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Volume 17

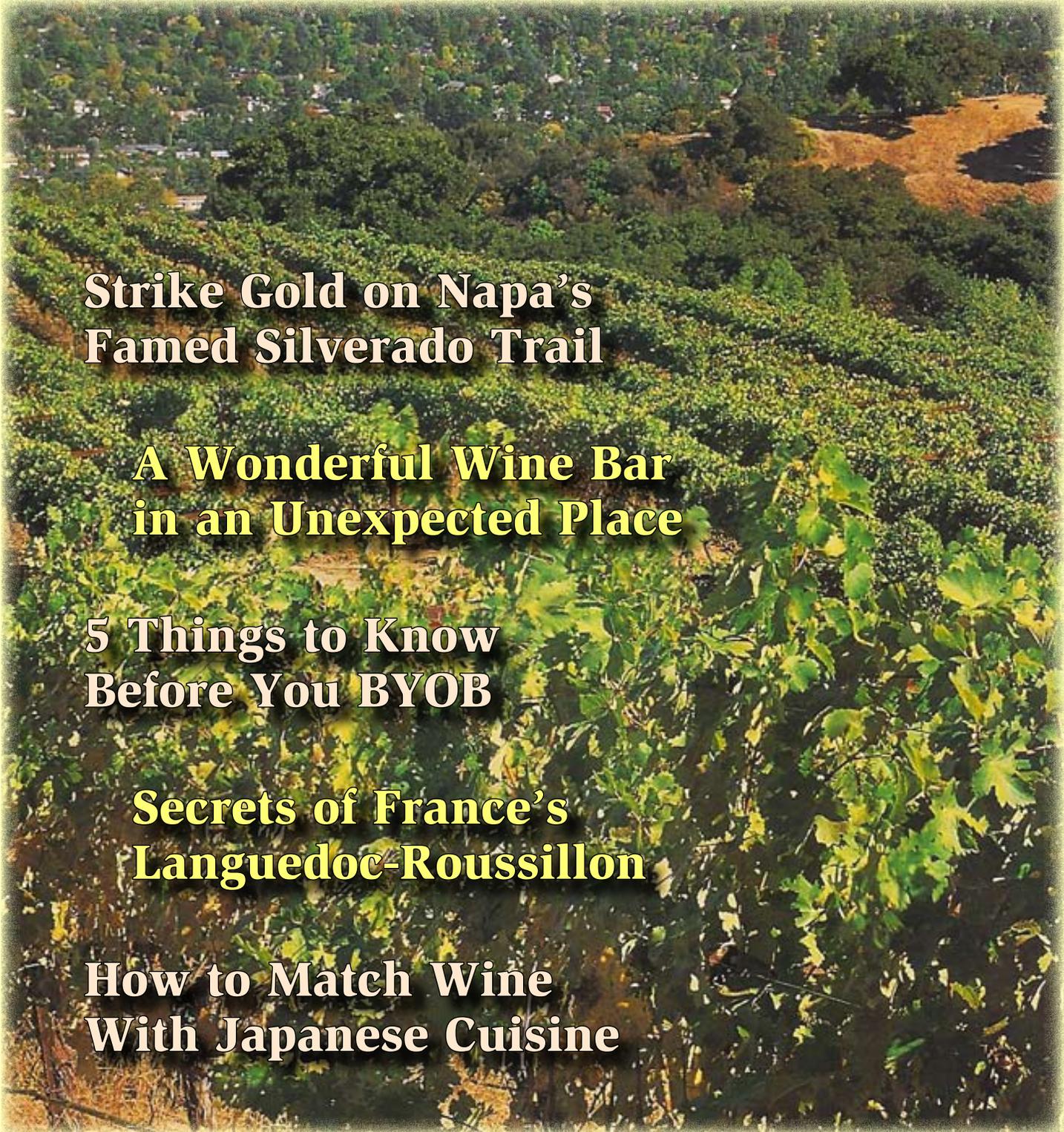
Number 9

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The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS



**Strike Gold on Napa's
Famed Silverado Trail**

**A Wonderful Wine Bar
in an Unexpected Place**

**5 Things to Know
Before You BYOB**

**Secrets of France's
Languedoc-Roussillon**

**How to Match Wine
With Japanese Cuisine**

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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.

YOUR GRAPEVINE TEAM:

Intrepid Wine Enthusiast, Chief Taster and Winehound:
Martin Stewart

Chief Operating Officer (aka "The Buck Stops Here"):
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Robert Johnson

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EDITOR'S JOURNAL

A Yummy Wine Experience

By Robert Johnson

Wonderful wine experiences are everywhere... if you keep your eyes open. Even in the tiny, isolated community of Seaside, tucked in the northwest corner of Oregon, a little more than an hour by car from Portland.

Since April of 2007, Seaside has been home to Yummy, a wine bar and bistro where pretentiousness is checked at the door and proprietor Corey R. Alpert seeks to make wine accessible to the masses.

"One of my goals is to shake the notion that one must know a lot about wine to enjoy the experience of a wine bar," Ms. Alpert says. "We are offering a wine bar without the intimidation."

Those who know and love wine will be impressed by the well-selected wine list, which includes by-the-glass and flight options in addition to full bottles. For those who are new to wine, there are no dumb questions, and Alpert offers her expert guidance.

"It's not as complicated as people

may think," Alpert says. "Drink and taste, and taste some more; that's the only way to learn what you like and don't like."

In that regard, the Yummy flights — ample pours of three different wines, paired by varietal or theme — make delicious learning tools. On one visit last spring, the "Northwest Reds" flight consisted of Saginaw Vineyard's 2006 Marechal Foch, Amalie Robert's 2006 Pinot Meunier, and Belle Vallee Cellars' 2007 Pinot Noir, all from Oregon's Willamette Valley.

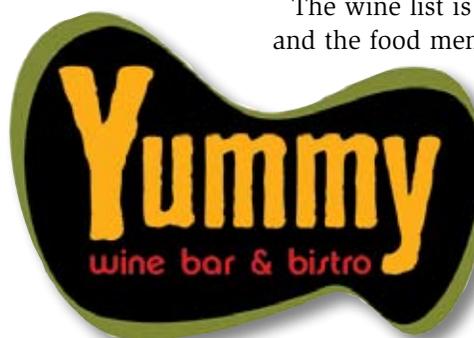
The wine list is constantly evolving, and the food menu changes with

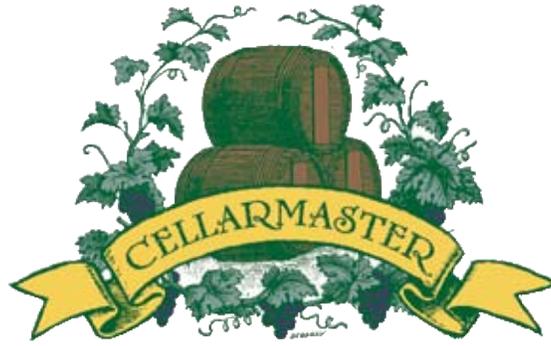
the seasons. This summer, for instance, some of the featured selections include Shrimp Ceviche, Summer Tomato Soup, Basil Goat Cheese Chicken and

Lemon Tartlet with wild berry coulis. There's also a "Bites" menu, perfect for those who just want to relax and snack.

Can't decide what to have? Just ask Alpert, who's always on hand and just may be your server. You couldn't be in better hands.

Yummy Wine Bar & Bistro is located at 831 Broadway in Seaside, Ore., and is open Thursdays through Mondays from 3 to 10 p.m. Call 503-738-3100 for reservations.





5 Things to Know Before You 'BYOB'

A good bottle of wine can transform a great meal into a memorable experience. If the wine is great, be prepared to deal with culinary nirvana.

But wine purchased in a restaurant can be extremely expensive. Diners can save a lot of dough by bringing their own bottle — when it's allowed. Here are five things you should know before you BYOB...

1. There is no federal law dealing with diners bringing their own wine into a restaurant. However, all states have their own guidelines, and some cities do as well. And even in states where the practice is allowed, an individual restaurant may ban the practice. So, when making a dinner reservation, be sure to inquire about the policies at that restaurant.

2. Restaurants may or may not choose to invoke "corkage" — a fee collected to offset the cost of glassware,

not to mention lost revenue. To discourage patrons from bringing their own bottles, some restaurants set their corkage fee extremely high. So, when making that reservation, also inquire about corkage.

3. Restaurants that charge corkage generally keep the fee; it is not considered a tip. So, if your server handled the wine service professionally, don't forget to adjust his or her tip accordingly.

4. It's bad karma to bring in a bottle that is available on the restaurant's wine list. Such an act also may cause the restaurant owner to reconsider his generous BYOB policy. Being allowed to bring in your own bottle is a privilege, so don't abuse it.

5. Even though you brought your own wine, you may not be allowed to take any leftover wine home; again, state and local laws apply. In states where it is allowed, open

container laws still apply, so re-cork or re-seal the bottle and place it in your car's trunk.



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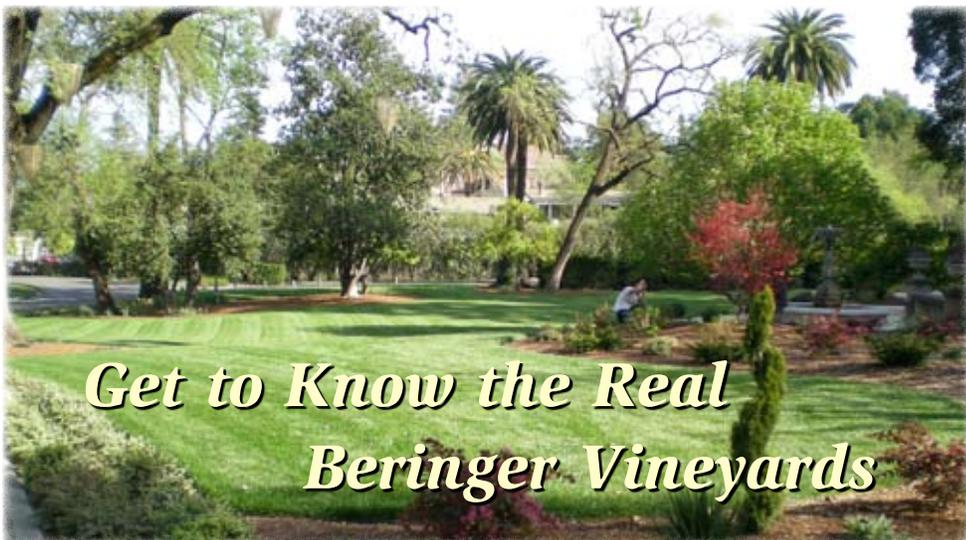
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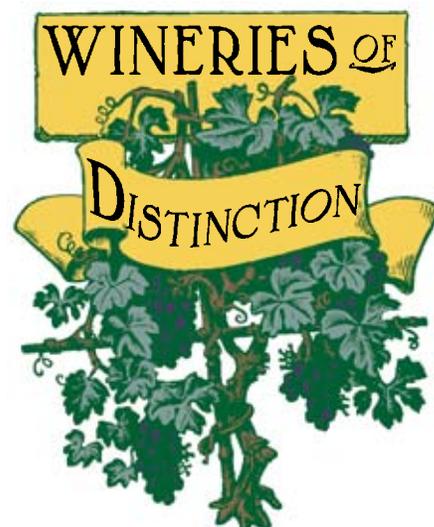
*Get to Know the Real
Beringer Vineyards*

If all you know about Beringer Vineyards is its ubiquitous (and, actually, quite good) White Zinfandel, well, you don't know Beringer.

The winery also makes some of the best Cabernet Sauvignon in the Napa Valley, sourcing grapes from its distinctive estate vineyards that also produce stunning Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Merlot and other varieties. It has become a leader in sustainable farming practices, and visitors can learn all about the winery — and its history that dates to the 19th century — on one of several tours offered daily.

Jacob Beringer left his home in Mainz, Germany, in 1868 to start a new life in the U.S., enticed by his brother, Frederick, who had sailed to New York five years earlier and wrote home constantly of the grand opportunities to be found in the vast new world.

New York did not appeal to Jacob, however. He had enjoyed working in wine cellars in Germany when he was younger and had heard that the warm, sunny climate of California was ideal for growing winegrapes. So in 1870 he traveled by train from the East Coast, first to San Francisco and then on to Napa Valley. To his delight, he discovered rocky, well-drained soils



similar to those in his native Rhine Valley.

The volcanic soil was ideal for growing the same grapes found in Europe's great winemaking regions. Better still, the hills could be dug out to provide storage and aging tunnels that would maintain the constant temperature needed to produce fine wines.

Jacob and Frederick together bought land in 1875 and set about making wines that compared to the best in Europe. In 1876, they founded the Beringer Brothers Winery.

The tough task of hand-chiseling the tunnels in the mountainside behind the winery fell to Chinese workers who had returned to the Bay Area after helping build the Trans-Continental Railroad. The tunnels took several years to complete, and turned out to

be the perfect place to age and store fine wine.

Even today, the average 58-degree temperature inside the tunnels makes them the ideal place for Beringer Vineyards to age wines. The newly restored Old Stone Winery, a popular

focus for visitors, marks the entrance to this cool, subterranean world.

While the winery was being built, Jacob took up residence in a farmhouse on the property built in 1848, now referred to as the Hudson

House. Meticulously restored and expanded, the Hudson House serves today as Beringer Vineyards' Culinary Arts Center.

In 1883, Frederick permanently moved to the Napa Valley and began construction of a 17-room mansion that was to be his home — a re-creation of the Beringer family home located on the Rhine River in Germany. This unique "Rhine House" is the center of Beringer's reserve and library tastings. It is a place where guests can enjoy a glass of wine while relaxing in the old library or on the same porch that Frederick once sat, overlooking the expansive lawns, lush gardens, and out across the Napa Valley.

Beringer Vineyards is the oldest continuously operating winery in the Napa Valley. In 2001, the estate was placed on the National Register for Historic Places as a "Historic District."

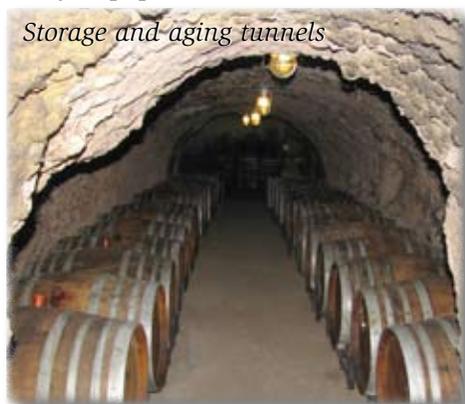
Jacob Beringer's foresight in recognizing the quality and potential of grape growing in the Napa Valley is part of the living heritage of Beringer Vineyards. With the present use of state-of-the-art technology applied to age-old traditions, Beringer's wines continue to reflect a single-minded dedication to the making of memorable wines from great Napa Valley vineyards.

And what vineyards Beringer has:

Bale Lane, located in the warmer, mid-valley area of Napa Valley; Bancroft Ranch, 1,800 feet up on Howell Mountain; Big Ranch Road, in the cool southern sector of the valley; Chabot, near St. Helena and noted for its venerable, low-yielding vines; Dos Rios, in the Yountville appellation; Knights Valley, 17 miles north of the winery (and actually in Sonoma County); Marston Ranch, a string of small hillside vineyards in the Spring Mountain

appellation; Quarry, a 20-acre site in the Rutherford district; Rancho Del Oso, with its red volcanic soil and mountain climate; Stanly Ranch, in the far-south Carneros district, just half-a-mile from San Pablo Bay; Steinhauer Ranch, the new name for the famous Tre Colline Vineyard; Yountville, in which grapes for Beringer's Private Reserve Chardonnay are grown; and St. Helena Home, providing a key component for the winery's Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon.

While Beringer makes a number of mass-produced "supermarket wines," it also crafts fine limited-production wines — some available only at the winery. And while that may be a revelation to most wine drinkers, it's a well known fact to those who are fortunate enough to live in the Napa Valley.



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2000 Main St.
St. Helena, CA 94574

Summer Hours:
Daily, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Tour Information:
707-967-4412

Get Ready for a Long Day on the Trail, Pardner

In the Napa Valley, it is known as “the road less traveled.” It is the Silverado Trail, which runs up and down the east side of this world-renowned wine region, and provides much appreciated relief from Highway 12, which can clog with bumper-to-bumper traffic during the summer tourist season.

The “quiet life” along the Silverado Trail dates back well before grape growing and winemaking arrived in the valley. Strolling through the meadows of wild flowers, grasses and grains, the native Indians must have lived in paradise. The volcanic activity that formed the valley left it fertile, protected by mountain ranges and stunning to the eye.

A river flowing through the valley provided life-giving water and an enviable menu of fresh fish. Fruits, nuts and berries were plentiful. Tools like arrowheads, knives and ax heads were carved out of obsidian, a volcanic glass. Mortar and pestles were used to grind the grains.

Deer and other wildlife looking for food along the base of the mountains carved out the first trails. Life was peaceful, except perhaps when a bear wandered too close to the village.

In 1831, George Yount, a frontiersman from South Carolina, received a land grant of 11,000 acres from General Vallejo, the last Mexican Governor. Yount built a blockhouse — a rustic fort to defend his wife and family from unfriendly Indians, ruffians and bears. (Today,



Mission grapevines were planted. A flour mill and saw mill were built. Wine was made to provide libation for special occasions and dinners.

“Civilization” had found the Napa Valley. Messrs. Chiles, Berryessa and Bale followed Yount with grants in hand, and carved out ranchos for themselves.

In 1852, the first permanent road

you can see the brass plaque that commemorates this spot just outside of Yountville).

Within a few years, herds of cattle roamed his rancho, and wheat and

was built from Napa to Calistoga, providing a major trade route for hauling wheat and fruit, the primary crops, as well as travelers. This road would later be known as the Silverado Trail.

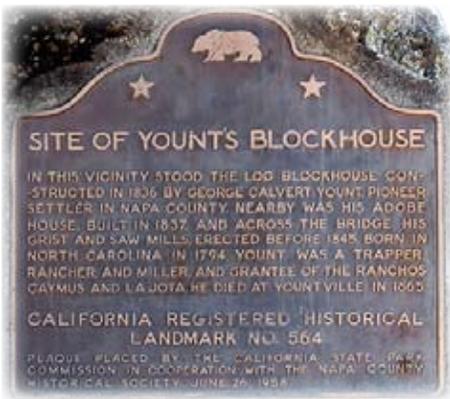
Before the end of the 1850s, a silver rush hit Napa Valley. Mining activities flourished on mountainsides in the northern end of the valley.

A clever landowner, Mr. Patchett, recognized the expanding mining industry as a grand opportunity for wine sales. A young Prussian who knew something of winemaking was employed by Patchett to make 1,200 gallons of wine using a cider press. Thus, wine commerce began in the Napa Valley.

Vine diseases and Prohibition largely put an end to Napa’s wine industry



TOURING TIPS



for several decades. The so-called “modern era” began in 1976 when Napa wines outshone French bottlings in a famous Paris tasting that now has been immortalized in two movies. The resultant publicity sparked new interest in Napa wines and growth that has continued unabated into the 21st century.

Along the Silverado Trail, dozens of wineries beckon visitors with their own unique niches. Here are a handful that definitely are worth checking out...

- **Clos du Val.** Cabernet Sauvignon is the specialty, but this also is the only winery that makes Zinfandel from grapes grown in the Stags Leap appellation.

- **Chimney Rock Winery.** The architecture is extraordinary, with its white facade standing out among the vineyards. Be sure to try the Cabernet Franc.

- **Stags Leap Wine Cellars.** Made famous in the aforementioned Paris tasting of 1976, and still crafting amazing renditions of Cabernet Sauvignon.

- **Pine Ridge Winery.** Makes district-specific bottlings of Cabernet, one of the best Chardonnays in the valley, and a fabulous Chenin Blanc that includes a touch of Viognier in the blend.

- **Robert Sinskey Vineyards.** While the Bordeaux-style Vintage Reserve is the star, don't pass up the Pinot Blanc. It's sold by the half-bottle, the perfect size to accompany a picnic lunch in an area set aside just for that purpose.

- **Plumpjack Winery.** San Francisco

Mayor Gavin Newsom is a partner in this limited-production winery, which sells most of its wine on-site and to high-end restaurants.

- **Rutherford Hill Winery.** Another great place for a picnic (buy a glass of Sauvignon Blanc or Gewurztraminer), and home to an amazing mile-long cave system — which explains why the tours take 30 minutes.

- **Duckhorn Vineyards.** One of the most beautiful estates in the valley, and the maker of one of the best bottlings of Merlot this side of Chateau Petrus.

- **Cuvaison Estate Winery.** It's easy to get burned out on Cabernet Sauvignon when visiting the Napa Valley. Come here for excellent Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

- **Dutch Henry Winery.** No flashy marketing or tasting room here — just great wines offered in a low-key setting for a reasonable \$5 tasting fee (much lower than most other estates in the valley).

- **Clos Pegase.** An architectural wonder (the winery blends in seamlessly with the surrounding vineyards), and home to an amazing art collection.

Start your day with one of the famous breakfast burritos at the Soda Canyon Store, where you also can pick up picnic fare to enjoy at one of the wineries later on. The store's deli stocks meats, gourmet cheeses, homemade salads and more.

It's going to be a long day on the trail, so be prepared!

For Further Information

Clos du Val
800-993-9463

Chimney Rock
Winery
800-257-2641

Stags Leap
Wine Cellars
866-422-7523

Pine Ridge Winery
800-575-9777

Robert Sinskey
Vineyards
800-869-2030

Plumpjack Winery
707-948-1220

Rutherford Hill Winery
707-963-1871

Duckhorn Vineyards
888-354-8885

Cuvaison Estate Winery
707-942-3468

Dutch Henry Winery
888-224-5879

Clos Pegase
800-366-8583

VINESSE

Hot LIST

1 Hot Cooking Schools. No people are more attuned to the wonders of food and wine than the Italians. In traditional Italian families, wine is served with dinner every night of the week. So if you'd like to learn more about the food-and-wine marriage, where better than an Italian cooking school? Italy is home to hundreds. Here are three of the best and most reputable: Cook at Seliano in Salerno (thefoodmaven.com/seliano), Cooking With Giuliano Hazan in Verona (giulianohazan.com), and La Cucina del Garga in Florence (garga.it).

2 Hot Museum Exhibition. Through Sept. 20, Chicago's Art Institute is presenting, “A Case for Wine: From King Tut to Today.” The exhibition explores wine as a stimulus and source of inspiration for artistic endeavor, and features classical antiquities, sacred and secular drinking vessels, wine bottles and labels, corkscrews and more. artic.edu or 312-499-4111

3 Hot Midwest Wine Festival. The Indiana community of Vevay hosts this multi-faceted event, which is a wine festival and a lot more. Yes, top Indiana wineries pour their wares, but there's also a grape stomp, riverboat cruises, food from local restaurants, live music and various youth-oriented contests. Fun for the entire family. swisswinefestival.org



Meritage. A trademarked designation, adopted in 1988, for blended wines that utilize the varieties made famous in the Bordeaux region of France. Most are given proprietary names — and high price tags — by the wineries that produce them.

Negociant. In France, a person who purchases juice from various wineries and then blends it into his own cuvees, generally for export.

Off-dry. Term used to describe a wine that is slightly sweet (i.e., has just a small amount of residual sugar).

Pomace. The mashed-up solid residue (skins, stems, seeds, pulp) that remains after grapes are pressed in preparation for fermentation.

Qualitätswein bestimmter Anbaugebiete (QbA). A German designation for an everyday (and generally affordable) quaffing wine.

VINESSE STYLE

DANISH KRINGLE

Kringle is an authentic, oval-shaped Danish pastry with 32 layers of flaky, buttery dough that's filled with a variety of fruit and nuts, then topped with a sweet icing.

Danish immigrants settled in southeastern Wisconsin in the 1800s and brought this time-treasured coffee cake recipe with them. The name *kringle* references certain knots and cleats in Old World Scandinavia's sailing language. The pastry's original shape resembled an oversized pretzel tied with a knot. In the 1940s, bakers eliminated the overlapping dough, or knot, and the kringle was reconfigured to its current oval shape.

Making kringle is a labor-intensive, three-day process. The dough undergoes the painstaking steps of resting and kneading, rolling, topping with butter, folding and chilling — over and over to create the multiple layers



of flaky crust.

The dough is then ready to be rolled and shaped into individual kringles. The bakers fill the dough with a paste, along with fruit and/or nuts. The edges are moistened with water and folded together, and once the pastry rises it is baked. Icing is applied after the kringle has cooled.

For a special breakfast treat, try kringle with a well-chilled glass of Muscat Canelli or sparkling Asti Spumante.

One of the best purveyors of kringle is the OH Danish Bakery in Racine, Wis. To learn more, visit ohdanishbakery.com.



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APPELLATION SHOWCASE

Languedoc- Roussillon



From the Camargue to the foothills of the Pyrenees, France's largest and most dynamic wine region unfolds: the Languedoc-Roussillon — now generally referred to more casually as the Languedoc.

The diversity of the landscape, the wide array of grape varieties, the multiple terroirs, the diverse climate and innovative winemaking techniques combine to create an exceptional environment for viticulture.

The white wines are fresh and fruity, sometimes with an exotic flavor... the rosés are supple and balanced... and the reds are full flavored with complex notes of red fruit and spice. The region's vintners also produce sparkling wines (don't refer to them as Champagne!) that are light and fruity, and Muscat wines that are floral, fruitful and honeyed.

Away from the bright lights of Cote d'Azur, the Languedoc has a quiet, rural appeal to wine tourists seeking an authentic experience.

Among the sleepy villages and vineyard-dotted countryside, the dramatic Lastours castle perched

high on a mountain and the walled city of Carcassonne provide wonderful days out. The cobbled streets of Carcassonne are busy with gift shops and cafes, workshops and museum pieces.

Montpellier is the regional capital. Chic, modern architecture stands alongside centuries of grand design. There are festivals all year-round, and the Opera House is a treat to visit.

Inland, the town of Nimes offers a similar mix, but on a smaller scale. If you don't mind heights, the Roman aqueduct and parkland at Pont du Gard are great for exploring.

For dining, seek out the lovely little restaurants at the side of the Canal du Midi, such as the Auberge de l'Arbousier in Homps and Au Chat qui Peche in Argeliers. And be sure to try the local Languedoc wines offered; the restaurant owners know what matches best with their exceptional cuisine.

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24,000

Approximate number of named grape varieties around the world (although scientists believe there really are “only” about 5,000 unique varieties).

Q I’m planning a party for friends, and we’re going to put out a number of dishes along with a number of wines, and just have guests eat and drink what they like. Are there any ingredients that I should avoid in the food so that as many of the wines as possible will be enjoyable?

A A similar question was put to food-and-wine expert Karen MacNeil, and here’s the list she came up with: artichoke hearts, blue cheese, capers, habanero or other extremely hot peppers, horseradish, pickled ginger, very pungent red or white vinegars, and wasabi.



During the recent American Century Celebrity Golf Championship — often referred to as the Super Bowl of celebrity events — many players took the opportunity to show off their locker-room celebratory skills in the 2nd annual Korbel Celebrity Spray-Off. Participating players included winner Tony Romo (shown here), runner-up Jerry Rice and third-place finisher Charles Barkley. Players were judged on cork distance and style of the sparkling wine spray. Romo, star quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys, took the title of “Spray-Off Champion” when he went long with the cork and impressed the crowd with some truly stylish spray. Each player had his own unique style, some focusing on cork distance and others choosing to entertain (and spray) the crowd. Jack Wagner offered some amusing dance moves, while Ben Roethlisberger drenched nearby onlookers. Others among the 39 participants included Michael Jordan, Maury Povich, Joe Buck, Jim McMahon and Brett Hull.

“Compromises are for relationships, not wine.”

— Sir Robert Scott Caywood



Just as wine is often best enjoyed years after its original bottling, Kendall-Jackson Winery expects to see the benefits of an energy-efficient lighting solution for years to come. The California winery aims to save more than \$100,000 annually in energy and maintenance costs as a result of an energy efficiency program that features innovative new lighting from GE Consumer & Industrial. “We are taking a holistic approach to increasing energy efficiency,” explains Robert Boller, vice president of sustainability for Kendall-Jackson. “Beyond changing out the lights, we are hoping to be an example of environmental stewardship. Making smart choices at every decision point allows us to have the lowest environmental impact with the highest efficiency.”

FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS

Red Wine With Maki? A Japanese Pairing Primer

Now that Paris has slipped to the world's second most-starred dining destination, as ranked by the Michelin Guide, it's time to take a closer look at Japanese fare and the wine pairing possibilities.

There are 160,000 places to eat in Tokyo — that's roughly six times more than you'll find in metropolitan New York — and while the Michelin folks did not dine at all of them, they did find 150 restaurants worthy of a total of 191 stars (more than double Paris' 95).

Pairing wine with Japanese food is a complicated endeavor because there are so many styles of food. Here are the seven most popular types of dining destinations, along with our wine suggestions...

1. Kaiseki — Formal Japanese dining at its best, featuring imaginative dishes and palate-awakening ingredients. Good (and expensive) wine lists are becoming more common in Tokyo, as are sommeliers to help diners with pairings.

2. Tempura — Battered and fried fish and veggies elevated to an art form. For wine, seek out a high-

acid variety such as Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling or Gewurztraminer.

3. Yakitori — Charcoal-grilled skewers of chicken and other meats. Zinfandel makes a great partner, as does a dry rosé.

4. Soba Noodles — Buckwheat-flour noodles, served cold with dipping sauces or hot in broth. Match the wine to the broth or sauce. If the sauce is very spicy, you may be better off with a cold beer, which is favored by many Japanese businessmen.

5. Izakaya — Japan's version of pub fare or "small plates." It's tough to find a perfect match in such a setting, so just drink what you like.

6. Street Food — You'll find a wide array of choices, including yakitori and tempura, but ramen (a soup of noodles, pork slices and scallions in a miso broth) is king. A chilled Sauvignon Blanc or Chenin Blanc works well.

7. Sushi — The Japanese cuisine with which Americans are most familiar... but haven't *really* experienced until they've visited Tokyo. Sparkling wine is always the go-to choice, but with maki, seek out a fruit-forward Pinot Noir or an "unoaked" Chardonnay.



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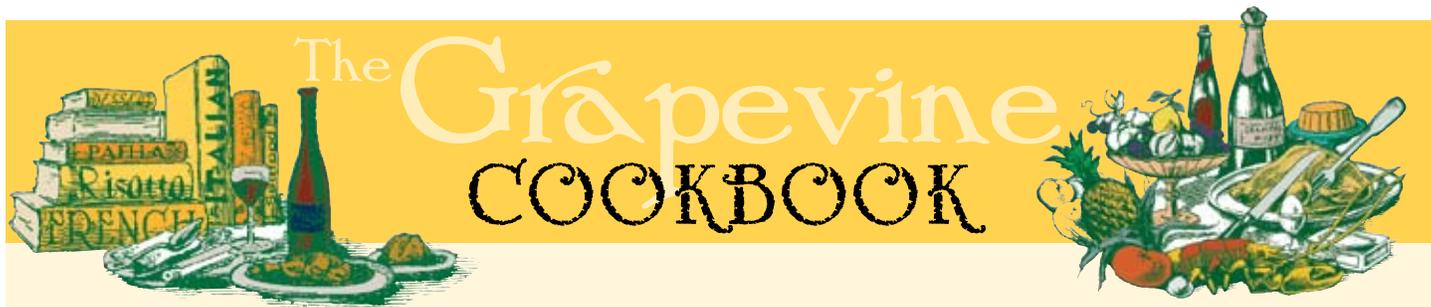
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CITRUS ROASTED CHICKEN WITH BASIL CREAM

Sauvignon Blanc matches perfectly with this dish, which serves 2 to 4, depending on your appetites. It also works well with a creamy Chardonnay.

Ingredients

- 1 whole roasting or frying chicken
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Juice and zest of one 1 lemon, 1 lime and 1 orange
- 1 tablespoon garlic
- 1 stick butter, softened
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1/4 cup fresh chopped basil leaves

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Rinse and dry chicken, and prepare for roasting.
3. Mix butter, juices, zests, garlic, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Brush or rub over entire chicken.
4. Roast in oven until temperature is 165 degrees internally. Remove from oven, move chicken to a cutting board, and let rest.
5. Strain pan juices into small heavy-bottom sauce pan. Bring juices to a boil and reduce by one-half.
6. Pour cream into sauce pan and add fresh basil. Bring to a boil and reduce until sauce coats the back of a spoon.
7. Check seasoning and adjust with salt and pepper, if needed.
8. Break down chicken to desired portions and serve with basil cream.

GRILLED FIGS WITH GORGONZOLA

Petite Sirah, Zinfandel or a bold red blend would match nicely with this dish, which makes a wonderful starter course. This recipe makes enough to fill a party pass-around platter.

Ingredients

- 6 to 8 large ripe figs
- Small wedge of Gorgonzola cheese, cut into cubes
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Aged balsamic vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Crackers

Preparation

1. Trim fig tops and cut each open half-way down the middle. (Note: Do not cut into pieces.)
2. Add olive oil, salt and pepper to cut figs.
3. Grill on heated outdoor barbecue, 3-4 minutes for each side over medium heat.
4. Remove figs from grill and stuff with pieces of cheese. (Note: The cheese will begin to soften and melt.)
5. Arrange figs on a serving dish and drizzle with balsamic vinegar.
6. Serve warm with crackers.

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