroma of some Pinot Noir bottlings can simultaneously be soft and sharp? This Italian bar shares that quality, with notes of anise, fruit and spice.

- **Scharffen Berger Bittersweet Dark Chocolate.** Its name may not sound like it, but this is an all-American bar with a rich, mocha-like quality. Great for a special afternoon pick-me-up.

# The Critical Transition From Winter to Spring

**U**ltimately, there is no more important part of the winegrowing year than the harvest season.

As San Antonio Winery winemaker Anthony Riboli recently told *Sunset* magazine: “You get one shot a year. You can do everything right, but ultimately, if Mother Nature creates a huge rainstorm right in the middle of the harvest, what are you going to do?”

Other than shed a few tears, not much.

As important as the harvest season is, however, one can't minimize the need for a smooth transition from the winter months to springtime in winegrowing areas.

As winter ends, the pruning is nearly finished and the vineyardists take cuttings to make bench-grafts and root them in sand. They also begin cleaning and repairing tractors and other machines that they will be using throughout the spring and summer.

As spring continues, the vines emerge from their winter dormancy. Sap begins to rise and brown sheaths, which have covered the buds, fall off. It's now time for the first working of the soil, deeply, to aerate it. If the vines' bases were covered for frost-protection, they are now exposed. The remnants of pruning are burned, and any rotten vine-stakes are replaced.

With daytime temperatures starting to warm, bud-break initiates the vegetation growth cycle as the shoots emerge. This is when frost danger is at its height, so smudge-pots, wind



machines and frost-protection sprinklers must be repaired and readied.

The soil is worked again to keep down the weeds. Suckers are removed from the vines about every 10 days to encourage the sap to rise in the vines. Cover crops are sometimes planted between the rows to further keep down weeds and act as hosts for predator insects.

When the daytime temperature reaches between 60 and 65 degrees, the flowering will begin. An early flowering usually signals a very good quality vintage. The warmer and

calmer the weather, the better; rain or hail can be disastrous.

After flowering, the shoots are thinned, and the best shoots are tied to the trellis wires. Within a few weeks, the blossoms will be replaced by minuscule berries that will grow in size but stay green and hard. In some vineyards, leaves will be pulled or removed from around the grape clusters to improve air circulation and reduce the possibility of bunch rot. Where weeds have been allowed to grow between the rows, they are plowed or hoed. Long shoots are trimmed every two to three weeks to concentrate vine metabolism on the fruit.

Once the winter-to-spring transition is complete, growers and vintners alike look forward to the warm summer months when the grapes really begin to develop their aromas and flavors.



## THE PERFECT WINEGROWING YEAR

- A cool, wet winter provides plenty of ground water.
- Lack of rain or frost after the first warm days of spring.
- Fruit dropped to ensure only a moderate crop load (and, thus, more concentrated fruit).
- Mild days and cool nights all summer, with no heavy rains or heat waves.
- Vines minimally irrigated and moderately stressed.
- Warm, dry days preceding and during harvest.

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## American Cellars Wine Club



Many of these wines are hand-crafted gems produced by little known or small wineries. Or they are very limited production wines that the major buyers wouldn't touch because there simply wasn't a large enough supply. But they all are compelling wines, and ones the average wine lover wouldn't find anywhere else... unless they happened upon the winery... or were a close personal friend of the winemaker.

**Each shipment includes:**

2 or 4 bottles of the best finds from around the world  
Wine facts plus detailed Wine Tasting Notes & Ratings  
Vinesse Newsletter

**Wine Color Mix:** Reds, Whites, or Mixed

**Frequency:** Approximately monthly

**Price:** Only \$12 avg. per bottle + shipping

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## California Treasures Wine Club



This Club's featured wines all come from California. About half come from wineries in California's esteemed Napa and Sonoma counties. Others come from the award-winning boutique wineries of the Central Coast region — like those found in the Santa Ynez Valley or the Santa Maria Valley of Santa Barbara County.

We also seek out great wines from not so well known areas of California — like the Sacramento River Delta, the Arroyo Seco District of Northern Monterey County... even a small vineyard we found just west of Yosemite National Park.

**Each shipment includes:**

2 or 4 bottles of the best finds from California  
Wine facts plus detailed Wine Tasting Notes & Ratings  
Vinesse Newsletter

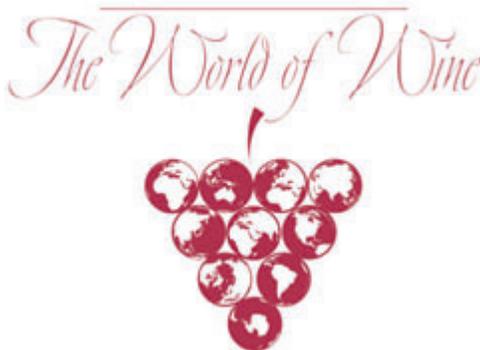
**Wine Color Mix:** Reds, Whites, or Mixed

**Frequency:** Approximately every other month

**Price:** Only \$12 avg. per bottle + shipping

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## The World of Wine Club



You're invited on an incredible wine adventure! The World of Wine transports you to six of the finest wine-producing countries in the world every year. Taste the most exquisite boutique wines each country has to offer... sample each country's rich winemaking history... and collect some souvenirs.

**Each shipment includes:**

6 bottles of specially selected wines  
Wine facts plus detailed Wine Tasting Notes & Ratings  
Vinesse Newsletter  
Complimentary Souvenir

**Wine Color Mix:** Reds, Whites, or Mixed

**Frequency:** 6 times per year

**Price:** \$99 per shipment + shipping



## ***Elevant Society***

The Elevant Society is a connoisseur's service that provides super-premium wines. These are wines that may be cellared, but they are mature upon arrival, ready for immediate enjoyment. Such quality wines, of course, carry a higher price, and membership in the Elevant Society is not for everyone.

**Each shipment includes:**

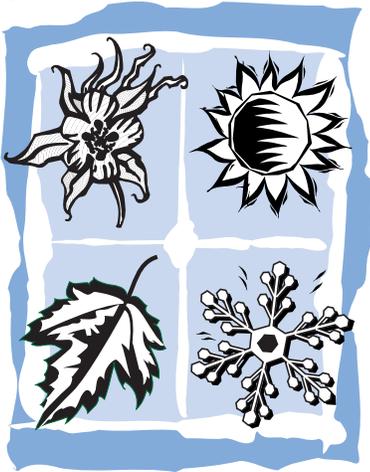
2 or 4 bottles at a time  
Wine facts plus detailed Wine Tasting Notes & Ratings  
Vinesse Newsletter

**Wine Color Mix:** Big, Bold Reds Only

**Frequency:** Approximately monthly

**Price:** Only \$69.99 avg. per shipment + shipping

## *Four Seasons*



## ***Four Seasons Wine Club***

Each Four Seasons sampler features wines paired for best enjoyment with the foods of that season — Spring, Summer, Fall, Holiday and Winter.

For example, our Summer Sampler includes four wines particularly suited for barbecues, picnics, or stand-alone summer sipping. Our Fall Sampler features specially-selected wines to complement hearty, harvest-time dishes. Wine “gems” from around the world, all specifically chosen by our tasting panel as the absolute best wines for the season. Each Four Seasons sampler also includes a complimentary surprise gift that is related to the season's wines.

**Each shipment includes:**

4 bottles at a time  
Wine facts plus detailed Wine Tasting Notes & Ratings  
Vinesse Newsletter  
Surprise Gift

**Wine Color Mix:** Reds, Whites, or Mixed

**Frequency:** 4 times per year, plus a special holiday shipment

**Price:** Only \$89.95 avg. per shipment (shipping included)

## ***Light & Sweet Club***

Not every wine drinker likes their wines completely “dry.” Our newest club is just the thing for fans of “off-dry” (read: sweeter) wines. These delicate, delectable wines are a touch sweeter, a bit lighter — and for many people — more *fun* to drink. This delightful selection of white wines may occasionally sparkle, may occasionally blush with light pink and may tickle with a touch of effervescence. They will always be light, and kissed with sweetness. Your Light & Sweet Club wines will come from around the globe (virtually every wine producing region makes their own special rendition) and our Light & Sweet Club will bring them all right to your door!



**Each shipment includes:**

2 bottles of light & sweet wines  
Wine facts plus detailed Wine Tasting Notes & Ratings  
Vinesse Newsletter

**Wine Color Mix:** Mostly white — occasionally blush/pink

**Frequency:** Approximately every other month

**Price:** Only \$12 avg. per bottle + shipping

### NORWAY NOIR?

By the end of next April, you just may see a new variety of wine on the market: Joerking. That's an indigenous variety of — are you sitting down? — Norway. And not just Norway, but *northern* Norway. Is it possible for wine grapes to ripen in such extreme northern climes? Loof Lirpa, the Norwegian Minister for Vinous Affairs, is not worried. "Our long, sunny summers — when it doesn't ever get dark — make up for the low temperatures by exposing the grapes to as much sunshine as they would see in Tuscany," Lirpa asserts. Time will tell. The Ugotterby Winery also plans to grow and make Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay.

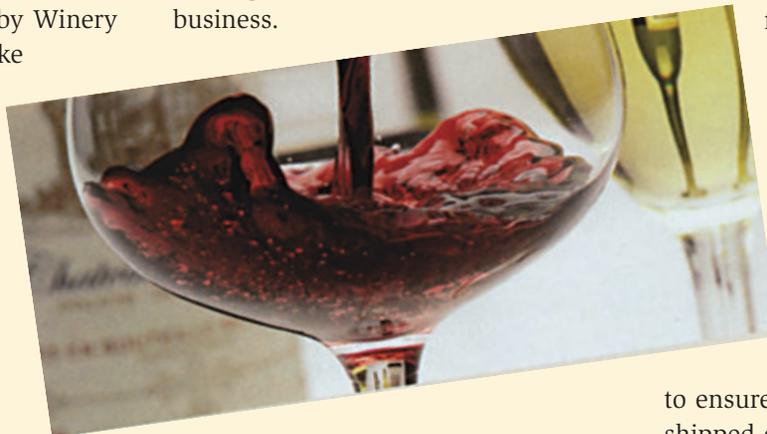
### VALLEY OAKS CLOSSES

Fetzer Vineyards' beautiful Valley Oaks Hospitality Center has been closed by its owner, the giant Brown-Forman beverage company, which also makes Jack Daniel's whiskey.

It's not only a loss for tourism in Mendocino County, California, but also for 76 employees who will be laid off. Ultimately, Brown-Forman decided it made little sense to operate



an upscale visitor center for a wine brand that sells for about \$9 at retail. It's another example of the negative impact that big corporations — which often are more focused on the bottom line than on the art of wine-making — can have on the wine business.



### NO SILVER LINING

Another fire has hit California's Napa Valley, this time frying \$2 million worth of wine at the famous Silver Oak Cellars. The fire occurred less than four months after

another blaze wiped out an estimated \$100 million worth of wine stored by nearly 100 wineries at the Wines Central warehouse in Vallejo, California. Silver Oak General Manager David Duncan estimated total damage in this more recent blaze at \$3 million. Just a month earlier, Silver Oak was one of the numerous wineries that suffered damage during the New Year's flooding that hit California's North Coast wine country. Duncan took the latest disaster in stride, telling *Wine Spectator* magazine: "We figure the next thing is going to be famine or pestilence."

### SEAL OF APPROVAL

Because New Zealand is so dependent upon the export market to support its wine industry, quality control is a critical undertaking. So, in 2003, the Wine Export Certification Service was established

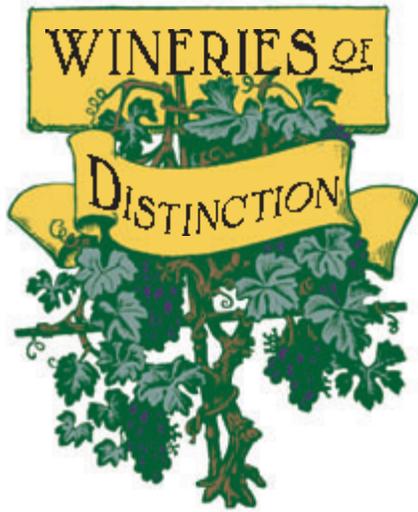
to ensure that no bad wines are shipped out of the country. To be approved for certification, a wine must be tasted by sensory experts, who verify that the bottling is varietally correct and possesses no serious flaws. Laboratory analysis also is part of the approval process.

### THRILLING GRILLING

With grilling season just around the corner, we'll soon be wondering what wine to open with those delicious burgers. Wine author Andrea Immer offers one obvious suggestion, and one not so obvious. "When you're picking up burgers or grilling your own, bring on the big, bold red Shiraz grape," she says. "It's got lots of jammy fruit and peppery spice to stand up to big, juicy, beefy flavors. For white wine lovers, a barrel-fermented California Chardonnay is perfect because the toasty-smoky flavors coming from the barrel sing with the char flavors of the grill."

## Being Green

In 1961, Paul and Beba Frey, both originally from Brooklyn, New York, went west with their young family and bought a farm in the inland part of Mendocino County near the town of Ukiah, 100 miles north of San Francisco. They went on to plant the land to vineyards and have 12 kids. Most of those 12 now work for the family business, along with a number of their kids. The farm is in the northernmost reaches of the Russian River watershed and is surrounded by thousands of acres of rugged hills, forested with Douglas fir, oak, madrone, and the easternmost of the coast redwoods. In the mid-1970s, son Jonathan Frey and his wife Katrina trained under the organic gardening guru, Alan Chadwick, at his Covelo, California, site. In 1978, when the Freys were regularly selling their grapes to a winery near Santa Cruz, the winery reneged late in the season on an agreement to buy the harvest. That kicked the Freys into action, and they started to make their own wine. To the chagrin of the Santa Cruz winery, that wine won three gold medals in prestigious competitions — and for the first time, organic winemaking received widespread attention. A movement had begun.



## Kongsgaard Savors Making Wine His Way, at His Pace

**A** vast majority of Napa Valley wine-makers have built their reputations on red wine, primarily Cabernet Sauvignon.

Don't count John or Maggy Kongsgaard among the majority. They're more than happy to be gaining a widespread following for their Chardonnay.

In the late 1970s, John Kongsgaard was an anomaly. He was a fifth-generation Napa Valley resident whose family *did not* make wine. But Kongsgaard broke the mold, and after concluding his graduate work at the University of California at Davis, set about transforming a patch of land on his parents' property into a vineyard. A patch of land he described as "miserable, scraggly pasture with a few scrawny cows."

Before long, the land on which cows once did whatever it is that cows do was producing not just good Chardonnay grapes, but *great* Chardonnay grapes. So great, in fact, that Napa Valley's Newton winery, where Kongsgaard had become



the winemaker, was more than happy to purchase them.

Along the way, Kongsgaard was developing a reputation not only for high-quality winemaking, but also for experimentation. He was finally able to implement some of his ideas on a large-scale basis when he left Newton in 1996 to join Luna Vineyards and introduce his own Kongsgaard line.

Perhaps his most "radical" idea was to do less with Chardonnay. Whereas many vintners subject their Chardonnay to countless procedures and techniques both during fermentation and after, Kongsgaard believes in leaving the wine alone. As an example, he will ferment Chardonnay in a barrel, and then leave the finished wine in that barrel to age for upwards of two years, checking it only occasionally and actually doing something to it only when absolutely necessary.

As he so succinctly puts it: "Essentially, I do a lot less than I used to."

*Kongsgaard tends vines on what used to be miserable, scraggly pasture.*

A lot less with the wine, and a lot less wine. His annual production of Kongsgaard wine is about 4,000 cases.

And that's just fine with him. He says he enjoys nothing more than retreating to the cellar, cranking up a Mahler symphony and checking on his wines.

In addition to two bottlings of highly-regarded Chardonnay, Kongsgaard also crafts a wonderful Viognier-Roussanne blend and a spicy Syrah that's reminiscent of Hermitage.

You'll note that's a total of three white wines and one red — a Napa Valley anomaly, indeed.



**WINE**  
**A TO Z**

**P** **Peak.** The time at which a wine tastes its best. Generally speaking, most white wines reach their peak more quickly than most red wines.

**Q** **uivira.** A family-owned winery in Sonoma County's Dry Creek Valley, primarily known for producing estate-grown bottlings of Zinfandel and Sauvignon Blanc.

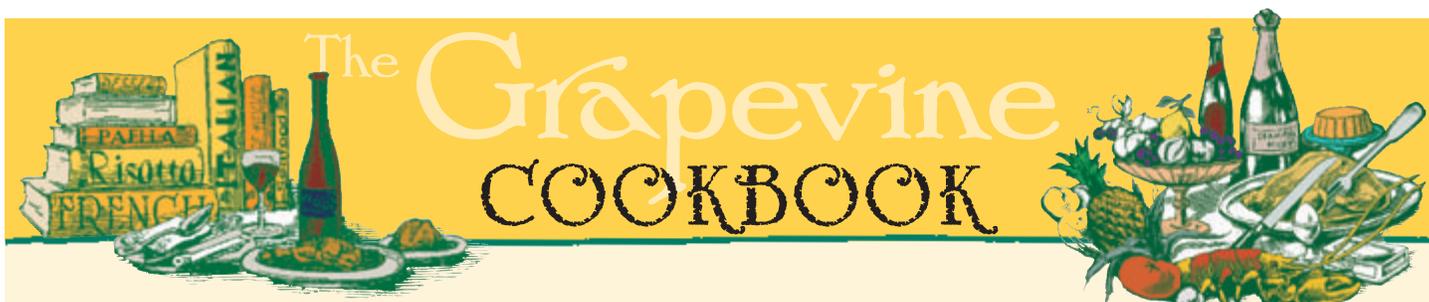
**R** **acking.** The process of moving wine from one container to another — barrel to barrel, tank to tank, barrel to tank, or tank to barrel — generally through the use of a high-pressure hose. The process leaves sediment behind, thus serving to both aerate and clarify the wine.

**S** **tructure.** Term used in the description of a wine's flavor spectrum — the overall impression of a wine. Examples: "brawny structure" or "delicate structure."

**T** **artrates.** Harmless crystals of potassium bitartrate that may form in a bottle of wine — often on the cork — from the tartaric acid present in wine. While harmless, they may not be pleasing to the eye for everyone; decanting can be utilized to keep them out of wine glasses.

**U** **nfiltered.** The opposite of filtered. Generally used to describe a wine made in a style that accentuates the flavors of the variety or the terroir within which its grapes were grown.

**V** **iniculture.** The science and study of grape production for the purpose of making wine. Viniculture is practiced in the vineyard; viticulture is practiced in the cellar.



## GINGER-HONEY MUSTARD

California wine country, particularly the Napa Valley, is cloaked in wild mustard during the spring, so what better time to share this tasty recipe that complements so many fried foods? Chicken fingers, in particular, match well with this mustard and a glass of Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc or Shiraz/Syrah.

### Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons dry mustard
- 1 tablespoon cold water
- 3/4 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup candied ginger, finely chopped
- 5 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon fresh ginger, grated
- 1 tablespoon cilantro, chopped, or garlic chives (optional)

### Preparation

1. In a small bowl, stir together the dry mustard and water to form a smooth paste. Set aside for 10 minutes.
2. Place the Dijon mustard, candied ginger, honey and fresh ginger in a food processor. Add the mustard-water mixture and pulse until combined.
3. (Optional) Add the cilantro or garlic chives, and pulse to combine.

Note: To use as a dip, add 1/4 cup of the honey-ginger mustard to 1 cup dairy sour cream or plain yogurt, and stir to combine.

## SPRING SALAD

Spring has sprung, and it's becoming much easier to find fresh ingredients for sumptuous salads. We like to serve this particular salad with Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Grigio, and because there's a lot of bacon included, it also matches well with Pinot Noir or lighter red wines.

### Ingredients

- 12 slices bacon
- 2 heads fresh broccoli (florets only)
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 1 cup seedless green grapes
- 1 cup seedless red grapes
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup blanched slivered almonds
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup white sugar

### Preparation

1. Place bacon in a large, deep skillet. Cook over medium-high heat until evenly brown. Drain, crumble and set aside.
2. In a large salad bowl, toss together the bacon, broccoli, celery, green onions, green grapes, red grapes, raisins and almonds.
3. Whisk together the mayonnaise, vinegar and sugar.
4. Pour dressing over salad and toss to coat.
5. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

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