

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

Volume 21

Number 4

©Vinesse Wine Club 2013

SKU 21026

The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS

Eating (and Drinking) Your Way Through *Louisville*

Meet the 'A' List of
Celebrity Vintners

Sampling the Olive
Oils of Argentina

Planning for Picnic
Pleasures Ahead

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

The Celebrity Wine 'A' List

By Robert Johnson

In days of yore, celebrities commonly got involved with products that might be called (no offense intended) utilitarian.

Mickey Mantle and Willie Mays sang the praises of Blue Bonnet margarine. Joe Namath bestowed the virtues of Noxema shaving cream. James Garner and Mariette Hartley hawked Polaroid cameras.

As time went on, celebrities not only endorsed products, they lent their names to them. Paul Newman sought to help others with his food line called Newman's Own. Michael Jordan jumped for joy over the success of Nike's Air Jordan shoes.

But no industry that I can think of has had an influx of celebrities to rival that experienced by the wine industry.

The list is long, impressive and ever changing. It includes, or has included, Mario Andretti, Dan Aykroyd, Antonio Banderas, Drew Barrymore, Raymond Burr, Mike Ditka, Ernie Els, Mick Fleetwood, Peggy Fleming, Greg Norman, Arnold Palmer, Fess Parker and Boz Scaggs.

That's a mere fraction of the full list, and includes only those who feature their names on the labels.

Now, we can add three more names to the celebrity vintner list: singer Fergie, and Hollywood "it" couple Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie.

Pitt and Jolie spend summers at a chateau in Provence, and have

partnered with the famous Perrin family to produce a rosé-style wine called Miraval — a delightful blend of Cinsault, Grenache, Syrah and Rolle. According to a statement issued by Pitt, he and Jolie are "intimately involved" in the project.

As for Fergie, she did not have to search far and wide for a vintner. Her father, Pat Ferguson, has always had a green thumb (the backyard of the old family home in Hacienda Heights, Calif., has been described as "a wonderland of fruit and vegetable crops"), and after retiring to Santa Barbara County's Santa Ynez Valley, he turned his attention to grape growing.

Together, Fergie and Pat founded Ferguson Crest, and one of the wines they make with winemaker Joey Tensley is called "Fergalicious," a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Grenache and Merlot.

"My wines are about having a dream and making it come true," Fergie told *USA Today*. "It's something for a father and daughter to share together. It's coming from the inside out. It's not about having a huge business."

And let's face it: Wine is a lot more fun than margarine.





Planning for Picnic Pleasures Ahead

Omar Khayyam, the 11th- and 12th-century Persian philosopher, astronomer and poet, was among the first to commit the concept of the picnic to paper (or perhaps papyrus):

A book of verse beneath the bough,
A loaf of bread, a jug of wine, and thou
Beside me singing in the wilderness
Ah, wilderness were paradise enow!

Khayyam described the concept, but he did not invent the word. Credit for that generally goes to Tony Willis who, in the 1692 edition of *Origines de la Langue Francaise*, used the word *pique-nique* to describe a group of people, who had brought their own wine, dining in a restaurant.

The English version of the word — picnic — was used by Lord Chesterfield in describing people who were playing cards, drinking and conversing.

Take your pick — *pique-nique* or picnic — and either way,

wine would seem to be a key ingredient of the definition. And as picnic season approaches here in America, it's time to start thinking about what type of wine we're going to place in our basket to enjoy in the Great Outdoors.

A safe bet is sparkling wine, because of its food friendliness. It's the one type of wine that can be served with a smorgasbord of open-air fare, from hot dogs to potato salad. Better still, it need not be expensive. On a picnic, eschew Champagne for an Italian Prosecco or a Spanish Cava.

If you'd like a little more flavor, but not so much that the flavors of the food will be overwhelmed, opt for a dry rosé-style wine, and chill it down. If you're grilling a burger or noshing on tangy ribs, a rosé makes an ideal pairing partner.



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



É L E 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

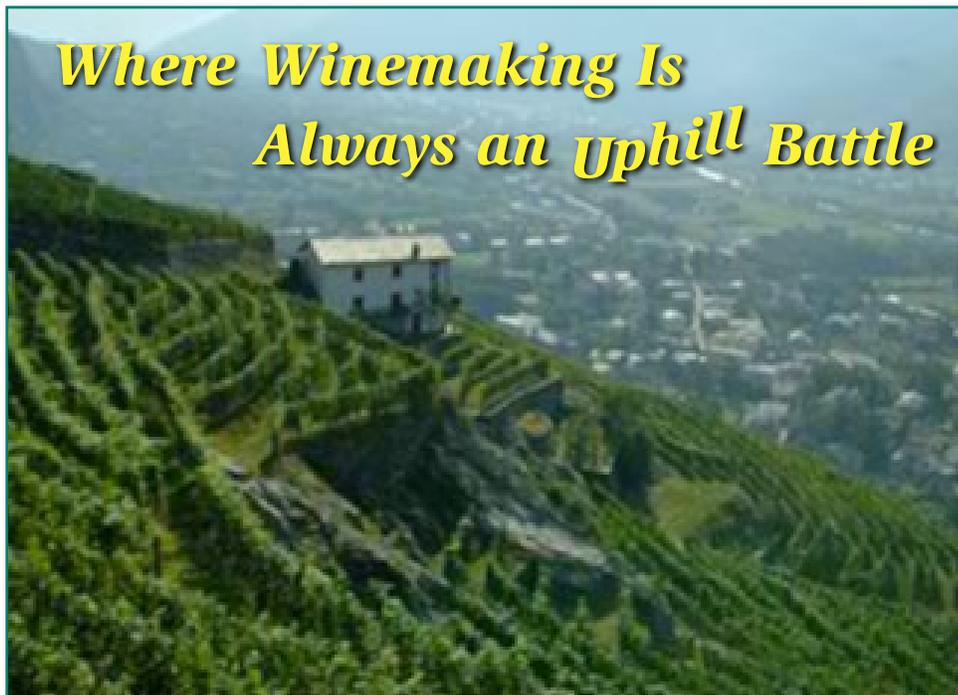
FREQUENCY:

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



**Where Winemaking Is
Always an Uphill Battle**

They have an unusual word to describe the tending of grapevines in the Valtellina area of Italy's Lombardy region: "heroic."

Valtellina, located at the base of the Alpine foothills along Italy's border with Switzerland, offers an extremely challenging "terroir." It's a narrow, 25 mile-long amphitheater of terraced vineyards that line the north bank of the Adda River, forming a deep gorge amidst mountainous terrain. This is Italy's largest terraced area of viticulture, with some 1,500 miles of dry walls supporting the terraces.

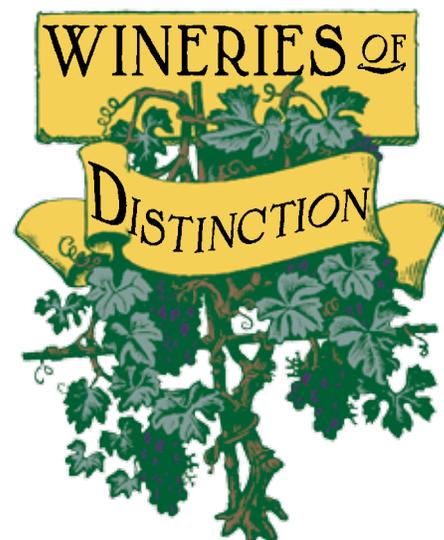
Working this land is a back-breaking proposition. The steep, nearly vertical vineyards — perched from 2,400 to 3,000 feet in elevation — rule out the use of any mechanical equipment. All work, from removing soil to harvesting grapes, is done by hand. It's a job that requires strong ankles.

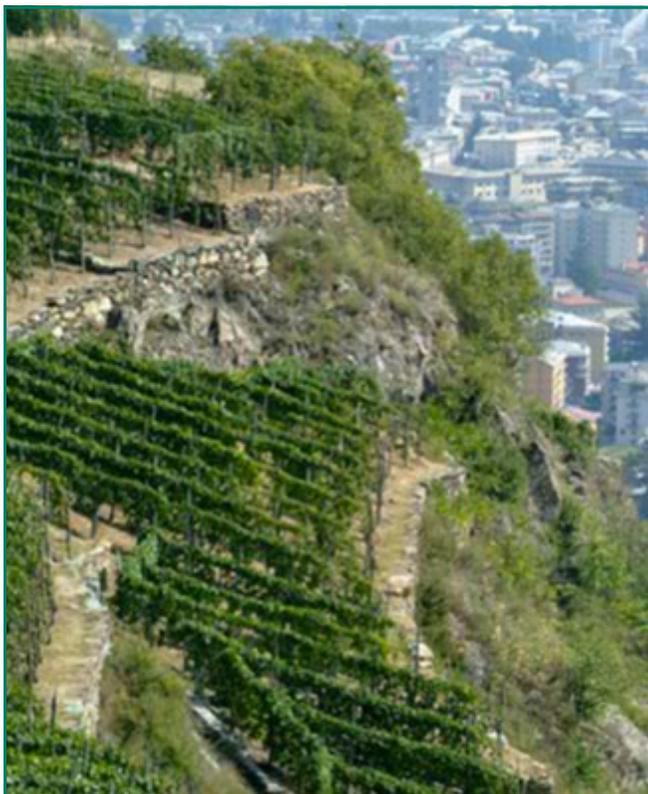
The star and primary grape varietal is Chiavennasca, the local name for Nebbiolo. It has been cultivated in Valtellina for more than 1,000 years, and was brought to the area from neighboring Piedmont in the 14th century. Today, all Valtellina DOCG wines must contain at least 90%

Chiavennasca.

Established in 1897, Nino Negri Winery is recognized as Valtellina's premier estate. Its success is credited to the efforts of winemaker Casimiro Maule, who has worked at the winery since 1971 — his entire professional life. In 2007, Casimiro was named "Winemaker of the Year" by Italian wine authority Gambero Rosso.

Originally from Trento, Maule moved to Valtellina for professional reasons and has weathered more than 40 harvests in the vineyards, in direct contact with nature and the scents and moods of the land. He has fond memories of the people who have played key roles in his life, particularly





Carluccio Negri, whom he met in 1971 and was instrumental in his development as a winemaker.

“Our vineyards are located in a unique environment that offers much, but in return demands hard work, sacrifice and passion,” Maule notes. “The vines grow in exceptional terrains on the mountain slopes, protected from the cold northern winds and bathed in sun from morning to night.”

But those terraced hillsides — “assembled” thousands of years ago to enable cultivation of the land — present a unique challenge.

“The sandy, silty base tends to be dry, as it retains very little water and is highly permeable,” Maule says. “The shallow soil has an arable surface of between 40 and 120 centimeters, and it is common to see vines take root in the cracks between the rocks.”

That is the very definition of “stressed vines,” and such vines typically produce grapes that are extremely concentrated in flavor, a trait that contributes significantly to the ultimate quality of the wines.

Nino Negri wines are distinguished by their Valtellina sub-zones of origin,

the most celebrated being Sassella and Inferno. The region’s “star” wine is the powerful Sfursat which, like Amarone, is made from partially dried grapes. Sfursat is the specialty of the house at Nino Negri, which has been producing the bottling since 1956.

The Nino Negri cellar is located in Chiuro’s 15th-century Quadrio Castle, where tradition and technology meld with outstanding results.

“To ensure top-quality results, we must invest continuously and significantly in our vineyards and

cellar,” Maule observes. “Today, the cellar houses 1,500 new barriques of French and American oak, and we have substituted the big old barrels with over 100 smaller barrels to permit a greater selection of the wines. The stainless steel vats and fermentation vessels have also been replaced recently, and allow us to implement new winemaking systems.”

With more than 40 harvests under his belt, there is no twist or turn proffered by Mother Nature that Casimiro Maule has not seen. Each year, he uses that experience, and the exceptional fruit from Valtellina’s steep vineyards, to validate Nino Negri’s place among the elite wineries of Italy.

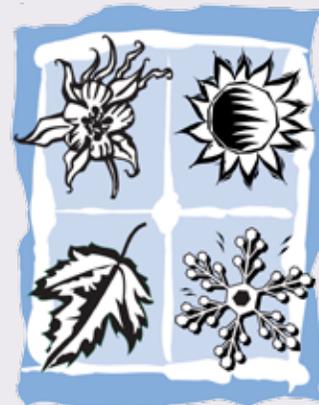
Winery 4-1-1

Nino Negri

Via Ghibellini, 3 – Chiuro
(Sondrio) Italy
0342.485211

<http://www.ninonegri.net>

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



The 139th running of the Kentucky Derby will take place on Saturday, May 4 at historic Churchill Downs in Louisville.

The Derby is more than a horse race. It’s an American sports tradition — from the iconic twin spires that overlook the track’s homestretch to the 80,000 revelers packed into the track’s infield, and from the seersucker suits and frilly dresses worn by spectators to those iconic mint juleps.

But once the race is over — and it’ll be over quickly, as the Derby has been described as “the fastest two minutes in sports” — one should take the time to enjoy the culinary delights of Louisville, where Southern cuisine (both traditional and with a twist) dominates the local menus.

Because there are so many restaurants from which to choose, we’ve pared the list to three. And in honor of the Kentucky Derby, we present them in win, place and show order.

WIN — 610 Magnolia.

“Our menu is a modern approach to the Southern table,” says chef/owner Edward Lee. “We start with the best of local seasonal produce, the

purest farmed animals and the historic foodstuffs that have defined this local landscape for generations. We then look at all these ingredients and traditions through a lens that is global, technical and provocative.”

Only 150 guests have the opportunity to experience Lee’s vision in any given week, as the restaurant seats just 50 people and is open only Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

The menu changes weekly, and among the dishes that have been

featured are king crab with coconut-banana custard and cashew... line-caught Scottish salmon with broccolini and fingerling potatoes... and wild boar chop and braised shoulder with black eyed pea ragout.

A three-course meal is priced at \$55 (plus \$45 for wine pairings), and a four-course extravaganza goes for \$65 (plus \$55 for wine pairings). 610 Magnolia also has a short but well-selected wine-by-the-glass list, plus a bottle list packed with old favorites (Robert Talbott “Logan” Chardonnay, \$46) and dotted with a few delightful surprises (Stonefly Vineyard Cabernet Franc, \$48).

PLACE — Proof on Main.

Kentucky is known more for bourbon than for wine, and Levon Wallace’s Proof on Main is considered one of the essential stops on Louisville’s “Urban Bourbon Trail.”

But the restaurant also does a nice job with wine, no doubt the result of Wallace’s training at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco, not to mention his stint as chef de cuisine at the 5-diamond Maravilla at the Ojai (Calif.) Valley Inn.

Like at 610 Magnolia, the menu



TOURING TIPS

Our Pick to Win the 2013 Kentucky Derby

As this edition of *The Grapevine* was being assembled, the early favorites in the Kentucky Derby were horses named Flashback and Itsmyluckyday. But we like to play hunches, so we always look for a wine connection among the names of our four-legged friends in the race. And we've found one... even if it is a little, shall we say, convoluted.

Our pick to win the 2013 Derby? Oxbow, listed by oddsmakers in late March at 33-1. Why Oxbow? Because that's the name of a wine tasting salon in downtown Napa, Calif. There, guests can taste five Waterstone Winery selections for \$15, or order wine by the glass. A gourmet cheese plate also is available, and live music is featured twice per month.

Even if Oxbow, the horse, does not win the Derby, Oxbow, the wine tasting salon, offers a winning experience for wine lovers.

at Proof on Main changes often, as does the list of wines served by the quartino for pairing with selected dishes.

Wallace's cooking has been described as "soulful and honest," and showcases the bounty of the Ohio River Valley. "Our seasonal menus pay homage to organic gardening, local farmers, artisanal producers and sustainable agriculture," Wallace says.

SHOW — Jack Fry's.

The namesake of this Louisville dining landmark, established in 1933, passed away in 1987. Gone, too, are the bookmaking and bootlegging activities discreetly undertaken in the restaurant's back room.

But with Stephanie Meeks as owner and Shawn Ward as executive chef, Jack Fry's continues to be a favorite among locals and a consistent recipient of "Best of Louisville" awards.

The restaurant's wine list seems to be tailor-made for Ward's cooking; name a dish on the menu, and there's at least one wine (and usually several) that would pair perfectly with it.

Among the starters that caught our eye (and delighted our palate) was the shrimp and grits – sautéed shrimp in a red gravy with shiitake mushrooms, tomatoes and country ham, served over grits. Another that you won't find anywhere else: spicy fried oysters with Kentucky country ham, green onions and creamy grits.

Ward transforms the humble pork

chop into a culinary superstar. It's herb encrusted and seared with a dry Vermouth glaze, and served with a medley of roasted new potatoes, asparagus, apple-smoked bacon, garlic and shiitakes.

He does the same for chicken, roasting the all-natural breast with cipollini onions, shallots, garlic, mushrooms and fingerling potatoes, served in a prosciutto almond jus.

And Jack Fry's pumpkin bread pudding — concocted with cranberry compote, buttermilk ice cream and bourbon molasses sauce — is the best dessert in town.

For exceptional, memorable dining in the home of the Kentucky Derby, 610 Magnolia, Proof on Main and Jack Fry's would be considered, in betting parlance, "prohibitive favorites."

For Further Information

610 Magnolia

610 W. Magnolia Ave.
Louisville, KY 40208
502-636-0783

Proof on Main

702 W. Main St.
Louisville, KY 40202
502-217-6360

Jack Fry's

1007 Bardstown Rd.
Louisville, KY 40204
502-452-9244

VINESSE

Hot LIST

1 Hot Wine Festival. Celebrity chef Paula Deen will be all over the 27th annual Sandestin (Florida) Wine Festival, hosted by the Sandestine Golf & Beach Resort, April 18-21. The "big event" will take place on that Saturday: "A Southern Lunch," featuring some of Deen's favorite dishes, paired with wines, plus a photo opportunity with Deen and admission to the festival's Grand Wine Tasting. Deen also will take part in a book signing and a pair of 30-minute cooking demonstrations.

www.sandestinwinefestival.com

2 Hot City Winery Tour. When driving north from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara wine country, take a break in the coastal community of Ventura for the "Off Market Street" tour of wineries. Stops include Plan B Wine Cellars, Panaro Brothers Winery, The Cave at Ventura Wine Co. and Four Brix Winery. There's even a brewery (Surf Brewery) for those who prefer beer. Hours are limited at some locations, so call ahead.

www.offmarketstreet.com

3 Hot New "Wine Pairing" Idea. Food is not the only thing that can be paired with wine. At any of eight (so far) Bottle & Bottega locations, you bring the wine, and they'll supply the art supplies (and a little direction) to help you create your own masterpiece.

www.bottleandbottega.com



It's NAM — National Acronym Month — here in the A2Z zone...

ABV **Alcohol By Volume**, a calculation required on wine labels by most countries.

BOB **Buyer's Own Brand**, a private label that's owned by the restaurant or shop selling the wine.

CS **Cantina Sociale**, an Italian designation for a wine made by a local cooperative of grape growers.

DO **Denominación de Origen**, or "place name," used by Spain for identifying a wine's region of origin, included grape varieties, etc. Add an H, and you have an exclamation made famous by Homer Simpson.

EULN **European Union Lot Number**, required on every bottle of wine made in Europe as a means of preventing fraud.

VINESSE STYLE

Argentine Olive Oil

In a relatively short period of time, Argentina has become known worldwide for its exceptional bottlings of Malbec.

In the very same regions where Malbec reigns supreme — the provinces of Mendoza and San Juan — you'll also find small "forests" of olive trees. And those trees are no afterthought. There are 1,200 wineries in the region; there are 6,000 olive growers.

When you think about it, that makes perfect sense. In Italy, most families that grow winegrapes also grow olives. Italians were among the first people from the "Old World" to populate Mendoza and San Juan. Most of the newcomers who planted grapevines also planted olive trees — emulating the farms in their native land.

Those olive trees aren't just for shade. Their fruit is used to make olive oil, and in Argentina, some of the wineries provide opportunities

for visitors to press and take home their own oil.

La Familia Zuccardi is one such winery. The massive estate (which makes wine under the Zuccardi, Santa Julia and Uno labels — all popular among members of the wine clubs of Vinesse — also has an on-site restaurant and, of course, offers wine tasting as well.



The Zuccardi family takes the same quality-focused approach to making olive oil as it does to making wine. The three varieties of olives — Frantoio, Manzanilla and Arauco — are hand picked, sorted for quality, and then pressed and bottled.

Unlike winemaking, the crafting of extra virgin olive oil embraces the concept of instant gratification.

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

APPELLATION SHOWCASE



It's easy to ignore Arroyo Seco. One of eight American Viticultural Areas in California's Monterey County, it's kind of like the quiet little brother in a family of raucous children.

Arroyo Seco (which translates to “dry riverbed”) is best known for its fruit-driven Chardonnay, and through the years, much of the annual crop has been sold to large winemaking concerns that simply blend it with juice from other appellations. Talk about an identity crisis.

Adding to Arroyo Seco's anonymity is its complete lack of what has come to be known as “wine tourism.” There are no fancy hotels nearby. No day spas. No 3-star restaurants. This is farm land — first, foremost, exclusively.

Arroyo Seco is situated between two much better known AVAs. To the north, Chalone — where some of the grapevines were planted in 1919, making them the oldest in the county — also is known for world-class Chardonnay. And the reason it's *known* is because the owners of Chalone Vineyard put the Chalone name front and center, in big, bold letters, on its wine bottle labels.

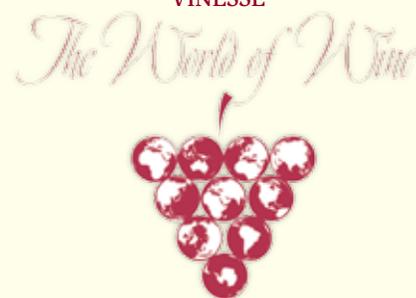
South of Arroyo Seco is San Bernabe, where nearly 5,000 acres are planted to 20 different winegrape varieties. It has been called “the

world's largest, most diversified vineyard,” and even if its name does not roll off the tongues of wine drinkers, it's extremely well known among America's grape growers and winery owners.

Arroyo Seco is no slouch when it comes to varietal diversity, though, and that's because it's home to multiple microclimates — mostly cool (influenced by the AVA's proximity to the Pacific Ocean), with a handful of sheltered warmer areas. So, in addition to Chardonnay, favored varieties include Riesling and Zinfandel, as well as various Bordeaux and Rhone grapes.

Presently, about 7,000 acres in Arroyo Seco are planted to grapevines, in soils ranging from gravelly sandy loam to Chualar loam. Drainage is good, sunshine is abundant during the growing and harvest seasons, and in a vast majority of the AVA's microclimates, the grapes dependably attain full ripeness — the key to complex, full-flavored... if not completely appreciated... wines.

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



Q I sometimes get intimidated when talking about wine. What’s up with all the lingo?

A The perception of wine is quite subjective, and that long ago necessitated the creation of some common descriptors to facilitate discussions. So, among wine judges, critics and writers, “body” refers to the viscosity of the wine... “crisp” indicates that a wine is high in fruit acidity... “finish” refers to the wine’s after-flavor... and so on. More colorful words and phrases are used by individuals, but having a “universal language” — or lingo — contributes to understanding.



AWRI

Just like vintners around the globe, Australian winemakers are becoming more and more aware of their impact on the environment — and the environment’s impact on winegrowing. That’s why the Australian Wine Research Institute provides wineries with a wide array of Earth-friendly resources. You can learn more about AWRI’s programs at awri.com/au.

“If you can’t be with the wine you love, [honey,] love the wine you’re with.”



— Direct marketing guru James Perdiew (with apologies to Stephen Stills)

When a recipe calls for wine, we typically suggest using the same wine that you intend to drink with the meal. Most of the time, it’s perfectly good advice. Occasionally, however, a particular wine just doesn’t mesh with the dish being prepared; it can actually overpower the basic flavor of the food. So here is one further suggestion: In preparing the food, use a somewhat lesser wine than the bottle on the table. And in all cases, when cooking, avoid wines that are high in tannins.

\$19,650

Price paid at auction for a bottle of Veuve Clicquot — circa the 1830s — that was recovered from a shipwreck off the coast of Finland.

Alpana Singh is the youngest person — woman or man — to pass the Master sommelier exam. That landed her the sommelier’s job at Chicago’s four-star Everest restaurant, and then she became the wine and spirits director for the entire Lettuce Entertain You restaurant chain. And because she’s smart *and* photogenic, she soon thereafter was named host of the restaurant review program, “Check, Please!” on Chicago’s PBS station. Singh recently moved on from that gig to open her own restaurant: The Boarding House. As one would expect, it’s wine focused, and Singh says she even has adjusted some food recipes to make them more wine friendly. The 500-bottle list is remarkably short on “same old, same old” bottlings, and packed with lesser known but inspired selections. Best of all, for a Chicago restaurant, the wines are very reasonably priced — a reflection of Singh’s desire to see people drink and enjoy wine, rather than merely covet it. When in Chicago, you should definitely check into The Boarding House (312-280-0720).

“The reason that you do not get headaches from drinking wines on vacation is that you are on vacation.”



— Chicago Tribune wine columnist Bill St. John, in response to a reader inquiry about sulfites in wine. (The reader indicated that he never got headaches from foreign wines consumed while on vacation.)

FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS

Panini



Matching wine with a panini is akin to matching wine with a sandwich. It would be helpful — no, essential — to know what kind of panini or what kind of sandwich.

“Panini” actually is plural for the Italian word “panino.” In Italy, it’s the term used for a sandwich that’s made with other than simple sliced bread, such as a ciabatta roll or baguette. In America, “panini” often is used as a singular word to describe a pressed and toasted sandwich — what most Italians would call a “tosto.”

Given the confusion over the terminology, adding wine pairing to the equation has the potential to create a culinary quagmire. So, for our purposes, we’ll use the American adaptation, and cite examples from the panini menu of that ubiquitous (and popular) bakery chain, Panera Bread.

Panera’s Cuban Chicken Panini features all-natural, antibiotic-free chicken; smoked, lean ham; sweet and spicy pickle chips; Swiss cheese; chipotle mayo, and sun-dried tomato ale mustard on Focaccia.

That’s a whole lot of flavor going on in the mouth, including quite a bit of saltiness and a bit of a spice kick. This calls for a refreshing wine with good acidity — either a well-chilled dry rosé made from a combination of Grenache, Syrah and/or Mourvedre

grapes, or a Blanc de Noir sparkling wine.

Panera’s Steak and White Cheddar Panini is made with seared top sirloin, caramelized onions, Vermont white cheddar cheese and horseradish spread on a French baguette.

The horseradish spread is the wild card in this sandwich recipe, and it needs a fruit-forward, peppery California (red) Zinfandel for companionship. Hold the horseradish, and you can pour a top-flight Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot, or an Argentine Malbec, and enjoy a delightful pairing.

Finally, let’s see if we can find a pairing partner for Panera’s Tomato and Mozzarella Panini, which features fresh mozzarella, roasted and fresh tomatoes, fresh basil and all-natural sun-dried tomato pesto on ciabatta.

With such straightforward flavors — no single ingredient that will overpower the others or one’s tastebuds — opt for a straightforward wine. That means an “unoaked,” fruit-forward Chardonnay or, if you prefer red, a soft Nero d’Avola.

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

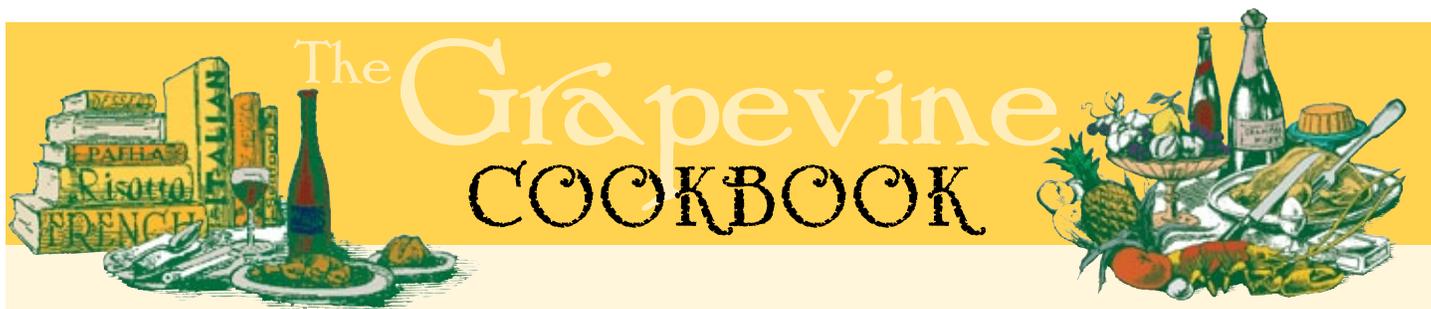
FREQUENCY:

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



SUPER PANINI

The wonderful thing about Panini is that it can be pretty much anything you want it to be — mix and match ingredients to your heart's... and stomach's... desire. This recipe, which yields 4 servings, pairs nicely with sparkling wine or a well-chilled rosé.

Ingredients

- 2 large onions, sliced
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 4 slices provolone cheese
- ½-lb. thinly sliced deli ham
- 1 large tomato, sliced
- 8 garlic-flavored sandwich pickle slices
- 8 slices Italian bread (½-inch thick)
- 2 tablespoons butter, softened

Preparation

1. In a large skillet, saute onions in oil until softened.
2. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes or until deep golden brown.
3. Layer the cheese, ham, tomato, pickles and caramelized onions on four bread slices. Top with remaining bread. Spread outsides of sandwiches with butter.
4. Cook on a panini maker or indoor grill for 3-4 minutes, or until bread is browned and cheese is melted.

CINCO DE MAYO SHRIMP TACOS

As the weather warms up, the grills emerge from hibernation. Here's a tasty dish to kick off the grilling season — and celebrate Cinco de Mayo — and it pairs perfectly with Sauvignon Blanc or Vinho Verde. This recipe makes 6 servings.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 lime, juiced and grated
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1-lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- Salt
- Ground black pepper
- 6 flour tortillas (8-inch diameter), heated according to package directions
- 1 package Dole All Natural Southwest Salad Kit (12-oz. size)

Preparation

1. Combine olive oil, lime juice and cumin in small bowl.
2. Thread shrimp onto skewers; season with salt and pepper. Brush shrimp with lime mixture.
3. Grill until shrimp are cooked through (about 3 minutes per side), brushing occasionally with lime mixture.
4. Roughly chop cooked shrimp.
5. Combine taco ranch dressing, sour cream and shredded cheese included in the Dole kit.
6. Spread mixture over each tortilla; top with shrimp, salad greens and chips.
7. Serve with favorite toppings.

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 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