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Volume 19

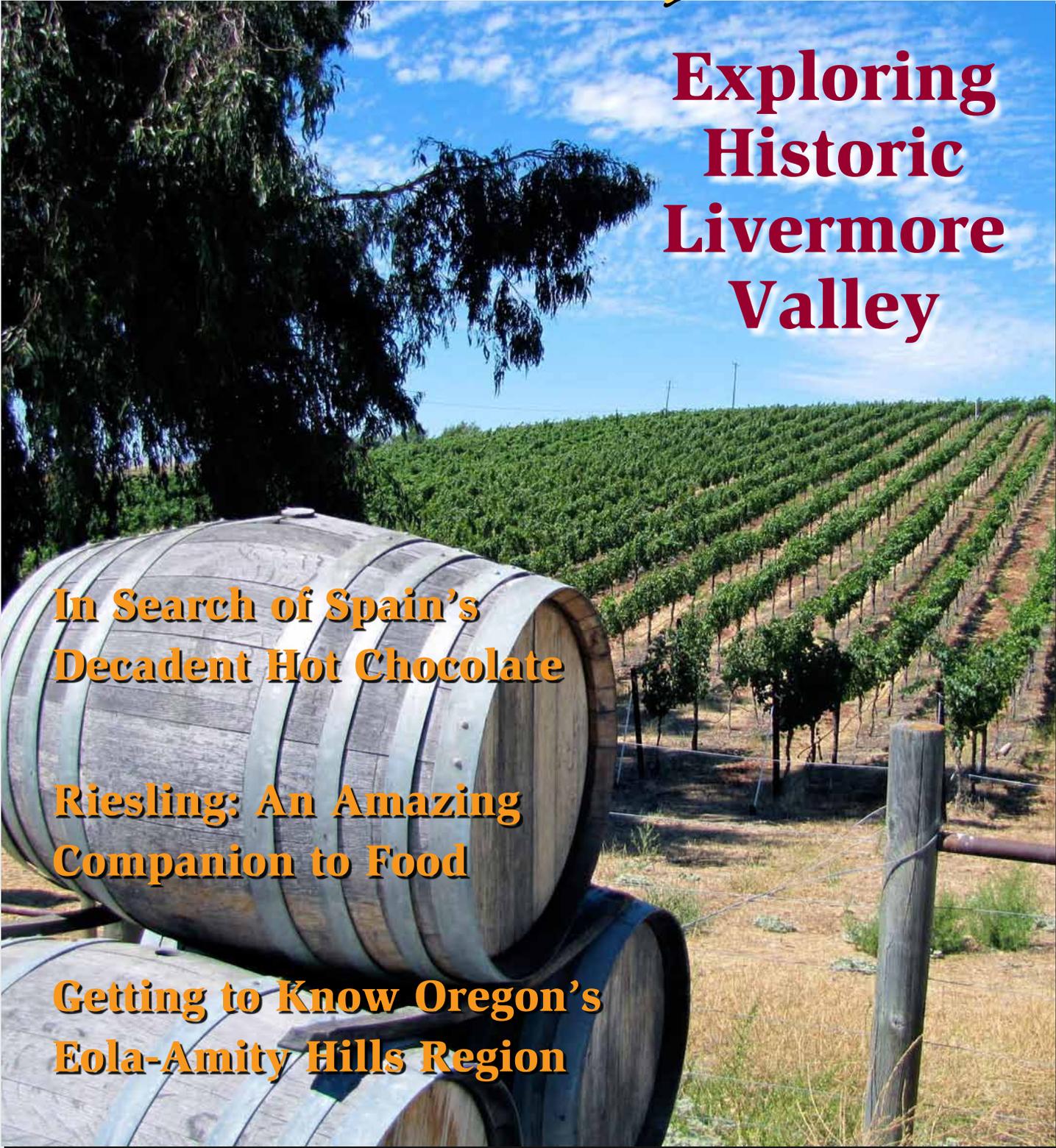
Number 8

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SKU 18030

# The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS



## Exploring Historic Livermore Valley

**In Search of Spain's  
Decadent Hot Chocolate**

**Riesling: An Amazing  
Companion to Food**

**Getting to Know Oregon's  
Eola-Amity Hills Region**

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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:

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**Katie Montgomery**

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## EDITOR'S JOURNAL

# The Millennial Revolution

By Robert Johnson

*With apologies to Jeff Foxworthy, if you're a Millennial, you just may be a... wine drinker.*

Millennials were born between the mid-1970s and the early 2000s, and they represent the youngest generation ever to embrace wine in such large numbers.

The United States last year surpassed France in total wine consumption for the first time since such records have been kept, and a good deal of the credit goes to the Millennial Generation.

Why are younger adults finding themselves just as comfortable with a glass of Pinot Gris as they are with a can of PBR?

There are at least three factors in play:

1. As the children of Generation X, they grew up with wine on the dinner table — at least, that is, in households where there was a dinner table used on a regular basis.

2. Because wine was omnipresent at home, it was never perceived as a special-occasion beverage to be consumed exclusively at frou-frou French restaurants.

3. The emergence of good-quality wines at reasonable prices from such countries as Australia, Argentina and Chile made embracing wine an affordable pastime for those with an interest in it.

Add it all up, and it's no longer

unusual to see groups of young twenty-somethings inhabiting wine bars or scouring the wine aisle at supermarkets. This inquisitive generation — which never knew a time without cell phones or email — has learned about wine on its own, after being exposed to it by their parents or peers.

Wine industry observers believe accessibility to the beverage has played a key role in transforming



Millennials into Merlot and Mourvedre drinkers. In the U.S. alone, there are 6,500 wineries. France has around 27,000, although many are very small family operations. The influx of wines from various New World countries has been unprecedented.

Most big cities are home to at least a handful of wine bars, and many restaurants have enhanced their wine lists with more affordable bottlings that are not plonk.

Accessibility helps eliminate intimidation, the final barrier for young adults to overcome in becoming regular, enthusiastic wine drinkers.

So, on behalf of the generations that came before them, may we say to the Millennials: Welcome to the party!



## The Many Reasons for Blending

**O**ne of the special places on Earth for growing Cabernet Sauvignon grapes is the Rutherford sub-appellation of the Napa Valley.

For one member of the Vinesse tasting panel, the Rutherford-designated Cab from Pine Ridge Winery — a wine originally known as “Rutherford Cuvee” — has been his benchmark Cabernet for nearly 20 years.

Another panel member loves a wine called “Rutherford” from Frog’s Leap Winery. It was introduced in 1996, and while the 2006 vintage is 92 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, there have been years when the Cab portion was as low as 60 percent.

With the “Rutherford,” it’s all about producing a wine that smells and tastes like its place of origin — and that means tweaking the blend from vintage to vintage.

French vintners have taken this approach for generations. In the Bordeaux region, for instance, it’s extremely rare to encounter a 100-percent varietal wine, whether it’s entirely

Cabernet Sauvignon or entirely Merlot. Most vintners utilize both varieties in their cuvees, and many include smaller portions of Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot.

They blend — just as John Williams does at Frog’s Leap — to evoke a sense of place.

There are other reasons for blending as well.

In the cases of both artisanal and mass-produced wines, a vintner may blend to develop and then perpetuate a “house style.” Among the larger producers, Kendall-

Jackson has built a reputation for making Chardonnay that is dependably fruitful and buttery, with just a hint of sweetness. Because it’s so similar from vintage to vintage, it has become a mainstay on countless restaurant wine lists.

Blending also can help “save” a vintage in which a particular grape variety falls short in quality or quantity. There are some years when a vintner can’t make a world-class varietal Cabernet Sauvignon, but can craft a really tasty blend.

When the ultimate goal is simply to produce an outstanding bottle of wine, rare is the vintner who does not embrace blending.



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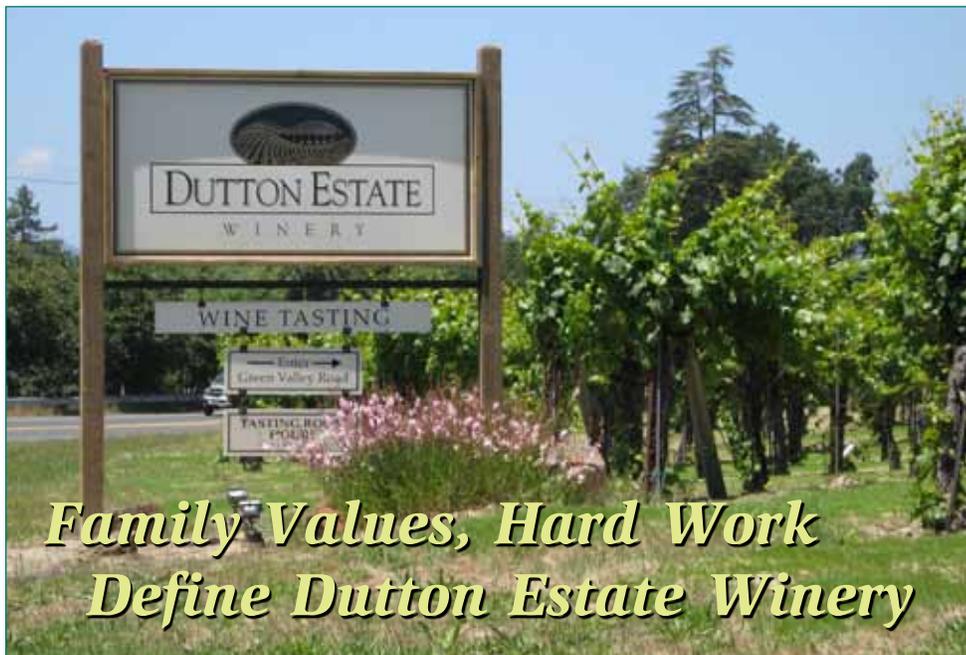
**FREQUENCY:**

Approximately Monthly

**PRICE:**

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***Family Values, Hard Work  
Define Dutton Estate Winery***

***In less than a decade, Dutton Estate Winery has emerged as one of the most dependable makers of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir in a region known for those varietals — Sonoma County's Russian River Valley.***

The estate is situated just outside the charming town of Sebastopol. Once a dominant apple-growing region, Sebastopol now is a destination hideaway and home to the winery's founders, Joe and Tracy Dutton.

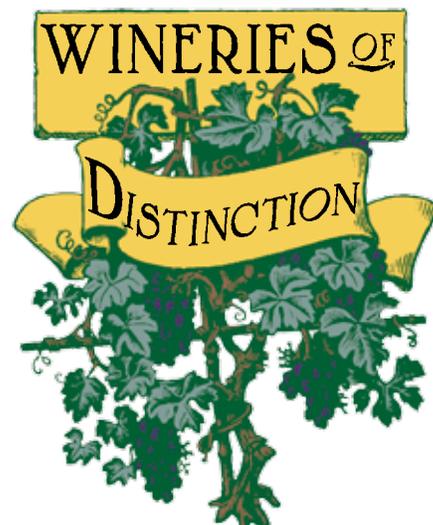
Joe and Tracy's agricultural heritage is deeply rooted in Sebastopol, as Tracy's great-grandparents began farming apples in the 1920s. Today, the family continues to grow apples and grapes at the family's farm and food production facility in Forestville at Kozlowski Farms.

Joe is co-owner of Dutton Ranch, which was founded in 1964 by his parents. Dutton Ranch farms 1,150 acres of grapes and 150 acres of apples, all within the Green Valley-Russian River Valley and Sonoma Coast appellations.

Both Joe and Tracy valued their experience growing up and wanted that same experience for their three girls. They wanted a business that their girls could be part of. Joe is a driving force in the vineyards and continues to manage them. Tracy oversees the winery, and the girls can be seen helping out at winery events.

Earth-friendly farming is practiced by the Duttons, even though it's more demanding than simply letting the chemical salesman tell you what to do. But the rewards are many: cleaner and tastier grapes, safer workers, and a natural environment that will continue to thrive for many generations.

The Duttons safeguard the health of their fruit while reining in chemical applications and other intrusions on the natural farming process. Yesterday, today and in years to come, the chief influence on the flavor of



their grapes will remain the prestigious Russian River Valley itself.

Given their commitment to green farming, the Duttons must monitor their ranches constantly.

They employ an

entomologist who visits every vineyard weekly, alert to leaf hoppers, mites, sharpshooters and other unwanted pests.

They consider the history of each ranch, the legendary coastal fog and other climatic trends, as well as the population of native insect predators. Then they make a choice for the lowest-impact intervention that will still achieve results.

As the Duttons expand to new ranches, they often find themselves cleaning up after the sins of others, clearing creeks and hills of old cars and other debris. They make erosion control a constant priority. And recycling plays a major role at Dutton Ranch. Into the bins go all glass, plastic, paper, oil, batteries and cardboard.

The Duttons also make common cause with other grape growers in fostering a sound environment. Joe Dutton is a board member of the Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, and the ranch plays host to regular seminars on such topics as sustainable farming.

Four distinct vineyards supply the special Dutton Ranch grapes: Thomas Road, Manzana, Vine Hill and My Fathers.

Thomas Road Vineyard is located at the northeastern part of the Green Valley. Planted to clone Dijon 115 in 1997, this vineyard produces wine with dark berry flavors and a bold, firm mouthfeel. The vines planted on the rockier Sebastopol-type soil historically produce wines of this consistent character. This fearless



*Joe and Tracy Dutton. Dutton's three girls can be seen helping out at winery events.*

wine is defined as the “Big Brother” of the four Dutton Pinot Noir bottlings.

The Manzana Vineyard is located next to the Dutton Palms Chardonnay Vineyard, in the

heart of the Green Valley. Manzana's hillside vineyard is east facing, which is an optimal situation for growing Pinot Noir.

Planted to clone Dijon 828 in 2001, this vineyard produces wine with red fruit flavors and a bold, luscious mouthfeel. The vines are planted in Gold Ridge-type soil.

Vine Hill Ridge Vineyard, which is located on Green Valley Road, surrounding the Dutton tasting room, was planted in 1980 using quadrilateral cane trellising. This wonderful plot of vines produces consistent fruit of high quality.

My Fathers Vineyard, named for the home property of Tracy Dutton's mother and father, was planted by Joe Dutton in 2002. Situated in one of the coldest areas of the Russian River AVA, this vineyard consistently produces some of Dutton Estate Winery's most sought-after Syrahs.

In an age when the wine business has consolidated greatly, Dutton Estate Winery stands out as an increasingly rare family estate — one based on family values and good old-fashioned hard work.

## Winery 4-1-1

### Dutton Estate Winery

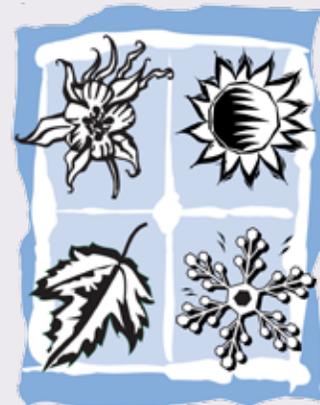
8757 Green Valley Road

Sebastopol, CA 95472

707-829-9463

[info@sebastopolvineyards.com](mailto:info@sebastopolvineyards.com)

## Four Seasons



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## TOURING TIPS

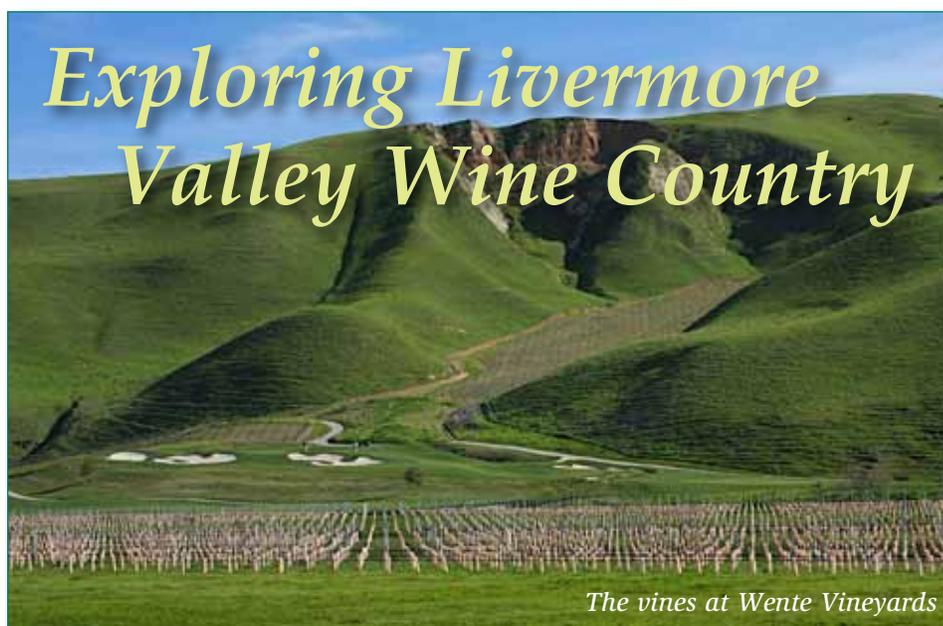
**C**oncannon Vineyard recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of Petite Sirah as a varietal wine.

Petite Sirah... a.k.a. P.S.... a.k.a. "Pets"... has been around a lot longer than that, of course. It's just that it didn't always go by that name, nor was it bottled as a varietal wine; vintners often used it to "beef up" their red blends. (Check out the "Wine in the Glass" archives at <http://blog.vinesse.com> for nine fascinating facts about Petite Sirah.)

Concannon is one of more than three dozen estates in California's Livermore Valley, located less than an hour east of San Francisco International Airport. The winery has been going strong for more than 125 years, as has nearby Wente Vineyards. If you're a history buff, these two are must-see stops during a tour of the area.

Other Livermore Valley Wine Country estates offer out-in-the-country experiences, and there also are a handful of tasting rooms in downtown Livermore's Blacksmith Square.

Unlike some other wine regions — with large crowds, long lines and expensive tasting room fees — most of Livermore's wineries still offer complimentary tasting in a homespun atmosphere, where wine enthusiasts and novices alike are warmly welcomed.



*The vines at Wente Vineyards*

Some of the wineries offer fine dining on the premises, while others provide all the fixin's... and outdoor tables... for a casual picnic.

For upscale wine country dining, the Wente Vineyards Restaurant features American dishes with Italian, French and Californian influences. Many of the ingredients come from the estate's organic garden.

Looking for a more casual meal, but aren't in the mood to battle the local ant colonies? Café Garré at Garré Winery offers outdoor patio seating and Mediterranean-inspired wine country cuisine.

There are several outstanding stand-alone restaurants in the area as well. But first, we need to work up an appetite by doing some wine tasting. Here are thumbnail sketches on a handful of Livermore Valley wineries...

- **Deer Ridge Vineyards Winery Estate & Gathering Place** — Besides having the longest name among Livermore area wineries, Deer Ridge is a true showplace. Its Tuscan-style architecture is stunning against a backdrop of vineyards and soft rolling hills.

- **Les Chénes Estate Vineyards** — Soak in magnificent mountain views as you sip estate-grown varietals that trace their roots to the Rhone region of France.

- **Cedar Mountain Winery** —

Cabernet Sauvignon is the specialty of the house at Cedar Mountain, where the focus is on small-lot, handcrafted wines.

- **La Rochelle Winery** — By tapping top vineyards in California and Oregon, La Rochelle has gained a reputation for crafting world-class Pinot Noir.

- **Fenestra Winery** — A valley favorite for more than 30 years, Fenestra is a boutique estate that crafts limited-quantity bottlings that allow Livermore's terroir to shine through.

- **Elliston Vineyards** — Many Livermore-area couples have tied the knot on Elliston's beautiful grounds. The setting is stunning... and so are the wines.

- **Little Valley Winery** — Tempranillo, a Spanish variety, is the star of the show at this estate, which also makes an array of sparkling wines. A favorite at the tasting room is the raspberry.

- **Mitchell Katz Winery** — If you enjoy drinking "wines of a place," this is the place to go. The winery is devoted exclusively to single-vineyard wines that capture the essence of the particular vineyard and the specific vintage.

- **Bent Creek Winery** — Nestled in the rolling hills southeast of Livermore, Bent Creek is surrounded by vineyards. It's a beautiful place to taste award-winning wines of numerous varieties.

- **Charles R Vineyards** — This

small, family-owned winery is tucked away in a valley along an old mining road. When you stop by to taste the handcrafted wines, there's a very good chance you'll meet the man who made them: Randy Bartlett.

- **Longevity Wines** — The specialty of this artisan winery is a Rhone-style blend consisting of Syrah, Grenache, Mourvedre and Petite Sirah.

- **John Christopher Cellars** — Located in historic Blacksmith Square, the tasting room offers an array of wines to sample, including some sublime red blends.

- **Livermore Valley Cellars** — The folks at LVC take winemaking seriously. But the same does not go for themselves. Their irreverent approach to the wine-tasting experience is a breath of fresh air in a sometimes-stuffy wine world.

Our thirst adequately sated, it's time to chow down.

If you'd care to rub elbows with the locals, head to Esin Restaurant and Bar for American food with a Mediterranean flair, top-notch service, innovative desserts and an award-winning wine list.

Craving steak? Hap's Original is an authentic New York-style steakhouse featuring broiled-to-perfection Angus steaks, and expertly executed seafood. It, too, boasts an extensive wine list.

And if it's a unique, tell-your-friends-all-about-it experience that you seek, there's only one place to go: Campo di Bocce of Livermore. There, you'll dine in the casual elegance of an Old World Italian villa, sip fine local wines and test your bocce skills on one of eight state-of-the-art courts.

From historic wine estates to vineyard-side gourmet dining, and from pristine picnic locations to bocce, Livermore Valley Wine Country offers plenty to see, do... and, of course, taste.

## For Further Information

**Concannon Vineyard**  
925-456-2505

[www.concannonvineyard.com](http://www.concannonvineyard.com)

**Wente Vineyards**  
(2 locations)

925-456-2305 • 925-456-2405  
[www.wentevineyards.com](http://www.wentevineyards.com)

**Garré Winery**  
925-371-8200

[www.garrewinery.com](http://www.garrewinery.com)

**Deer Ridge Vineyards Winery**  
925-743-9427

[www.deerridgevineyards.com](http://www.deerridgevineyards.com)

**Les Chénes Estate Vineyards**  
925-373-1662

[www.leschenesvine.com](http://www.leschenesvine.com)

**Cedar Mountain Winery**  
925-373-6636

[www.cedarmountainwinery.com](http://www.cedarmountainwinery.com)

**La Rochelle Winery**  
925-243-6440  
[www.lrwine.com](http://www.lrwine.com)

**Fenestra Winery**  
925-447-5246  
[www.fenestrawinery.com](http://www.fenestrawinery.com)

**Elliston Vineyards**  
925-862-2377  
[www.elliston.com](http://www.elliston.com)

**Little Valley Winery**  
925-862-9006  
[www.littlevalleywinery.com](http://www.littlevalleywinery.com)

**Mitchell Katz Winery**  
925-931-0744

[www.mitchellkatzwinery.com](http://www.mitchellkatzwinery.com)

**Bent Creek Winery**  
925-455-6320

[www.bentcreekwinery.com](http://www.bentcreekwinery.com)

**Charles R Vineyards**  
925-443-3043

[www.charlesrvineyards.com](http://www.charlesrvineyards.com)

**Longevity Wines**  
925-551-3673

[www.longevitywines.com](http://www.longevitywines.com)

**John Christopher Cellars**  
925-456-9463

[www.johnchristophercellars.com](http://www.johnchristophercellars.com)

**Livermore Valley Cellars**  
925-454-9463

[www.lvcwines.com](http://www.lvcwines.com)

**Esin Restaurant and Bar**  
925-314-0974  
[www.cafeesin.com](http://www.cafeesin.com)

**Hap's Original**  
925-249-0781  
[www.hapsoriginal.com](http://www.hapsoriginal.com)

**Campo di Bocce of Livermore**  
925-249-9800  
[www.campodibocce.com](http://www.campodibocce.com)

# VINESSE

## Hot LIST

**1 Hot Wine Festival.** Last year, it was dubbed "the event of the season in the Caribbean." So they're going to do it again this fall. "It" is the 2nd annual Barbados Food & Wine and Rum Festival, and it's scheduled for Nov. 18-21. The festival features an array of seminars and plenty of opportunities to sample your favorite adult beverage... as well as rum-based concoctions.  
[www.FoodWineRum.com](http://www.FoodWineRum.com)

**2 Hot Friday Night in Wine Country.** We've shared the wines of Lucas & Lewellen with club members on several occasions, and this summer, the Lucas & Lewellen tasting room in Solvang, Calif., has been sharing delicious wine-and-cheese pairings with guests. The next "Friday Night Wine Down" is scheduled for Aug. 26 from 6 to 8 p.m., and includes wines paired with artisan cheeses, plus live music, all for \$20.  
[www.LLwine.com](http://www.LLwine.com)

**3 Hot Santa Maria-Style Barbecue.** Three local purveyors of some of the best 'Q on the planet. Three local breweries. Fifteen local wineries. Put it all together and what do you get? An event called "Vino-Q," which is set for Aug. 20 from 12 noon to 4 p.m. at the Town Center in Santa Maria, Calif. A full list of participating wineries is available online.  
[www.vinoqsm.com](http://www.vinoqsm.com)



**Ugni Blanc.** Another name for Italy's Trebbiano variety. It often is described as pleasant and tart, but typically is used for blending.

**Viader Vineyards.** A winery situated on Napa Valley's Howell Mountain, founded in 1987 by Delia Viader. Because the vineyard site is so rocky, dynamite had to be used to loosen the ground for the vineyard's post holes.

**Wines & Vines.** A leading trade publication in the wine industry. Its original name (in 1919) was the *California Grape Grower*. It's a go-to source of information for those in the business.

**York Mountain.** An American Viticultural Area in California, west of Paso Robles.

**Zaca Mesa Winery.** A leading producer of Rhone-style wines from California's Central Coast growing region.

## VINESSE STYLE

### SPANISH HOT CHOCOLATE

*It's late. You've been partying all night, and "last call" has come and gone.*

But you're still wide awake, and you're hungry. Where to go?

In most parts of the United States (except, perhaps, in the big cities), the choices are few and far between. As a result, places such as Denny's and The Waffle House do a brisk wee-hours business.

But in Madrid, revelers wind down in a much more sophisticated manner. They head for the Plaza Mayor, and seek out Spain's most famous *chocolateria*: San Ginés.

There, waiters in white jackets serve cups of thick, almost pudding-like hot chocolate, accompanied by deep-fried *churros*. On a diet? Not at San Ginés.

There is a long-established if slightly under-the-radar chocolate culture in Spain. The natives live

it, but visitors must seek it out. Fortunately, chocolate shops and *chocolaterias* are not hard to find.

Also in Madrid, the simply-named Chocolat is a Sunday morning staple, where the hot liquid treat is accompanied by *porras* — similar to churros, only chewier.

Many visitors to Spain flock to Valencia to see that city's massive Gothic cathedral.

Just steps away is another bastion of Spanish chocolate wonderfulness: Santa Catalina.

This *chocolateria* is a bit more daring with its menu — in a good way. Rather than churros, the preferred snack is a pumpkin *bunuelo*, or fritter. And the hot chocolate is bolstered by an infusion of cinnamon, then topped with whipped cream.



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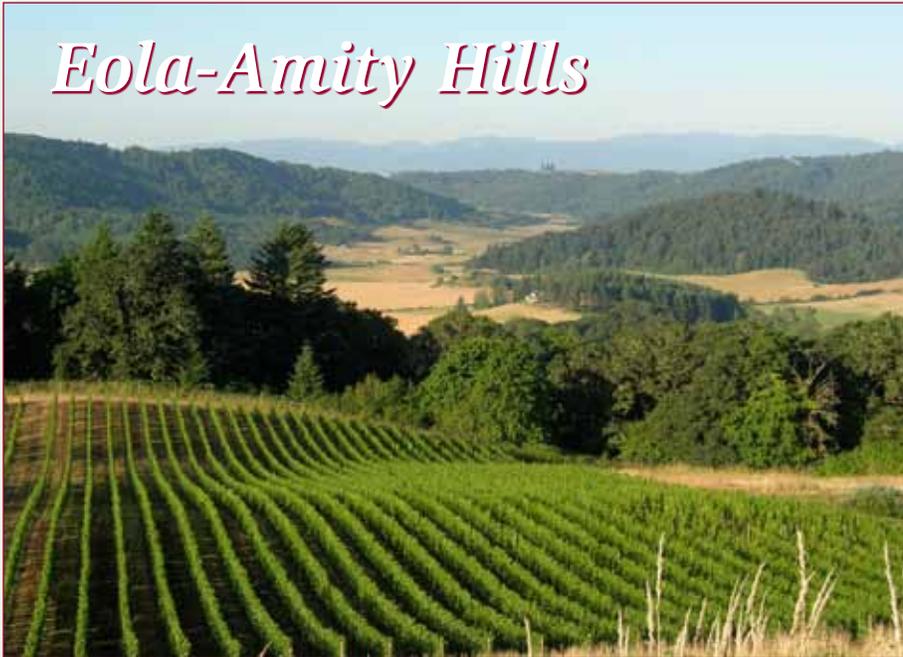
#### PRICE:

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## APPELLATION SHOWCASE

### *Eola-Amity Hills*



***The Willamette Valley is the “capital” of Oregon’s wine industry. Within the vast appellation are a handful of sub-appellations, each with unique characteristics that influence the style of the wines.***

Eola-Amity is one such sub-appellation, situated just outside of the capital city of Salem, and encompassing 37,900 acres. About 2,000 of those acres are devoted to vineyards, which are farmed by 30 wineries.

The Eola-Amity Hills region enjoys a temperate climate of warm summers and mild winters, and 40 inches of annual rain, most of which falls outside of the growing season. The average maximum temperatures are 62 degrees in April and 83 degrees in July, which contribute to the ideal conditions for the cool-climate grape varieties that dominate the Eola-Amity Hills.

The climate is greatly influenced by its position due east of the Van Duzer Corridor, which provides a break in the coast range that allows cool Pacific Ocean air to flow through. This drops temperatures in the region dramatically, especially during late summer afternoons,

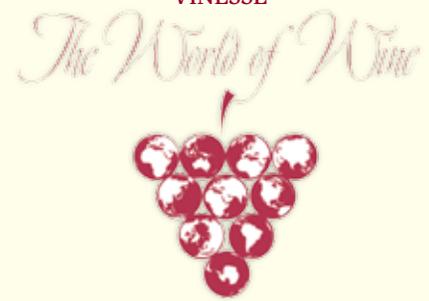
helping to keep grape acids firm.

The soils in the Eola-Amity Hills contain volcanic basalt from ancient lava flows, as well as marine sedimentary rocks and alluvial deposits at the lower elevations of the ridge. This combination results in a relatively shallow, rocky set of well-drained soils, which typically produce small grapes with great concentration.

Eola Hills, and its northern extension, Amity Hills, is part of a North Willamette Valley hill chain that developed out of intense volcanic activity and the collision of the Pacific and North American plates. The main ridge of the Eola Hills runs north-south and has numerous lateral ridges on both sides that run east-west. The majority of the region’s vineyard sites exist at elevations between 250 and 700 feet.

The predominant varieties of the area are Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Gris.

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### **WINE COLOR MIX:**

Reds, Whites, or Mixed

### **FREQUENCY:**

6 times per year

### **PRICE:**

\$122.94 per shipment plus shipping

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**Q** Can you tell me how many wineries there are in California? My wife says it's more than 5,000, and I can't believe that's true.

**A** You win this particular debate. As of 2010, the number of bonded wineries in the Golden State was at 3,364. Perhaps your wife was thinking of the total for the United States, which last year was up to 7,626, according to Wine Institute.

**J**ust a few years ago, it finally could be said that there was at least one winery in each of America's 50 states. Today, there are at least two in each state, now that a second has been opened in North Dakota.



“The good news about wine is that this is its golden age. There has never been so much good wine on earth ever before.”

— Wine educator Kevin Zraly, quoted in the Chicago Tribune

**T**he concept of cellaring wine is foreign to most Americans. According to those who track such matters, only 1 percent of all wine is consumed more than five years after it was made. Around 9 percent is opened and enjoyed between a year and five years after it was made. That means 90 percent of all wines are consumed within one year of their crafting and bottling.

**L**a Bodega Winery provides wine drinkers with an opportunity to sample its wares while on the fly — almost literally. The Texas-based estate, owned by Gina Puente-Brancato, offers samples of its wares at two locations within the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport: Terminal A, near Gate A15, and Terminal D, near Gate D14. The wine samples can be accompanied by a plate of Zuniga's tapas, providing a nice respite from the hustle and bustle of the airport. La Bodega almost makes it a pleasure to be delayed. (We said *almost...*)



**75** Percentage of wine consumed in the U.S. that is made in the U.S. For the most part, Americans prefer American wine.



**T**he Sustainable Winegrowing Program was initiated in January 2001 by winegrowing members of Wine Institute and the California Association of Winegrape Growers to promote vineyard and winery practices that are sensitive to the environment, responsive to the needs and interests of society-at-large, and economically feasible to implement and maintain. Wine Institute is a public policy advocacy group, representing more than 975 California wineries and affiliated businesses that are responsible for 85 percent of the nation's wine production. CAWG is a public policy advocacy group of winegrape growers, representing more than 60 percent of the total annual grape crush. Together, they developed the Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices workbook as the basis for the Sustainable Winegrowing Program, providing a tool for vintners and growers to assess their practices and learn how to improve their overall sustainability.

## FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS

# Riesling's Multiple Personalities

**O**ne of the challenges of successful food-and-wine pairing is that there are no absolutes.

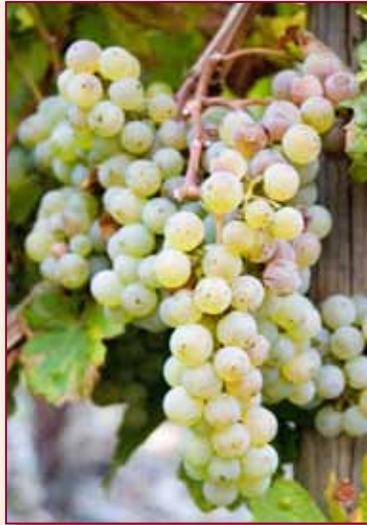
For instance, one of the more commonly referenced combinations is Pinot Noir with salmon. Probably 95 percent of the time, that's a safe bet.

But what if that salmon were prepared with a black pepper crust? The spiciness of the seasoning would overpower the fruit flavors of the Pinot, rendering the wine comparatively flavorless.

Among white wines, the two varietals most commonly cited as "food friendly" are Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling. Happily, nearly all bottlings of Sauvignon Blanc pair nicely with various types of seafood — from barbecued shrimp to seared scallops, and from Dungeness crab to fried clams.

But "blanket statements" don't work with Riesling because winemakers craft it in a variety of styles, from bone dry to very sweet. Although a majority that find their way onto wine lists at fine restaurants are dry, some are not. And it's the sugar level in the wine that determines, by and large, the appropriate food partner.

Let's begin with the bone-dry renditions, as these are the most food-friendly and versatile. These wines embody characteristics that have been described as steely, minerally and citrusy — depending largely upon where the grapes are



grown. Because of their taut acidity, they seemingly sing when consumed with food.

What type of food? Except for red meats and dishes with red sauces, the possibilities are almost limitless: oysters, feta cheese, Chinese food, Tex-Mex fare, stuffed olives, sliced fresh tomatoes, veal, chicken with soy

sauce... and we could go on.

Then there are the off-dry renditions of Riesling — those that are slightly sweet in the mouth thanks to the 1 or 2 percent residual sugar in the cuvee when fermentation is halted.

Off-dry does not equate with super-sweet. Typically, the fruit flavors of the wine simply shine more brightly. It can be like biting into a perfectly ripe peach; you'll experience sweetness, but not necessarily taste sugar.

This is a perfect style of wine to serve on Easter or Thanksgiving — or anytime the main course is ham or a similarly salty dish. Off-dry Riesling also is a great choice when serving a cheese tray with multiple selections.

Sweet Riesling can function as dessert on its own, and also pairs beautifully with fruit-driven desserts such as a peach cobbler with whipped cream, or apple pie with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

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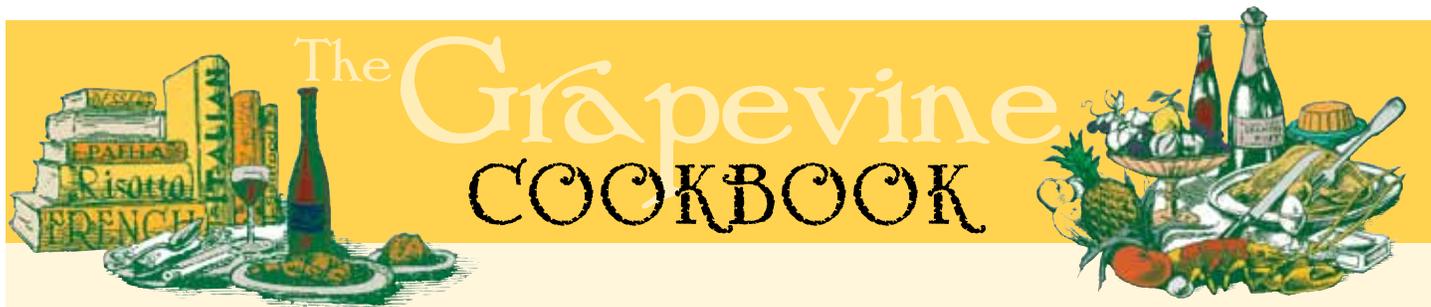
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### HAM DIVAN

This dish pairs nicely with off-dry renditions of white wines such as Riesling or Gewurztraminer.

#### Ingredients

- 10-oz. package frozen broccoli spears, cooked and drained
- 8 slices cooked ham
- 1 envelope (1.5-oz.) cream-style chicken soup mix
- 1 cup sour cream
- ¾-cup milk
- 2 tablespoons dry bread crumbs
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese

#### Preparation

1. Arrange broccoli in a shallow 1½-quart baking dish. Place ham slices on top of broccoli.
2. In a small bowl, stir cream-style chicken soup mix into sour cream. Blend in milk. Pour over ham.
3. Sprinkle top with bread crumbs tossed with Parmesan cheese.
4. Bake for 15 minutes in 400-degree oven.

### MEXICAN SKILLET DINNER

This recipe makes 6 to 8 servings, and the dish matches beautifully with Zinfandel or Syrah/Shiraz.

#### Ingredients

- 2-lbs. fresh pork sausage
- ½-cup chopped onion
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 can (15-oz.) tomatoes
- 1 can (15-oz.) kidney beans
- ½-cup chopped green pepper
- 1 package (6-oz.) corn chips
- ½-cup grated American cheese

#### Preparation

1. Cook pork sausage and chopped onion in frying pan until sausage is lightly browned. Pour off drippings.
2. Sprinkle flour over sausage and mix well.
3. Add tomatoes, kidney beans and green pepper. Simmer for 15-20 minutes.
4. Serve over corn chips. Sprinkle top of sausage mixture with grated cheese, and serve piping hot.



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