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Volume 18

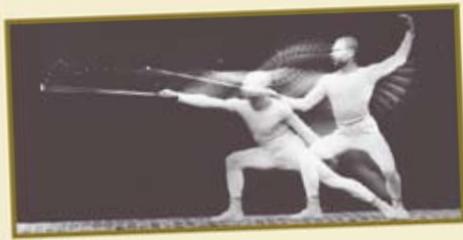
Number 9

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The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS



WILLIAM
KNUTTEL

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CABERNET SAUVIGNON

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Is Saying
to Us**

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Remote Northwoods**

**The New 'Proper' Way
to Pour Champagne**

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Editor:

Robert Johnson

Wine Steward:
Katie Montgomery

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EDITOR'S JOURNAL

Wine in America's Dairyland

By Robert Johnson

One would not normally think of far northern Wisconsin as "wine country."

And yet, situated on the south shore of Lake Superior in the tiny community of Bayfield (population: 627), one can take some time to go wine tasting. That's just what I did one day in August.

Wine was not the point of the trip. Music was. I had made the summer getaway trek to Bayfield — which is much closer to Duluth, Minn., than to any large Wisconsin city — to see Canadian musician Jesse Cook at a most unusual venue known as Big Top Chautauqua.

Cook is a flamenco guitarist who includes a good deal of percussion in his songs. Think of the Gipsy Kings on steroids. Big Top Chautauqua is a circus tent perched on a ski slope where more than 50 concerts are staged each summer. It's an amazing place, and a great reason to explore Wisconsin's famous Northwoods.

While preparing for the trip I did some research on daytime activities in and around Bayfield. Among the options: a three-hour boat excursion to the Apostle Islands (not recommended unless you get a more

personable captain than I did), a ferry ride to Madeline Island (a little touristy but only 20 minutes away), and visits to orchards and flower farms.

Bayfield Winery is part of Hauser's Superior View Farm, which specializes in apples and makes numerous products out of its bounty — including wine.

On my visit, I tasted five of the 12 wines available. J.D. Hauser's Grand

Reserve was the closest to traditional wine, fermented dry and aged in oak. One could easily mistake this apple wine for Chardonnay, considering many Chardonnays

have a distinct apple-like flavor.

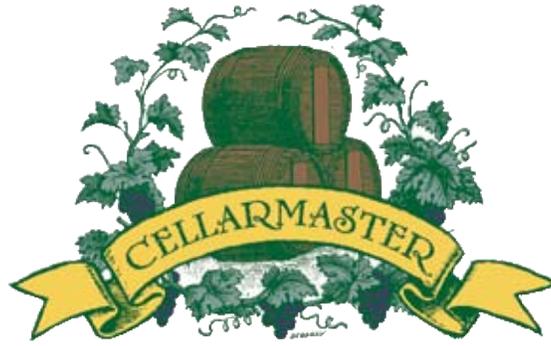
The Dry Pear was described as "subtle," which I'd define as "almost flavorless." The Schneewittchen and Hauser's Colonial apple wines had more flavor but were nothing exciting.

I'm not afraid to admit that my favorite was the Blueberry Farm House Cider, a sweet apple wine infused with blueberry flavor. I even brought a bottle home, and am saving it for the next weekend morning that I bake blueberry muffins.

As I always say, "wine country" is where you find it.



Bayfield Winery



Hello, Muddah; Hello, Fadduh

Here We Are in Camp Garnacha

Many parents have received heart-wrenching letters from summer camp, detailing how much “non-fun” their child was having, and how desperately they wanted to return home.

We have heard of no such letters emanating from the various wine camps held around the country, no doubt because the adults attending are exactly where they want to be: immersed in the wonderful world of wine.

Here is information on two upcoming wine camps...

- On Sept. 25, the first Taste of Lodi Wine Camp will take wine lovers to a new level and teach guests to become a vintner for a day — the full winemaking process. The day begins in a Lodi vineyard picking grapes and learning about the growing process with a viticulture demonstration. Guests will take two vineyard tours, lunch with a winemaker, take a wine blending class, participate

in interactive activities, and attend a wine and food pairing class. The fruits of labor will be enjoyed at a winery dinner that evening. Guests will be given a bottle of wine, wine camp hat and shirt, VIP entrance to the Taste of Lodi event the next day and one night of lodging.

Info: www.TasteOfLodi.com

- Wine Boot Camp is described as the ultimate fantasy experience for wine lovers. An intensive one-day training program, Wine Boot Camp provides the experience and knowledge needed to become totally confident in the understanding and appreciation of fine wine. Wine novices and experts will experience first-hand the joys and frustrations of winemaking, working hands-on in the vineyard and the cellar under the tutelage of top winemakers and viticulturists. Wine workshops and tastings of outstanding wines are an integral part of the program. The next Camp is scheduled for Sept. 18 in Sonoma County.

Info: www.affairsofthevine.com



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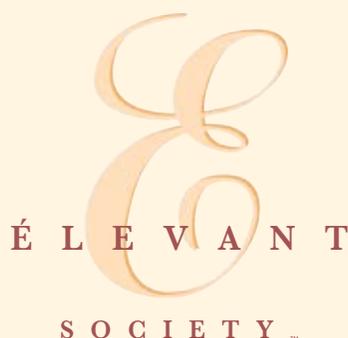
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Vinesse created the Élevant Society to meet members' demands for super-premium wines. While virtually all members of the original American Cellars Wine Club were very satisfied with their monthly selections, some wanted more, and they were willing to pay for it.

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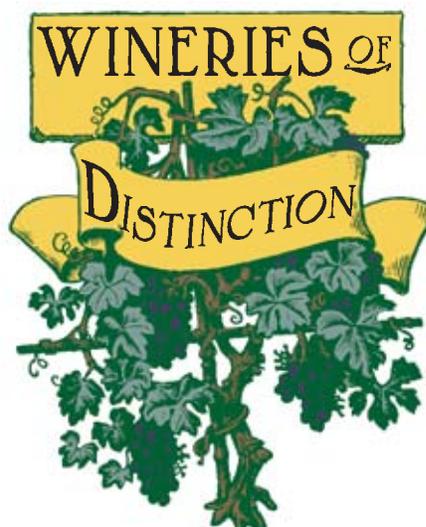
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A Napa Valley Legend That's Still Going Strong

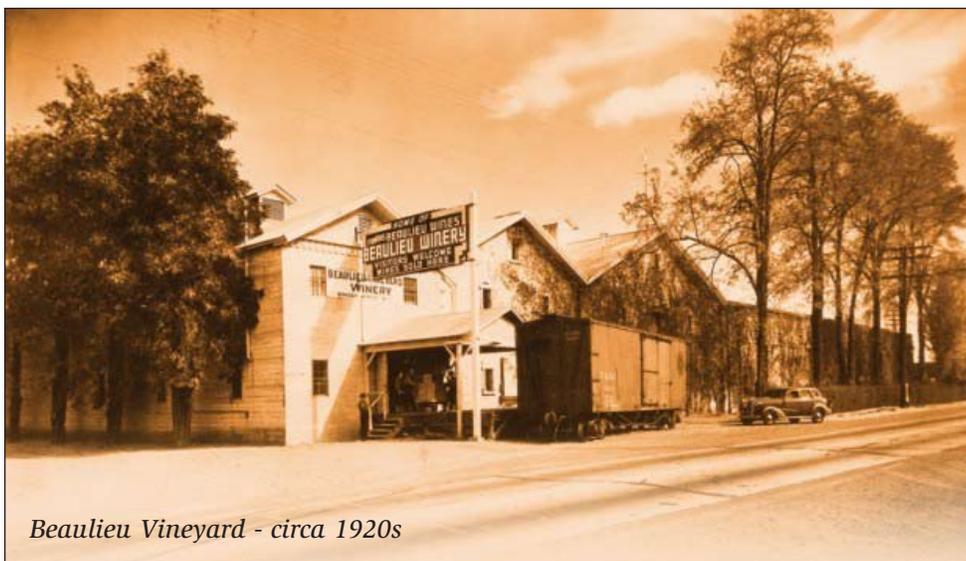
In 1900, when Georges de Latour's wife Fernande first laid eyes on the land that would become their original Rutherford vineyard, she named it "beau lieu," or "beautiful place."

Shortly thereafter, de Latour sold his thriving cream of tartar business, bought the four-acre ranch and founded Beaulieu Vineyard with the vision of making Napa Valley wines that would rival those of his native France.

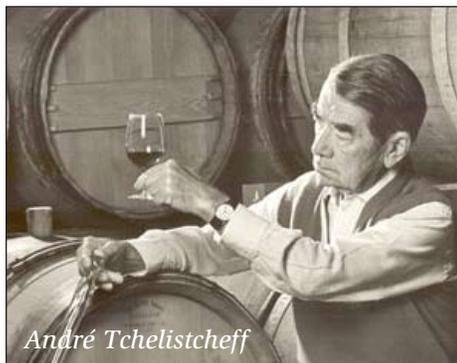
De Latour quickly made a name for himself by importing Phylloxera-resistant rootstock from Europe to the recently-ravaged, fledgling California wine industry. He also began selling wine to the Catholic church,

establishing a strong relationship that would allow Beaulieu Vineyard to remain in business during Prohibition.

In fact, during that time, the winery increased its business. After the repeal in 1933, de Latour began searching for someone who could contribute European winemaking expertise. In 1938, he traveled to France and returned with André Tchelistcheff, famed viticulturist and enologist who instituted the



Beaulieu Vineyard - circa 1920s



André Tchelistcheff

philosophy of continuous innovation in vineyard and winery to which the estate remains dedicated today.

Tchelistcheff introduced cold fermentation for white wines, malolactic fermentation for reds and aging red wines in small French oak barrels. He also tasted the de Latour family's private wine — what they called "Private Reserve" — from the 1936 vintage.

This Cabernet Sauvignon-based wine was so distinctive that Tchelistcheff insisted it be bottled and sold as the winery's flagship offering. The result was the inaugural release of Georges de Latour Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, a wine that was destined to become Napa Valley's first "cult" Cabernet.

Today, Beaulieu continues to turn to innovative practices to craft wines in a bold, classic style. It has become a leader in clonal research, and the BV Clone Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon wines are highly acclaimed.

Most recently Beaulieu completed a new state-of-the-art winery within one of its original buildings. The Georges de Latour Private Reserve Winery utilizes the latest technology in combination with time-honored traditions for the production of this exceptional wine — the long-time benchmark of Rutherford Cabernet.

The new Georges de Latour Private Reserve Winery is a winery-within-a-winery, completely housed in one of the buildings on Beaulieu's historic Rutherford estate. The winery is entirely self-contained, providing 100 percent control over the quality that shapes the expression of each vintage.

The new winery design features

gentle hourly automatic pumpovers that last only five minutes each. This new system maximizes extraction of color, flavors and tannins.

Winemaker Jeffrey Stambor will choose from three fermentation options — twenty 2,000-gallon stainless steel tanks for bright fruit character; five 1,600-gallon French oak tanks for seamless integration of tannins; and more than 400 new 60-gallon French oak barrels for rich complexity. These barrels are mounted on racks that allow them to rotate for exceedingly gentle cap management.

Whichever method is chosen, fermentation for each small lot is long and slow — up to 60 days — to ensure the full development of varietal character.

After Stambor determines the blend that best displays the Rutherford terroir, the Georges de Latour Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon will age in 750 new French oak barrels for even greater depth of expression.

Stambor has worked at Beaulieu Vineyard for nearly 20 years, combining a deep knowledge of viticulture with intuitive winemaking.

He joined the estate in 1989 as a viticulture-enologist, and for many years served as an important connection between the winery and its historic vineyards in Napa Valley. He believes his experience working with legendary winemaker André Tchelistcheff was a unique opportunity to learn from a master.

And it shows in the wines.

Winery 4-1-1

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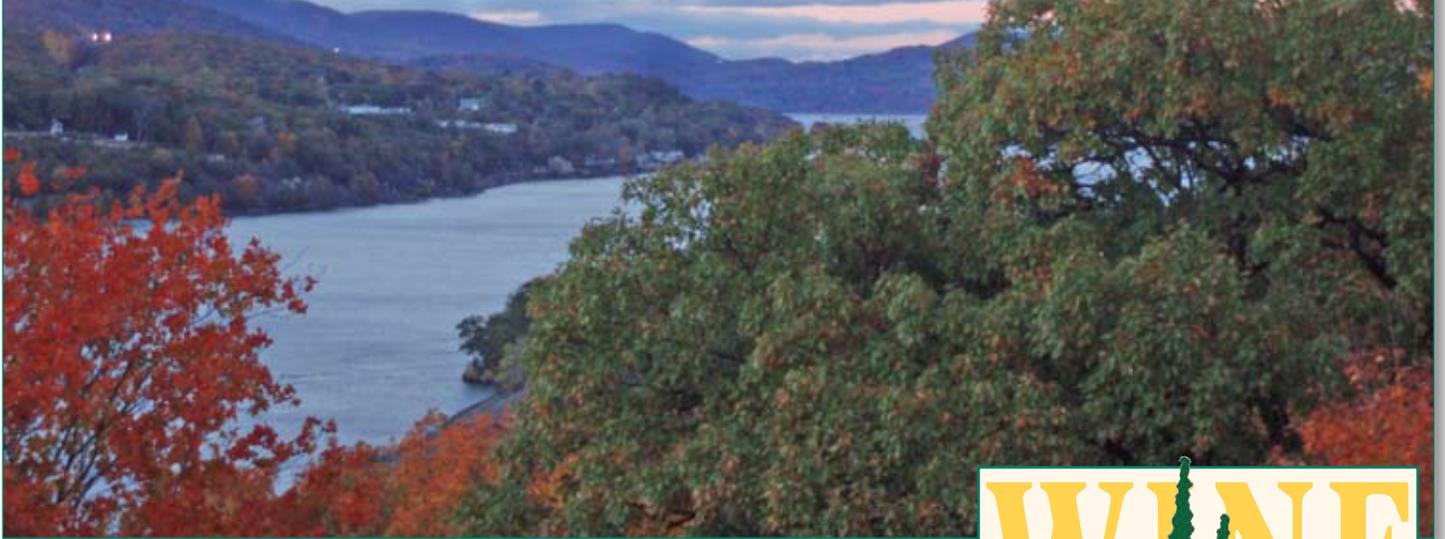
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The Scenic and Vinous Wonders of New York's Hudson River Valley



***Some of the country's
Oldest vineyards can
be found in the Hudson
Valley of New York
state.***

The French Huguenots planted the first vines in New Paltz (now part of Ulster County) in 1677, a hundred years before any vines were planted in what is now California.

When the Huguenots planted vines in the Valley, they discovered a unique combination of soil, climate and sun that together makes for ideal grape-growing conditions. They originally planted their vines on the hillsides of the Hudson Highlands and started a tradition of grapes and wine that continues to this day.

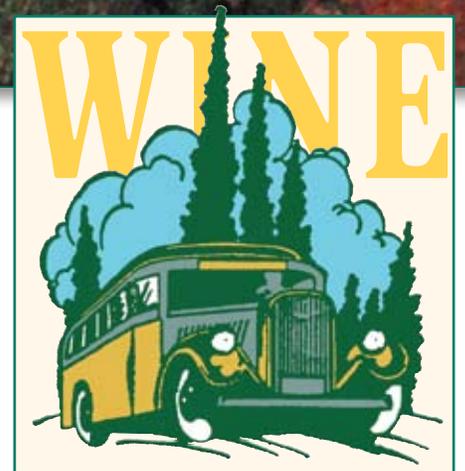
Most of the early wines were made by families for their own consumption. But in 1827, Quaker Robert Underhill, who had established a self-sustaining community at Croton Point, planted grapevines brought from Europe with the intention of making wines to sell. The Croton Point community grew their own watermelons, apples, pears, chestnuts and castor beans, and also made bricks.

Although Underhill's attempt to cultivate these vines failed, that didn't stop him. Over the next two decades he cross-bred native and European vines and the results paid off — grapes with wonderful flavors, growing on vines hardy enough to survive in the sometimes harsh climate.

The first commercial winery in the Hudson Valley, Jacques Brothers Winery, was established in 1837 for the production of altar wines. Renamed Brotherhood in 1885, the Washingtonville estate is the nation's oldest continuously operated winery.

Less than an hour-and-a-half from New York City, a visit to the Hudson Valley wineries and wine trails offers hospitable tasting rooms where you often can meet the owners and taste award-winning wines made from classic European varieties, regional hybrids and assorted fruits such as apples and pears.

Beyond the wineries, the Hudson River Valley contains a wealth of natural beauty rich with hiking and biking trails, famous historic sites, and a culinary treasure of farms and restaurants.



TOURING TIPS

Situated right along the Hudson Valley wine trail, Blueberry Inn on Kiernan Farm makes a convenient home base for a multi-day visit to the area. Nestled in the beautiful Shawangunk Valley, it's a Dutch-style farmhouse that dates back to around 1790 and is packed with antiques.

Another option is the Inn at Twaalfskill, a 19th-century inn located in a wooded residential area. It has a large shaded yard, breezy porch and peaceful garden terrace, all perfect for relaxing when the weather is nice. During the wintertime, guests can utilize the spacious common areas inside.

Meticulous restoration has left



Stoutridge Vineyards

the original details of the Victorian architecture intact, and the atmosphere is further authenticated by period furnishings and coordinated fabrics.

Those who appreciate handcrafted goods will love the area. Along 15 miles of scenic trails, visitors can check out 10 working potters' studio showrooms. They spread out across the communities of West Park, Bloomington, High Falls, Stone Ridge, Accord and West Hurley.

In Sugar Loaf, more than 50 galleries, studios and shops are filled with a wide array of hand-made items that make great home accent pieces or gifts.

Of course, Brotherhood is a must-stop on your winery itinerary. Guided tours of the historic site are offered from April through December.

Other estates worth a visit:

- **Millbrook Vineyard & Winery.**

One of the most honored wineries in all of New York, its bottlings compare favorably to those made in California.

- **Oak Summit Vineyard.** This estate makes only one type of wine: Pinot Noir. The proprietors take a Burgundian approach in all they do, and visits must be arranged in advance.

- **Palaia Vineyards.** A great place to pick up gifts and listen to music four days per week during the busy season — not to mention sample award-winning wine.

- **Stoutridge Vineyards.** While many of the Valley's wineries are housed in historic structures, Stoutridge is more Californian with its state-of-the-art facilities. But history

isn't far away: Less than half-a-mile down the road, you'll find land that has been continuously planted with fruit trees and grapevines for more than two centuries.

- **Whitecliff Vineyard & Winery.**

If you love gorgeous scenery with your wine, Whitecliff is the place to go. The 70-acre property surrounds a tasting room that has a large deck offering spectacular views of the white cliffs of the Shawangunk Ridge.

When planning a visit, keep in mind that the Hudson River Valley is a magnet for leaf-peepers, and accommodations can be both expensive and challenging to arrange. If you don't mind missing the autumn rainbow of colors, a great time to visit is right after Labor Day, when the wineries are starting to gear up for the harvest season and the roads and hotels are less crowded.

For Further Information

Brotherhood Winery
Washingtonville, NY
845-496-3661

Blueberry Inn on Kiernan Farm
Gardiner, NY
845-255-8998

Inn at Twaalfskill
Highland, NY
845-691-3605

Millbrook Vineyard & Winery
Millbrook, NY
845-677-8383

Oak Summit Vineyard
Millbrook, NY
845-677-9522

Palaia Vineyards
Highland Mills, NY
845-928-5384

Stoutridge Vineyards
Marlboro, NY
845-236-7620

Whitecliff Vineyard & Winery
Gardiner, NY
845-255-4613

VINESSE

Hot LIST

1 Hot New Napa Valley Attraction. Some locals consider it one more step in the "Disneyfication" of the region, but Napa Valley Zip Lines is scheduled to open on Sept. 15 nonetheless. Visitors will be able to soar above the valley in a harness on zip lines (steel cables) for roughly a mile in the Mayacamas Mountains. Wine tasting is suggested *after* the ride. www.napavalleyziplines.com

2 Hot Art Exhibit. Through Oct. 31, check out the "Wine & Art" exhibit at the Napa Valley Museum, which is located on the grounds of the California Veterans Home in the up-valley town of Yountville. An array of wine-related topics are covered in a series of 34 panels. www.napavalleymuseum.org

3 Hot Wine Book. Spelunkers rejoice! A new book called *Into the Earth* has been published by Daniel D'Agostini and Molly Chappellet, devoted entirely to wine caves of the Napa Valley. The goal was to illustrate the diversity of caves in the valley, which are used for aging wines under ideal temperature and humidity conditions. Considering there are more than 100 caves in Napa, it was no small undertaking — but it was beautifully executed with stunning photography. Several wineries are selling the book, and it's also available at Martin Design in St. Helena. www.martinshowroom.com



Jug Wine. Originally a field blend of average quality sold for everyday drinking. Now, a derogatory term for a mass-produced, non-descript wine.

Kosher Wine. A wine produced under the supervision of a rabbi, meeting strict standards as prescribed by the Torah.

Lyth. First estate to produce a White Meritage bottling in California's North Coast wine country.

Musque. Winegrape clone that's known for its highly aromatic, Muscat-like nose. There are musque clones of Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. The most famous musque grape is now known as Gewurztraminer.

Nematode. A parasite frequently found in vineyards that can be combated by the use of resistant rootstocks

Onophile. A lover of wine — such as the members of the wine clubs of Vinesse.

VINESSE STYLE

POURING CHAMPAGNE

Could the French be wrong about the way Champagne should be poured?

Yes, according to Professor Gerard Liger-Belair, who recently conducted a series of tests utilizing thermographic equipment at the University of Reims.

The amount and persistence of bubbles in the glass is a key factor in the enjoyment of Champagne. So the goal is to “protect” those bubbles — i.e., to preserve as much CO2 as possible.

Using a widely available wine from Champagne's 2008 vintage, Liger-Belair and his cohorts tested two pouring methods, and three wine temperatures.

The ideal temperature turned out to be 39 degrees Fahrenheit, and the ideal pouring practice proved to be other than what is known as “the

Champagne method.”

For decades, French vintners have poured Champagne into the middle of a flute — a little bit at a time, making sure that the froth doesn't overflow. But according to the study, that can cause a considerable loss of carbon dioxide.

Twice as much CO2 can be retained by instead tilting the flute and pouring the Champagne down the side, much like artisan brewers pour beer.

A few other notes about pouring Champagne:

- While old-fashioned coupe glasses are making a comeback in some locales and restaurants, they are not recommended except for cheap bottles or Champagne cocktails. Coupes are CO2 destroyers.

- While 39 degrees is the best serving temperature on average, older vintages benefit from being served a few degrees warmer.



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APPELLATION SHOWCASE

Wisconsin Northwoods



Wollersheim Winery

Wisconsin may be known for cheese, beer and the Green Bay Packers, but it also has a long history of winemaking.

In fact, one could argue that the origins of the American wine industry are firmly rooted in the rich soil of the Badger State.

In the early 1840s, a Hungarian immigrant named Agoston Haraszthy established a vineyard, winery and wine cellars overlooking the Wisconsin River at what is today the Wollersheim Winery in Prairie du Sac. Haraszthy went on to establish some of the first successful vineyards in Sonoma, Calif.

The many German settlers who came to Wisconsin in the 1800s also brought with them their winemaking skills, producing versions of traditional German wines as well as new varieties made from North America's own native grapes.

In addition, winemakers learned to utilize the many fruits that could be grown in the state. Over time, a number of Wisconsin grape and fruit

wines were born.

The state's famous and remote Northwoods region has a surprisingly high concentration of wineries, including Bayfield Winery, profiled in "Editor's Journal" on page 2.

White Winter Winery creates world-class meads and hard ciders using age-old techniques. Hook Stone Winery crafts its wine from grapes grown in California and Washington.

The European-style Chateau St. Croix features a carriage house, stables, vineyards, formal gardens, picnic areas and a fishing pond. Eight acres of vineyards provide the fruit for the well-balanced wines of River Bend Vineyard & Winery. At Cap-N-Corks, you'll find a variety of wines poured daily at the tasting bar, as well as fresh-roasted coffee.

Autumn Harvest Winery is surrounded by picturesque countryside and a lush orchard. Munson Bridge Winery is located on a historic farm in Clark County. Woodland Trail Winery is situated in the Nicolet National Forest. And Three Lakes Winery is located in a turn-of-the-century train depot, stocked with delightful antiques.

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Q As we travel around the country, we always try to stop by a winery or two, if there are any in the area. We've noticed that at some wineries, the wines are made out of fruit other than grapes. Is this a common practice?

A Quite common, particularly in areas where the climate is not conducive to winegrape growing. In these (generally) colder climes, many vintners use hybrid grape varieties that have been developed with the climate in mind, and many instead use other fruits such as apples, pears, cherries and berries. Another popular wine in colder climates is mead, made out of honey.

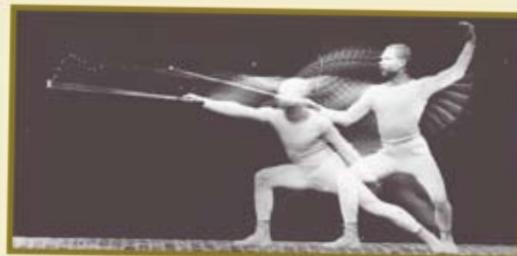
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Number of wineries in Wisconsin that generally are open to the public during set hours or by appointment.

For contact information and suggested itineraries, visit:
www.wiswine.org

If you're looking to use wine as an investment (good luck!), it's best to select bottlings that are made to age (their price will go up over time), are crafted by an estate with a track record of success, come from an outstanding vintage for the appellation/country, and have received high scores from reviewers. Once you've acquired the wine, be sure to store it under optimum conditions.

Behind The Label



WILLIAM
KNUTTEL
NAPA VALLEY
CABERNET SAUVIGNON

2005

Wine labels are designed mainly to attract consumer attention and sell product. But even within the parameters that such marketing necessities create, there is room for creativity and artistic expression. With this label, for instance, designer Jeffrey Caldevey successfully captures the frenetic and eccentric wine world of vintner William Knuttel with the chronophotograph "le coup d'epee." This 1890 attempt of photographer Etienne-Jules Marey to show motion in photos — in this case, the thrust of the epee — is symbolic of the traits that make fine wine so alluring: finesse, development, power and balance.



“ If it can be fermented, I can make wine out of it. ”

— A New York vintner who asked that we not use his (or her) name

FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS

AVOCADO & GUACAMOLE

A few years ago, the Mayor of Chicago was answering questions about trying to have more healthful dishes available at the annual “Taste of Chicago” walk-around event in Grant Park.

You know, things that attendees could gobble up besides giant turkey legs, deep-dish pizza, cheesecake and fried you-name-it.

Thinking on his feet, the Mayor remembered one of the new items that had been added and, attempting to defend the smorgasbord of fat-filled offerings, said, “Guacamole is good for you.”

Well...

All things in moderation, of course, and a few spoonfuls of guacamole every so often — perhaps as part of a salad or with a grilled chicken breast — won’t do the reasonably healthy person any harm.

In fact, the key ingredient in guacamole — avocado — contains the kind of fat that actually can do us some good... again, in moderation. And the good news is that you can drink wine with it, not something that can be

said of every fruit and vegetable.

The oily nature of the avocado creates a texture sensation in the mouth that is best complemented by a seemingly oily wine. Thus, when avocado is the overriding flavor of a dish, a wine such as Pinot Grigio pairs beautifully. So does Riesling, as long as it’s fermented completely dry.

With a turkey-and-avocado sandwich, where avocado takes a co-starring role, a richer wine is called for. The best match: a creamy California Chardonnay.

Slicing that avocado into a salad? Assuming the dressing isn’t overpowering, Sauvignon Blanc is a great match. Semillon would be even better, but varietal bottlings are few and far between.

Which brings us to guacamole, combining avocado with sour cream (or yogurt, for a more healthful option) and some spice for a bit of a kick.

The spice makes pairing tricky, but not impossible. We recommend a dry sparkling wine — nothing fancy, just an everyday blanc de blancs.

It’s a combination worth toasting.



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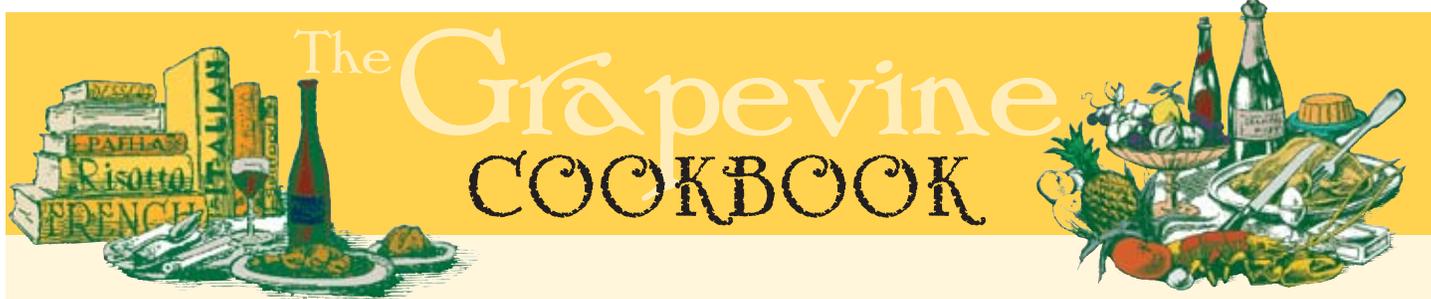
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ROASTED VEGETABLE PIZZA

Those of us who eat pizza quite often need to make sure we include veggies as toppings — so we may continue to eat pizza quite often. This recipe fills that bill, makes 8 servings, and can be enjoyed with almost any red wine — particularly Sangiovese, Zinfandel or Merlot.

Ingredients

- 1 medium bell pepper, cut lengthwise into eighths
- 1 medium yellow summer squash, cut into 1/4-inch slices
- 1/2 small eggplant, cut into 1/4-inch slices
- 1 package (8-oz.) whole fresh mushrooms, cut in half
- 2 tablespoons roasted garlic-flavored vegetable oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 package (10-oz.) ready-to-serve thin pizza crust
- 1 cup shredded provolone cheese
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil leaves

Preparation

1. Heat oven to 425 degrees. Spray jelly roll pan (15-1/2 inches by 10-1/2 inches by 1 inch) with cooking spray.
2. Spread bell pepper, squash, eggplant and mushrooms in a single layer in pan. Brush with oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake uncovered for 20 to 25 minutes, turning vegetables once, until veggies are tender.
3. Place pizza crust on non-greased cookie sheet. Sprinkle with 1/2-cup of the cheese. Top with vegetables. Sprinkle with remaining 1/2-cup cheese.
4. Bake 8 to 10 minutes, or until cheese is melted. Sprinkle with basil and serve.

ORANGE GRILLED SHRIMP

This tasty dish has a bit of a kick, and that makes it an ideal pairing partner for Sauvignon Blanc or sparkling wine — white or rosé.

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. jumbo shrimp, shelled and deveined
- 1 cup fresh lime juice
- 4 jalapeno peppers, seeded and minced
- 2 tablespoons Tabasco
- 1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons freshly-ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup orange marmalade
- 1/2 cup corn oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 4 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped

Preparation

1. Mix oil, vinegar and lime juice in a sauce pan and heat on a medium setting.
2. Add marmalade, Tabasco, salt and black pepper, and mix well.
3. Add Jalapeno peppers, cilantro and garlic. Remove from heat.
4. Arrange shrimp in a deep glass dish, pour marinade mixture over them, cover and refrigerate for 6 to 24 hours.
5. Grill to desired doneness.

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