

TO ORDER MORE FEATURED WINES CALL 1-800-823-5527 TODAY!

Volume 20

Number 5

©Vinesse Wine Club 2012

SKU 19242

# The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS

## *Riding the Rails in Style Through Wine Country*

*Wine Pairing With Tomato  
Sauce and Salty Foods*

*Cruising Europe's Wine  
Country Ports of Call*

*The Impact of Clones  
on the Quality of Wine*

GET YOUR DAILY DOSE OF WINE NEWS AT <http://blog.vinesse.com>



### 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"):

**Lawrence D. Dutra**

Editor:

**Robert Johnson**

Wine Steward:

**Katie Montgomery**

*The Grapevine* is published by Vinesse, 822 Hampshire Road, Suite E, Westlake Village, CA 91361; 1-800-823-5527. Copyright by Vinesse, LLC. Printed in USA.

No responsibility is assumed for loss or damage to unsolicited materials.

## Be good to the planet RECYCLE

### CHARTER MEMBER BENEFITS:

- *The Grapevine* Newsletter
- Premium wine selections at members-only prices
- Wine tasting as a participant on VINESSE's Gold Medal Award Panel
- Complimentary subscription to VINESSE's Cyber Circle Community
- 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
- Complimentary wine tasting



## EDITOR'S JOURNAL

### 4 Pilgrimage-Worthy Napa Valley Estates

By Robert Johnson

*It was just a sidebar, taking up about a third of a page, in the May issue of Food and Wine magazine. But the headline caught my attention: "Wineries Worth a Pilgrimage."*

The author recommended four estates on two continents: Movia in western Slovenia, Chateau Musar in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, Tasca D'Almerita in Sicily, and Chateau Cos D'Estournel in



Bordeaux. The attractions range from "a mad genius winemaker" to "one of Bordeaux's greatest Cabernet-based reds."

The piece got me thinking about how we, as wine lovers, approach our favorite beverage and the places where it is made. When we become interested in a topic, we want to learn more about it. And when it comes to wine, the learning never ceases because each vintage brings new questions and answers. When we make the time to plan a trip to one of our favorite wineries, it really can be a pilgrimage.

I don't know how the *Food and Wine* writer managed to get the list down to just four wineries in the entire world. For me, virtually every winegrowing region around the globe is home to at least that many pilgrimage-worthy estates. We

spotlight many of them in our "Wineries of Distinction" feature.

Just for fun, I've started to make lists of wine regions and wineries within those regions that

I believe are worth a visit. Every so often, I'll share one of those lists here — beginning with Napa Valley...

• **The Hess Collection** — Donald Hess owns wineries around the world, and his Napa estate houses about a quarter of his acclaimed collection of international contemporary art.

• **Sterling Vineyards** — Visitors take a tram from the parking lot to the winery, and once they reach the top, they're rewarded with a breathtaking, 360-degree panorama of the valley.

• **Far Niente** — During the springtime, you can spot the red and pink azaleas on this estate's 13-acre garden from a mile away.

• **Domaine Chandon** — Etoile is one of the few restaurants that's part of a Napa Valley wine estate, and it delivers plenty of style, sophistication and pleasure... in its décor, and on its plates.



## Make No Bones About Importance of Clones

**B**ring up the subject of human cloning, and prepare yourself for a spirited ethics debate.

But when the topic turns to grapevine cloning, the mood can become downright romantic. Matching the right clone to the right vineyard site can make all the difference between a vintner's ability to craft a world-class wine, and the introduction of the next iteration of "2-Buck Chuck."

"In viticulture, a clone refers to a vine variety that is selected for specific qualities, which result from natural mutations," explains Anthony Bell of Bell Wine Cellars in Yountville, Calif., a champion of Clone 6 Cabernet Sauvignon. "Cuttings are made from an original 'mother vine' that exhibits key characteristics, such as resistance to certain diseases or desired cluster size, taste, smell, etc."

What does it take for a vine to be considered a distinct clone?

"The plant must possess a characteristic making it different from its parent plant, even if the difference is

slight," Bell explains. "Larger or smaller fruit, size/yield, disease resistance, fruit maturation rate, fruit color and aroma are all good examples of qualities that growers or winemakers may wish to isolate and develop further.

"Keep in mind that differences between clones of the same variety are much smaller than differences between grape varieties, but sometimes the difference can be important," Bell adds.



For example, the *Chicago Tribune* recently featured a list of Pinot Noir clones, and the aroma-and-flavor spectrum that each exhibits:

**Pommard** — earth, dried mushroom, cherry pie. **2A (a.k.a. Wadenswil)** — cherry, raspberry, rose petal. **113** — plum, cherry, raspberry, cedar. **114** — pomegranate, blueberry, mineral, cola, spice. **115** — rose petal, red cherry, black raspberry, leather, anise. **667** — dark cherry, strawberry, black tea, warm earth, Christmas spice. **777** — black cherry, cassis, blackberry, licorice, leather, tobacco.

Depending on the style of wine a vintner wishes to make, he or she may mix and match specific clones, which also exhibit specific tannin and texture qualities.



## THE ONE THAT STARTED IT ALL!

- Hand-crafted gems produced by little known or small estates
- Limited-production bottlings
- Under-the-radar wines you won't find in supermarkets

### EACH SHIPMENT INCLUDES:

- 6 bottles from all over the wine world
- Detailed Tasting Notes for each featured wine

**WINE COLOR MIX:** Reds, Whites, or Both — Your Choice!

**FREQUENCY:** Monthly

**PRICE:** Only \$12-\$15 average per bottle plus shipping

To learn more about this Club, call 800-823-5527 or visit [www.Vinesse.com](http://www.Vinesse.com)



É L É V A N T  
S O C I E T Y

**IT'S NOT FOR EVERYONE.  
IS IT FOR YOU?**

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.

**EACH ÉLEVANT SOCIETY  
SHIPMENT INCLUDES:**

- 2 or 4 bottles — your choice — of super-premium wines, mostly big and bold red varieties or blends
- Detailed Tasting Notes for each featured wine

**FREQUENCY:**

Approximately Monthly

**PRICE:**

\$85.99 average per shipment including shipping

To learn more about this Club, call 800-823-5527 or visit [www.Vinesse.com](http://www.Vinesse.com)



***Small-Lot Winemaking Is  
a Kuleto Estate Specialty***

***In 1992, culinary entrepreneur Pat Kuleto assembled five parcels from cattle ranchers to create a 761-acre ranch of wild hillside land on the eastern edge of the Napa Valley.***

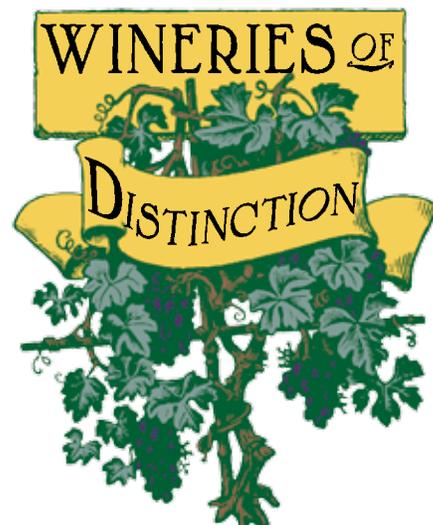
Marrying the eye of a master designer and the heart of a vintner, Kuleto perceived the vast potential for a world-class vineyard on this mountainous land overlooking Lake Hennessey, Pritchard Hill and the towns of Rutherford and St. Helena. The building of his rustically elegant Tuscan-style home, Villa Cucina, and the planting of the surrounding Kuleto Estate vineyards represented the next step in the evolution of a life committed to gracious living and excellence.

After decades of making wine for personal pleasure and the enjoyment of friends, the first planting of Kuleto Estate in 1993 was a culminating moment for Kuleto. Not surprisingly for a man who has designed some of North America's most celebrated restaurants, the inspiration for Kuleto Estate was part of greater vision.

A passionate connoisseur of food and wine, Kuleto sought to craft a calm, sustainable retreat that reflected the robust yet refined lifestyle for which his restaurants and design had become famous. Central to this goal were the vineyards of Kuleto Estate, their permanence, and the legacy they

represented for his son, Daniel.

Deemed unplatable by many due to the steep mountainous conditions, Kuleto was undeterred and applied his years of design, gardening and building experience to the challenging proposition of hillside farming. What he found as he began gently sculpting a small portion of the property only served to reinforce his assessment of the Hennessey Basin of Napa Valley. Underneath the Manzanita scrub, fragrant chaparral and Madrone saplings was a collage of distinct soil types and unique environments



suiting to a truly remarkable range of varieties.

Interpreting the land, Kuleto made bold site-specific planting decisions for each terraced virgin vineyard block, carefully choosing the root-stocks and clones that best suited each varietal. Working with the natural topography, the individually terraced lots are not oriented to one central direction, but instead are planted varietal specific to work in concert with the contours of the property.

Begun in 1993, the first wave of plantings included Cabernet Sauvignon, Sangiovese, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. In the years that

followed, Syrah, Zinfandel and Muscat, as well as several other small-lot blending varieties, were added, planted at elevations ranging from 800 to 1,450 feet.

With the ongoing cultivation of the vineyards underway, the next step for Kuleto Estate was clear: In order to meet his meticulous standards of quality and excellence, Kuleto knew that every aspect of the winemaking process needed to occur on the property.

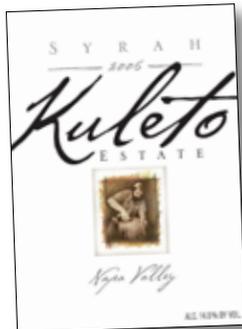
In 1997, he committed to building a winery on site to complete the vineyard estate that had grown to include extensive orchards, gardens and a working ranch with sheep, fowl, cattle and fish from the property's Lake Brunello. Construction of the state-of-the-art Kuleto-designed facility began in 1999 and was completed in 2001.

The 17,000-sq.-ft., gravity-flow facility is a showcase example of technology blended with Old World charm. The winery's design integrates the best of both traditional and innovative techniques for the most efficient and gentle handling of ultra-premium fruit.

Central to the Kuleto philosophy is the ability to individually cultivate and craft the small vineyard blocks at every stage of their development right through the winemaking process. Under the guidance of winemaker

Dave Lattin and long-time vineyard manager Alberto Ochoa, this artisan's approach sometimes focuses on lots as small as half a ton.

With total case production below 8,000 and a full-time, 15-member vineyard and winery team, Kuleto Estate assures attention to detail at a level impossible to achieve in larger wineries.



That suits winemaker Dave Lattin just fine. For Lattin, making wine at Kuleto Estate is about quality of life and a deep relationship with a remarkable piece of land.

From his first memorable sip of Mosel at the age of 6, Lattin has been cultivating a keen palate and a passion

for wine. Originally from Corvallis, Ore., he received his bachelor's degree in microbiology from Oregon State University in 1981. Soon after, he took his first position in the industry, working for Acacia Winery.

Determined to gain experience, Lattin traveled to Europe where he developed a profound appreciation for German and French wines. From the vineyards of St. Emilion to the cellar at Troplong-Mondot, he worked and studied the art and craft of winemaking before returning to the United States.

Founded on a respect for the natural environment, Kuleto has created a place where viticulture and Lattin's winemaking exist as part of a guiding and coherent philosophy that informs every step of the process. That's how Kuleto Estate is crafting wines of distinction that reflect both the remarkable attributes of their unique terroir and the vision of Pat Kuleto.

## Winery 4-1-1

### Kuleto Estate

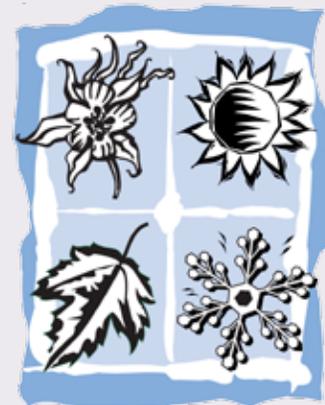
2470 Sage Canyon Rd.

St. Helena, CA 94574

707-302-2200

*Open to the Public  
by Appointment Only*

## Four Seasons



### WINES THAT MATCH THE SEASON

Summer — wines for barbecues, picnics or just for sipping. Fall — wines for hearty, harvest-time dishes. You get the idea. All wines are selected by our Tasting Panel to pair beautifully with the foods you love.

### EACH SHIPMENT INCLUDES:

- 4 bottles of specially-selected wines
- Detailed Tasting Notes for each featured wine

### WINE COLOR MIX:

Reds, Whites, or Mixed

### FREQUENCY:

4-times per year, plus a special holiday shipment

### PRICE:

\$98.99 average per shipment including shipping

To learn more about this Club, call 800-823-5527 or visit [www.Vinesse.com](http://www.Vinesse.com)

**M**ay 12 is National Train Day, with Amtrak staging celebrations at its stations in New York City, Philadelphia, Chicago and Los Angeles.

“Trains have always been an important part of America’s transportation legacy, and Amtrak has been America’s railroad for 40 years,” notes Emmett Fremaux, Amtrak’s Vice President of Marketing and Product Development. “This past year, we had a record-breaking 30 million passengers enjoying the journey on our trains, and this year’s National Train Day will celebrate the unique excitement and inspiration train travel offers.”

If you can’t make it to a National Train Day event, you could plan a train-focused trip to one of America’s winegrowing regions this summer. There are several worthy of consideration, including two in California and one in Colorado.

The Napa Valley Wine Train provides a relaxing three-hour, 36-mile round-trip journey from the historic town of Napa, through one of the world’s best-known wine valleys to the quaint village of St. Helena, and back.

Guests aboard the Wine Train enjoy a freshly prepared lunch or dinner inside a fully restored 1915-1917 Pullman Dining Car or 1952 Vista Dome car as they pass the vineyards and wineries of Napa Valley. They also have the option of pre-purchasing a winery tour.

The expertly refurbished Pullman Cars create an atmosphere conducive to relaxation and enjoyment. Meals, crafted by Executive Chef Kelly Macdonald, are prepared in a specially fabricated kitchen car located adjacent to each dining area. The meals are freshly prepared on the train using environmentally responsible ingredients; humanely raised, hormone-free meats, and fresh, line-caught fish.

The lounge cars are luxuriously



furnished and equipped with picture windows to maximize the view. All rail cars are expertly finished with Honduran mahogany paneling, etched glass partitions and brass accents.

Guests are invited to explore the train, where they may visit the kitchen car to see the chefs in action; the wine tasting bar, where a wine expert can help them find a favorite new wine; or the observation deck, where they can soak in an unobstructed view of the valley.

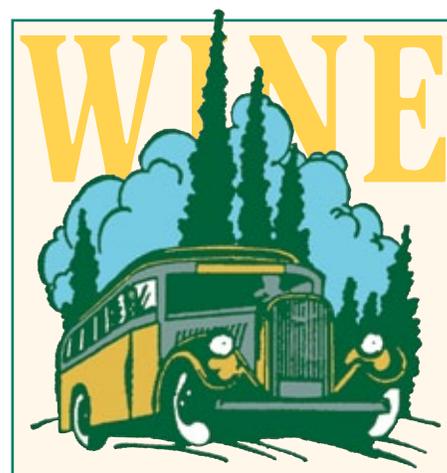
Because the Napa Valley experience should not have to end when the tasting rooms close, a special Evening Winery Tour is offered. The acclaimed Grgich Hills Estate will re-open exclusively for the Wine Train’s Evening Winery Tour guests.

Participants will travel by motor coach to Grgich Hills Estate, where they’ll disembark and be guided on a private tour and tasting. The tour includes a behind-the-scenes look at the cellar, fruit and cheese pairings, as well as samples of Grgich Hills wines.

After the tour, the Napa Valley Wine Train will stop in front of the winery, where tour participants will board and be escorted to the dining car to enjoy a four-course gourmet meal while the train chugs back to Napa.

The tracks on which the Napa Valley Wine Train runs were built in the 1860s to bring guests to the hot springs resort town of Calistoga. While the track to Calistoga no longer exists, much of the rest of the route is unchanged.

During the three-hour journey, guests can see five towns — Napa, Yountville, Oakville, Rutherford and St. Helena — and numerous wineries through the large picture windows. Currently, the day trains stop at different locations, depending on the day of the week. Guests are allowed to disembark at these locations only



**TOURING TIPS**

if they have pre-purchased one of the winery tours.

Down the coast of California, the Santa Barbara Vino Train is just the ticket for those seeking an escape to the beautiful city of Santa Barbara.

Travelers can relax and leave the cares of the world behind as they board the Vino Train in Los Angeles. Once aboard, one is immediately aware of the subdued elegance and refined Streamline Modern appointments of an earlier, more gracious era.

En route, guests enjoy a freshly prepared, family-style buffet breakfast with Belgium waffles, fritatas, sliced chicken sausages and more. The dinner menu on the return trip changes frequently.

Individually owned private railway cars make up the Vino Train. The Overland Trail is the primary car and makes most trips. It's a 1940s-era, former Southern Pacific club lounge that was built as a mid-train first-class lounge for the San Francisco Overland.

Carefully restored and upgraded to meet current Amtrak passenger train requirements, the Overland Trail can be added to virtually any Amtrak train. The car features a gracious quarter-circle bar, provides a very comfortable ride, and boasts expansive picture windows.

All of the wine tasting on the excursion takes place in downtown Santa Barbara, where an "Urban Wine Trail" has been established by several wineries. The tours, led by Tom Anderson, are both fun and



Overland Trail railway car

educational.

Colorado is home to some of the finest scenic railroads in the country. From the classic 1950s-era streamliners of the Royal Gorge Route railroad to steam trains that traverse the rugged Rocky Mountains, these scenic rails provide a way to relax, enjoy civilized travel, and experience a taste of Colorado history and heritage.

The Royal Gorge Route Railroad is Colorado's most unusual rolling restaurant, offering delicious entrees and complementary wines from around the country. Imagine fine dining, exceptional service and delicious food, combined with the spectacular scenery of the Royal Gorge — that's what the Colorado Wine Train offers.

The 12:30 departures feature a three-course lunch, while the 6:30 departure includes a three-course dinner. Wine is not included in the fare, but is available for purchase.

Amtrak's National Train Day comes just once per year, but wine trains around the country offers hundreds of opportunities to soak in the sights while savoring fine wines.

### For Further Information

#### National Train Day

<http://www.nationaltrainday.com>

#### Napa Valley Wine Train

<http://winetrain.com>

#### The Santa Barbara Vino Train

[http://www.overlandtrail.com/ride/sb\\_wine\\_t\\_page.htm](http://www.overlandtrail.com/ride/sb_wine_t_page.htm)

#### The Royal Gorge Route Railroad

<http://www.coloradoscenicrails.com/>

# VINESSE

## Hot LIST

**1 Hot Wine Cruises.** There's rarely a shortage of wine on a cruise ship, but seldom is wine the focus of the cruise. Not so with Celebrity Cruises, which has introduced a series of expeditions that will enable wine lovers to experience the fall harvest in prominent European wine regions such as Bordeaux, Champagne and Rioja. The trips feature both land excursions and plenty of wine-tasting opportunities on board. [www.celebritycruises.com/wine](http://www.celebritycruises.com/wine)

**2 Hot Burgundy Restaurant.** You've traveled to the Burgundy region of France for a total wine immersion experience. So, after touring the vineyards, head back into Beaune and dine in the stone cellars of Le Caveau des Arches. There, you'll be wowed by the behind-glass wine cellar, while savoring delicious Burgundian dishes at reasonable prices. [www.caveau-des-arches.com](http://www.caveau-des-arches.com)

**3 Hot Wine Country Inn.** Venture north of Healdsburg in Sonoma County and you'll come to the small town of Cloverdale, home of Auberge on the Vineyard. In addition to luxurious accommodations, this bed-and-breakfast inn offers occasional workshops on pruning, blending and barrel tasting. It's also part of a local association that has put together a "Wine Tasting and Discount Pass" for guests. [www.sonomabedbreakfastinnwinecountry.com](http://www.sonomabedbreakfastinnwinecountry.com)



**Oenophile.** A wine connoisseur or aficionado — which, if you aren't already, you soon will be as a member of a Vinesse wine club.

**Punt.** The indentation found in the base of a wine bottle. Legend has it that deeper punts are indicative of higher wine quality, but there are plenty of great bottles of wine with very shallow punts.

**Quinta.** The Portuguese term for a winery. Most *quintas* are focused on producing sweet Port wines.

**Reserva.** A Portuguese and Spanish term for a wine of high quality, often exposed to long-term oak barrel aging.

**Super Tuscan.** A style of wine in the Tuscany region of Italy that became popular late in the 20th century. It typically includes Cabernet Sauvignon — a non-Italian variety — in the blend.

## VINESSE STYLE

### COCKTAIL NAPKINS

*If you attend weddings, bridal showers, baby showers or cocktail parties, you are well familiar with the cocktail napkin.*

Typically 5 square inches in size, they can add a classy touch to any special occasion. Pure white is the “color” of choice for most wedding receptions, and any number of solid colors may be used for other “life” events.

We thought we'd begin this story with that information since, after all, this department is called “Vinesse Style.” But truth be told, this month's story is more about the “fun” versions of cocktail napkins that are out there. Specifically, napkins with wine themes.

A great source of these products is GiftedGrape.com. A few of the napkin designs on that site could be called “stylish,” but a vast majority would fall into the “fun” category.

A few of our faves:

- A drawing of a provocatively dressed woman holding up a glass of red wine and saying, “Santa, I've been an awful good girl.”
- The initials “d.i.v.a.” accompanied by what they stand

for: “Diving Into Vino Again!”

- The initials VIN: “Vino Is Necessary.”
- “Does Wine Count as a Serving of Fruit?” (No answer was provided, so we'd have to assume the answer is yes... right?)
- “I'm a Hybrid. I Run on Chocolate & Wine.”
- “We Only Serve Fine Wine. Did You Bring Any?”
- “Wine Me Up and Turn Me Loose.”
- “Wine Is My Favorite 4-Letter Word.”
- “Will Trade Wine for Gossip.”

Gifted Grape, as we mentioned, also carries several “stylish” designs, ranging from varietal grape names (Merlot, Chardonnay) with clusters of grapes around the words, to green napkins adorned by white grape “swirls.”

Whether stylish or fun, cocktail napkins come in handy when one has a not-so-stylish drop of red wine running down their chin.

#### EACH SHIPMENT INCLUDES:

- 4 bottles of the best finds from California
- Detailed Tasting Notes for each wine



#### FEATURED WINES MADE IN CALIFORNIA EXCLUSIVELY!

- Napa
- Sonoma
- Santa Ynez
- Monterey
- Sacramento Delta
- Amador County
- Mendocino
- ... and More!

#### WINE COLOR MIX:

Reds, Whites, or Both — It's Your Choice!

#### FREQUENCY:

Approximately Every Other Month

#### PRICE:

Only \$15-\$17 average per bottle plus shipping

To learn more about this Club, call 800-823-5527 or visit [www.Vinesse.com](http://www.Vinesse.com)

## APPELLATION SHOWCASE



***Known for its breathtaking wilderness and perhaps more famously for its potatoes, Idaho also is home to a fast-growing wine industry and award-winning wines.***

Nestled between the Rocky Mountains and the Snake River, the Idaho wine regions nurture the grapes with a moderate climate, limited precipitation, and a consistent growing season that adds complexity to the grapes.

Winegrapes were first planted in the Pacific Northwest in 1862 by French and German immigrants in the Clearwater Valley of northern Idaho. But the enactment of Prohibition in 1919 had a debilitating impact on the industry, bringing production to a halt until the 1970s.

In 1976 — 43 years after the repeal of Prohibition — Ste. Chapelle began its operation, becoming the first commercial producer of Idaho wines. Today, it's the state's largest winery.

Southwestern Idaho has the highest density of vineyards and wineries. The Snake River Valley appellation is the first registered AVA (American Viticultural Area) in the state, officially designated in April 2007. The AVA covers an area of 8,000 square miles, and has comparable latitudes to many famous wine regions of the world.

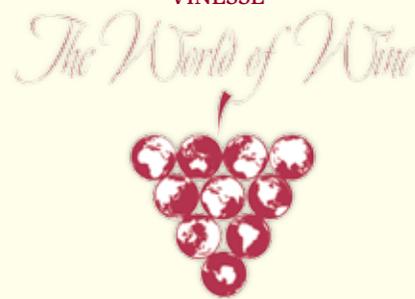
From a geographical standpoint, area vintners insist, Idaho offers

ideal growing conditions. The land in Idaho shows geologic evidence of volcanic sediment and an ancient lake that formed nearly 4 million years ago.

Winegrapes thrive in Idaho's distinct, four-season climate. The characteristic cold winters allow vines to go dormant, rest and conserve important carbohydrates for the coming season, all the while ridding the plants of bugs and disease. The region's summer combination of cool nights and warm days serves to balance grape acids and sugars favorably. The sugars remain high, nurtured during the long day by the abundant sunshine, while acids are maintained at favorable levels by the comparatively cool evenings.

Adequate sugar often is the obstacle in Oregon, where early rains absorbed by the grapes and vines in the final stages of ripening may dilute the fruit's natural levels of the substance. With precipitation also responsible for other assorted agricultural woes, including mold and rot, the Snake River Valley's lack of rainfall is considered a plus.

VINESSE®



**JOIN US FOR AN  
INCREDIBLE WINE  
JOURNEY!**

Each Shipment Takes You  
to a Different Corner  
of the Wine World!

Taste Exquisite Boutique  
Wines... Savor Each Country's  
Winemaking Tradition... and  
Collect Some Souvenirs!

**EACH SHIPMENT  
INCLUDES:**

- 6 bottles of specially selected wines from one country or region of the wine world
- Detailed Tasting Notes for each featured wine

**WINE COLOR MIX:**

Reds, Whites, or Mixed

**FREQUENCY:**

6 times per year

**PRICE:**

\$139.99 per shipment  
including shipping

To learn more about  
this Club, call 800-823-5527  
or visit [www.Vinesse.com](http://www.Vinesse.com)



**Q** Two of our favorite things to eat are ham and olives, but we haven't had much success pairing them up with wine. Do you have any suggestions?

**A** In both of the foods you mentioned, salt is the "enemy." Salt may help bring the flavors of food to life, but when you try to drink a low-acid wine — such as Cabernet Sauvignon — with it, the wine will taste dull... if you can get much flavor out of it at all. The same holds true for Zinfandel, Merlot and most other reds. The solution is to match salty dishes with wines possessing higher acidity levels. That means mostly whites — such as Pinot Grigio, Riesling or Sauvignon Blanc — as well as rosé-style wines. In fact, a rosé makes a great choice because it often will have the flavors you love in red wines, accompanied by the acidity needed to complement the saltiness of the food. Another go-to choice: sparkling wine.

543

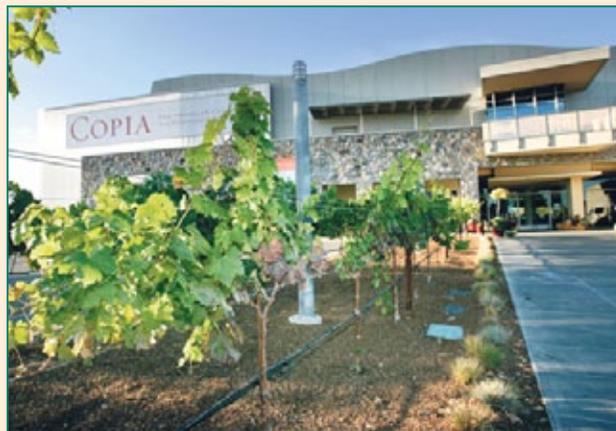
Number of acres comprising the Viu Manent Winery in Chile, about four miles southeast of Santa Cruz. Viu Manent specializes in Malbec, although there are more than 20 varieties planted in its estate vineyard. The winery offers tours of the property in horse-drawn carriages.

“ I use it for my sangria! ”



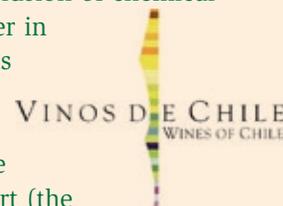
— The owner of the Simple Chai bar in Nanjing, China, when asked what he does with the Chinese wine that he stocks. He added that most Chinese drinkers prefer wines from France, Chile, Australia or South Africa. (Source: Los Angeles Times)

**I**t was known as Copia, its official name also including the verbiage: “The American Center for Wine, Food and the Arts.” Napa Valley wine icon Robert Mondavi put up a million dollars in seed money to get the project going, and the center opened in November of 2001 — an opening covered in this very publication. Copia helped kick-start the revitalization of downtown Napa, but it struggled financially from the very beginning. Finally, some \$78 million in red ink later, Copia closed in late 2008. And late last month, liquidation of Copia's remains were put up for auction in the form of more than a thousand lots — everything from a vintage Easy Bake Oven to a pair of 8-foot-tall urns made out of thousands of bottle caps. The Copia complex is slated for redevelopment.



**“**If you're looking to maximize the chances of a 'check, please!' moment during your next dinner with that someone special, then you may need to ditch the Big Red wine,” writes Joe Roberts in a lifestyle blog for Playboy.com. What does Roberts suggest in its place? “Buck up and order some rosé with that high-priced date night meal.” Much of the rest of the blog is not suitable for a family wine publication, but we can tell you that Roberts does a good job of debunking the “undeserved pink-plonk perception” of rosé.

**O**ne of the hallmarks of “green” winegrape growing — whether it's organic, sustainable or biodynamic — is the exclusion of chemical pesticides from the vineyards. Chile has been a leader in “green” winegrowing almost by default, and it has its unique geography to thank. The country is 2,700 miles long, but its average width is only 110 miles, and it's protected on all sides by natural barriers: the Patagonian ice fields to the south, the Atacama Desert (the world's driest desert) to the north, the Andes Mountains to the east, and the Pacific Ocean to the west. Those barriers help keep Chile virtually free of pests, and that means there's no need for pesticides.



## FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS

### Tomato Sauce



**W**hen learning how to cook, one of the first “recipes” we typically are taught is for spaghetti.

It makes perfect sense, since preparing spaghetti is, basically, an extension of learning how to boil water. We cook the pasta in very hot water, and when preparing a basic tomato sauce, we place chopped pieces of tomato in a skillet, add some olive oil, pour in a little water and let the conglomeration simmer. We may add some more water and/or salt to influence the thickness and/or flavor. Simple stuff.

As we advance in our cooking skills and confidence, we’ll add other flavors to the spaghetti sauce in the form of herbs, spices and vegetables — basil, oregano, parsley, black pepper, onion, garlic. We have multiple ways to make a tomato sauce recipe our own, but it’s still the base ingredient — tomato — that defines it.

And it’s the tomato that provides the challenge when trying to pair a tomato sauce-topped plate of spaghetti with wine. Specifically, it’s the high acid level of tomatoes.

There are no absolute rules in food and wine pairing, as we learned

from the book, *Red Wine With Fish*. That said, there are some cases in which tried-and-true pairings handed down through generations are tough to beat.

So, with spaghetti and tomato sauce, we give you... Chianti.

Chianti is the Italian wine made from Sangiovese, a winegrape that’s high in natural acidity. And as generations of Italians will tell you, the acid of the sauce and the acid of the wine complement each other quite nicely with their engaging “tang.”

Chianti isn’t the only wine that one can uncork with spaghetti. Other red wines with relatively high levels of acid include Pinot Noir (from California, New Zealand or Burgundy) and Gamay (particularly from the Beaujolais region of France).

But there’s always something to be said for pairing food of a region with wine of a region. And there is no more classic meal than spaghetti topped with tomato sauce, accompanied by a glass of Chianti.

Now *that’s* Italian!



## Light & Sweet

### THE FASTEST-GROWING CLUB IN VINESSE HISTORY!

A club for people who enjoy a touch of sweetness in their wines.

Wines that are lighter in style, sometimes sparkle, occasionally blush, and are simply fun to drink.

Wines selected from top regions around the world.

### EACH SHIPMENT INCLUDES:

- 2 bottles of delicious light-and-sweet wines
- Detailed Tasting Notes for each featured wine

### WINE COLOR MIX:

Mostly White; Occasionally Blush/Pink or Sparkling

### FREQUENCY:

Approximately Every Other Month

### PRICE:

Only \$15–\$17 average per bottle plus shipping

To learn more about this Club, call 800-823-5527 or visit [www.Vinesse.com](http://www.Vinesse.com)



## CHICKEN TORTILLA SOUP

Here's a tasty dish to savor on a lazy weekend afternoon, along with a glass of well-chilled Sauvignon Blanc. This recipe yields 4 servings.

### Ingredients

- 2 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
- 1/2 teaspoon olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 cans (14.5-oz. size) chicken broth
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 cup chunky salsa
- 8 ounces corn tortilla chips
- 1/2 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- Sour cream

### Preparation

1. In a large pot over medium heat, saute the chicken in the oil for 5 minutes.
2. Add the garlic and cumin, and mix well.
3. Add the broth, corn, onion, chili powder, lemon juice and salsa. Reduce heat to low and simmer for about 20 to 30 minutes.
4. Break up some tortilla chips into individual bowls and pour soup over chips. Top with Monterey Jack cheese and a sour cream to taste.

## MARINATED FLANK STEAK

Looking for a tasty dish to enjoy with a glass (or two) of Syrah? You've come to the right place. This recipe yields 6 servings... so be prepared to share your wine.

### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 1/2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 lbs. flank steak

### Preparation

1. In a medium bowl, mix the oil, soy sauce, vinegar, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, garlic and black pepper.
2. Place meat in a shallow glass dish. Pour marinade over the steak, turning meat to coat thoroughly. Cover, and refrigerate for 6 hours.
3. Preheat grill for medium-high heat.
4. Oil the grill grate. Place steaks on the grill, and discard the marinade.
5. Grill meat for 5 minutes per side, or to desired doneness.

### As a Member, You Can View Your Account Online

For full details about your account, including your personal shipment history, charge amounts, and more, please visit [www.Vinesse.com](http://www.Vinesse.com) and log on via the "Your Account" link at the top right.

**TO ORDER CALL TOLL-FREE: 800-823-5527**  
**HOURS: MONDAY-FRIDAY 8AM TO 5PM PST**

**Vinesse**

822 Hampshire Rd., Suite E, Westlake Village, CA 91361 • [www.Vinesse.com](http://www.Vinesse.com)