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The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS



MARTIN'S JOURNAL

Once one reaches a certain age, life begins taking away more than it gives.

A rare exception to that rule was the experience of Robert Mondavi, a man who almost single-handedly put California — particularly the Napa Valley — on the world wine map.

He founded the Robert Mondavi Winery, and began his tireless promotion of California wine, after he had turned 50.

Mondavi's death on May 16, a month shy of his 95th birthday, was not unexpected. But it still hit hard because anyone who makes his living in the wine industry — myself included — has Robert Mondavi to thank for it.

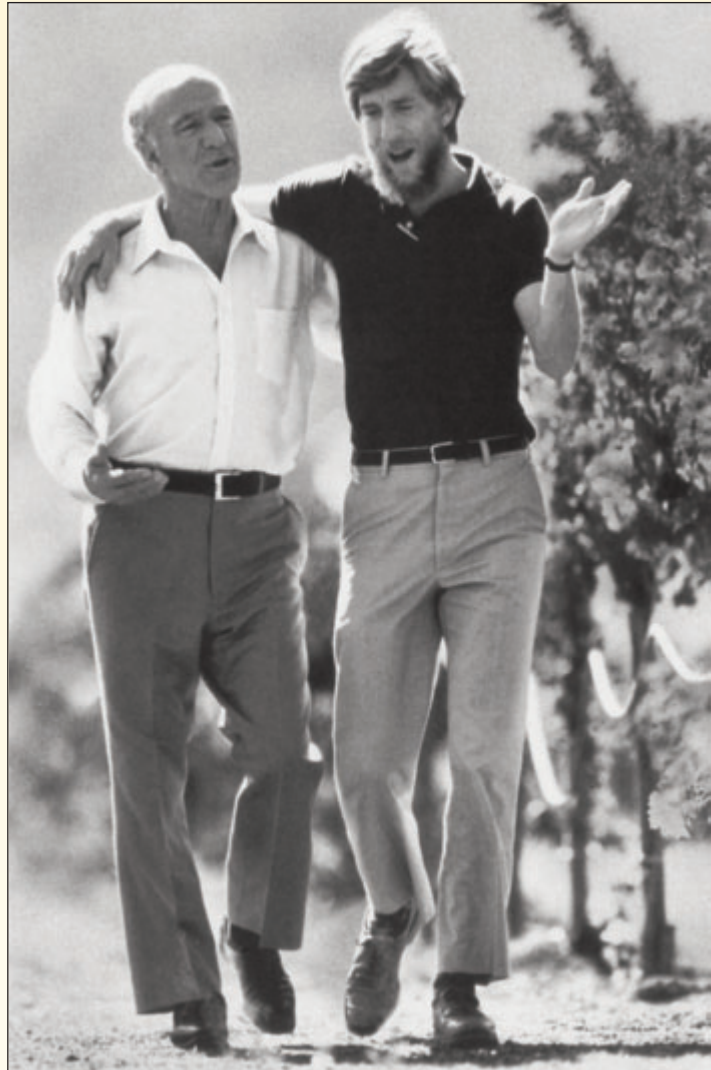
Analogies are never precise, but I'll offer one that's right on target — a home run, if you will: Robert Mondavi was the Babe Ruth of wine. Just as Ruth transformed baseball into America's national pastime, Mondavi took the California wine industry by the collar, gave it a good shake, and set America on a course to becoming a true wine culture.

I doubt we'll ever see another like him.

Martin Stewart Jr.

Robert Mondavi

1913-2008



"Wine to me is passion," said Robert Mondavi, shown here with son Tim. "It's family and friends. It's warmth of heart and generosity of spirit." Mondavi, who worked tirelessly to promote California wine, coined the phrase "Fume Blanc" to spark consumer interest in Sauvignon Blanc, and strived to see wine become an everyday part of the American table, died on May 16. He was 94. This issue of *The Grapevine* is dedicated to his memory.

Check out "Editor's Journal" every Monday on VinesseTODAY.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.

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-  Perfectly matched recipes for featured wine selections



I've often said that "wine country" is where you find it. You don't have to go to the Napa Valley in order to have a memorable wine experience.

For proof, I give you downtown Los Angeles. Yes, L.A. La-La Land. The city that's known for being at the forefront of cultural trends just happens to be home to two historic businesses where wine takes center stage. One, believe it or not, is a working winery; the other is a venerable restaurant.

In 1917, Santo Cambianica left his home in the northern Italian province of Lombardy and settled in the bustling Italian-American community in Los Angeles. On Lamar Street, he founded the San Antonio Winery. Just three years later, however, Prohibition jolted the wine industry. The majority of L.A. wineries closed forever, but Santo requested permission from the Catholic Church to make sacramental wines. The church granted his request, and San Antonio Winery was able to survive.

Today, San Antonio Winery remains as the only producing winery in Los

Angeles. Still in its original location on Lamar Street, it is the last vestige of the rich winemaking tradition of the region.

You can tour the winery any day of the week. Tours begin each hour on the hour from 12 noon to 2 p.m. on weekdays, and from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends.

Less than a mile and a half away is another island of "wine country" in the middle of the big city — a restaurant known as Philippe the Original, or, as locals refer to it, Philippe's.



The restaurant turns 100 this year, and patrons wait in long lines for the signature French dip sandwiches (beef, lamb or pork) and other delicacies such as coleslaw, pickled beets, old-school chili and fruit pies.

But the big surprise at Philippe's, with its sawdust-covered floor, is the by-the-glass wine list. It's posted behind the

counter, and typically includes 10 whites and 10 reds, all well selected and reasonably priced. An example: a generous pour of Silver Oak Cabernet Sauvignon for just \$15.

Start at San Antonio Winery, finish at Philippe the Original, and you've had an amazing wine country experience in the middle of downtown Los Angeles.



Dedicated to the memory of Robert Mondavi...

Krug. Mondavi departed Charles Krug Winery after a family dispute, and founded Robert Mondavi Winery in 1966.

Lodi. California town where Mondavi attended public schools.

Michael. One of Mondavi's three children, the others being Tim and Marcia.

Napa Valley Wine Auction. Fundraising event co-founded by Mondavi in 1981, benefiting Napa health care, low-income housing and youth services organizations.

Opus One. Napa Valley winery Mondavi co-founded in 1979 with Baron Philippe de Rothschild. A case of Opus One wine sold for \$24,000 at the first Napa Valley Wine Auction.

Pioneer. In 2007, the Culinary Institute of America honored Mondavi as the first "Pioneer" inductee in the Vintners Hall of Fame.

APPELLATION SHOWCASE

MCLAREN VALE, AUSTRALIA

Mclaren Vale is home to the oldest Australian vineyard, its original vines planted in 1838.

It's also home to several highly acclaimed wine estates, including the legendary Chapel Hill. The Indian Ocean borders on the west, which leads to a cooling factor that prevents the grapes from getting too hot. In short, the climate is perfect for grapevines.

McLaren Vale is a mere half-hour drive south out of Adelaide. Driving over the first row of hills, one is met by a vista of undulating vineyards surrounding pretty townships. The backdrop: the wave-like South Lofty Ranges, rolling to the sea.

The township of McLaren Vale is

central to this region, with Reynella and Clarendon to the north, Kangarilla on the eastern boundary, Aldinga on the coastal edge to the west, and Mount Compass and Sellicks Hill to the south.

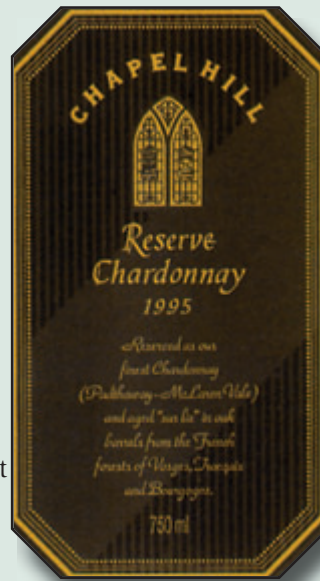
McLaren Vale was named after David McLaren, the colonial manager of the South Australia

Company, who arrived in the colony in 1837.

Thomas Hardy, a winemaker growing vines on the outskirts of the young Adelaide City, purchased the Tintara Winery from Dr. A.C. Kelly in 1873. Through Hardy's innovative ideas and rapid expansion, this was considered by many to be the beginning of McLaren Vale's wine industry.

By 1889, more than 7,300 acres were under vine and 70 recognized winemakers

worked in the colony. Many of the award-winning wines produced in the region today come from 100-year-old vines.



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VINESSE STYLE

THE CHOCOLATE YOU EAT IN VEGAS...

Las Vegas didn't get the nickname "Sin City" because of the chocolate indulgences it offers.

But it could have. Ethel M was first on the scene with its chocolate nuggets filled with bourbon, Scotch or Irish whiskey — not mere flavors of those potent potables, but the actual elixirs. Ethel M's may have been the first chocolates that required an I.D. to purchase.



Today, the company still offers tours of its production facility, and also has a number of "chocolate lounges" around the city, including one at the Fashion Show Mall. 800-471-0352.

If you'd like to experience chocolate as art, head to the Bellagio and stop by Jean-Philippe Patisserie, where a floor-to-ceiling fountain pours three

types of chocolate through 25 suspended glass vessels at the rate of 120 quarts per minute. When you're done gawking, order a slice of white chocolate cheesecake. 702-693-7111.

You can build an entire meal around chocolate at Payard Patisserie, located inside Caesars Palace. For \$45, a fixed-price menu includes a cheese and fruit course, a coffee, a caramel and nut course, an orchard course and a chocolate course. 702-731-7292.

Finally, at Wynn Las Vegas, a chocolate lover can ride their sugar high from a shop called, simply, Chocolate, to a Valrohana chocolate soufflé at Daniel Boulud's Brasserie and then to a bitter chocolate cream napoleon with milk chocolate ice cream at Alex Stratta. 702-770-7000.

And remember, what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas... except, perhaps, that post-chocolate feeling of snugness around the waist.

BEING GREEN

The Fetzer family gained worldwide recognition for producing premium Mendocino County wines of value, and also for their pioneering efforts in spearheading the organic winegrowing movement. Today, Daniel Fetzer continues this family heritage at Jeriko Estate, with a commitment to quality winegrowing and stewardship farming practices. Simple as it may be, until 50 years ago most winegrowers practiced basic organic farming principles. Prior to the post-World War II agrichemical movement, farmers utilized practices that were handed down from ancient times, some deeply rooted in tradition and that relied on basic farming knowledge. "At Jeriko, we believe that farming is a heritage and that many ancient beliefs were too quickly discounted with the introduction of the agrichemical era," Fetzer says. "Implementing new technology with old wisdom is the basis of our tread-gently-on-the-earth approach." Jeriko Estate is farmed in accordance with the organic standards set forth by the USDA, and the vineyard and winery are certified organic by California Certified Organic Farmers.



Grilling Essentials

Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, Americans will consume 7 billion hot dogs.

That's 7 billion... with a B. Or, to put it another way, that's 818 hot dogs *per second*.

Needless to say, there's a lot of grilling going on during the warm months, and hot dogs represent just a fraction of the bounty that finds its way onto grills. And in the American tradition

of entrepreneurship, if an activity (such as grilling) becomes popular, associated gadgets are sure to follow.

If you'll be donning an apron this summer, here is some "optional equipment" you may want to check out...

■ **Double-tined skewers.** These provide the best stability when moving from kitchen to grill.

■ **Griddles or grill platters.** These focus the high heat on a flat surface, which makes for fabulous fish and



steak searing.

■ **Instant-read thermometer.** Essential for food safety and maximum flavor. Avoid the plastic models; they can melt.

■ **18-inch tongs.** When you use a fork to flip the meat, you allow tasty juices to escape. We like long tongs because they keep hands and faces farther away from the heat.

■ **Offset spatula.** The best have a thin — but sturdy — blade that allows for easy sliding between the grill and food, and a long handle.

■ **Smoking cans and boxes.** The cans come filled with wood chips that release flavorful smoke as they heat on the grill. The box is designed to have soaked wood chips added to it before it's nestled in the fire.

■ **Cedar planks.** Soak these slabs of wood in water, juice or wine, then set them directly on the grill. Great for subtly smoking fish or chicken.

For more grilling tips, visit these helpful Web sites:

weber.com

bobbyflay.com

bbq.about.com

Four Seasons



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Exploring Bordeaux: The Vineyards and the City

Bordeaux — the name refers to both the region and the wine made there — covers a huge area of southwestern France, where the Dordogne and Garonne rivers meet to form the mighty Gironde estuary.

Bordeaux is best known for its red wines, which are sometimes called “Claret” in the United Kingdom. The most powerful and ageworthy wines tend to come from two areas: the Haut Medoc, along the “left bank” of the Gironde, north of the city of Bordeaux; and from the “right bank” appellations of Pomerol, Lalande-de-Pomerol and Saint-Emilion, near Libourne.

For visitors to the Haut Medoc, in particular, the picturesque chateaux epitomize fairy tale France — a wine lover’s dream. Although an incredible one-in-six jobs in and around Bordeaux are based in the wine industry, the area has lots to offer beyond vineyards and chateaux.

Its location on the Gironde estuary makes it ideal for beach and city experiences, and the Aquitaine countryside is great for touring.

Any day out and about comes with a stunning backdrop. Medieval villages like Saint-Emilion and the protected district of central Bordeaux (with its wonderful 17th, 18th and 19th century buildings) contrast with



TOURING TIPS

the 21st century development of the riverside areas, where living and nightlife quarters now stand.

Bordeaux’s location on two great rivers makes it hard to resist a river cruise. Tours depart from Quai Louis XVIII. Bigger sailing boats head out to sea via the Gironde estuary, and



various water sports are popular pastimes.

Many of the city’s museums are free to visit and open daily. Try the galleries of the Musee des Beaux Arts, or for performing arts, head for

the Grand Theatre (home to the Opera National de Bordeaux) or one of the city’s many small café-theaters. For some real Bordeaux culture, take in a show performed in bordeluche (the local dialect) at the Onyx on Rue Fernand Philippart.

The contemporary art museum (CAPC) is housed in a stunning 19th century warehouse on the Garonne, and has pieces by the likes of Gilbert and George and Anish Kapoor.

Shoppers can go in search of chic in the luxury boutiques of the Grands Hommes area, or rummage for bargains at the weekend markets of Saint-Michel. In between, the narrow old streets of Saint-Pierre feature numerous boho cafes and independent shops. For antiques and bric-a-brac, Rue Notre Dame and Passage Saint-Michel offer lots of browsing.

Bordeaux claims to have 1,000 places where you can dine out, and if that didn’t make picking a place daunting enough, the Tourist Information Office on Cours du 30 Juillet organizes gourmet walking tours.

At La Tupina, Jean-Pierre Xiradakis offers fine regional cuisine. For Michelin-starred dining, seek out Le Chapon Fin; we’ve yet to meet a taxi driver who didn’t know exactly where it is.

The area is renowned for fabulous cakes, so make time to savor tea and pastries at L’Autre Salon de Thé, or a light lunch at L’Orangerie.

Of course, no trip to Bordeaux is complete without visiting some of the local vineyards. But if language and lack of familiarity with the road system are barriers, the Tourist Information Office can arrange vineyard tours



and other wine-themed day trips at any time of the year. Be aware that late June (when an annual wine festival is held) and the weeks of the autumn harvest can be crowded — but also lots of fun.

For Further Information

Musee des Beaux Arts
culture.gouv.fr/culture/bordeaux
(Note: In French)

Grand Theatre
opera-bordeaux.com
(Note: In French)

Onyx on Rue Fernand Philippart
onyxtheatre.free.fr
(Note: In French)

Contemporary Art Museum (CAPC)
bordeaux.fr
(Note: In French; follow Culture link)

La Tupina
latupina.com

Le Chapon Fin
chapon-fin.com

L'Autre Salon de Thé
05 61 22 11 63

L'Orangerie
05 56 85 54 54

General Tourism Info
bordeaux-tourisme.com
saint-emilion-tourisme.com
arachon.com



Schrader Specializes in Cabernet, But Zin Makes Him Smile

Directly and indirectly, Robert Mondavi impacted countless wineries and winemakers in the Napa Valley and beyond.

A good example is Schrader Cellars, which regularly sells out of its Cabernet Sauvignon bottlings, necessitating a mailing list to ensure as many people as possible get to purchase the much sought-after wines.

Fred Schrader had an extensive background in fine art, antiques and wine when he was invited to attend the 1988 Napa Valley Wine Auction, an event co-founded by Mondavi. That experience ultimately led him to co-found the now-legendary Colgin-Schrader Cellars in 1992.

In 1998, he decided to found his namesake winery: Schrader Cellars. The goal: to make the best wines possible by combining the finest vineyard sources

and winemaking talent available.

Among the vineyard sources: the Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard. If the name To Kalon sounds familiar, it's because it was made famous by the Robert Mondavi Winery. Schrader's 2005 vintage of T6 Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon —made with “no holds barred” winemaking practices to produce an elegant elixir of exceptional depth, richness and character — recently received a rating of 97 on the 100-point scale of Wine Spectator magazine.

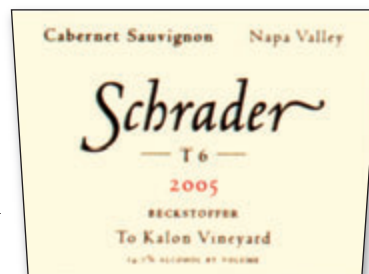
The “no holds barred” approach is embraced by winemaker Thomas Brown, who worked for Turley Wine Cellars before joining Schrader in 2001. Brown oversees all aspects of the process, from vineyard management to the all-important decisions made in the cellar.

In addition to the T6, Brown makes Cabernet Sauvignon bottled under the Schrader, Schrader CCS, Schrader RBS and Schrader Old Sparky labels.

The other specialty of the house at Schrader is Zinfandel. The Vieux-Os “old vine” program brings together Napa Valley's most notable and historic family-owned vineyard estates in one portfolio. Add up the ages of the vineyards, and Vieux-Os represents more than 250 years of estate grape-growing heritage.

The names of the Vieux-Os Zinfandel sources are just as colorful as the wines are delicious: Hell Hole Vineyard, Ira Carter Vineyard, Tofanelli Vineyard and Train Wreck Vineyard.

One could forgive Schrader if he has a soft spot in his heart for the Zins. It was through the label designing process for Vieux-Os that he met the woman who would become his wife, Carol. Better still, with Carol's graphic art talents, Schrader didn't have to look for someone to design his wedding invitations.



Quotes Du Gour

Friends, associates and admirers remember Robert Mondavi...

■ *Legendary chef and restaurateur Charlie Trotter:* "He was not just a wine guy, but a huge supporter of the culinary scene. He elevated how wine and gastronomy could go together."

■ *California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger:* "He was a tireless entrepreneur who transformed how the world felt about California wine."

■ *Stag's Leap Wine Cellars founder Warren Winiarski:* "Bob gave a new sense of where we could go in this valley with his aspirations and his energy. You wanted to be at his side because things were happening."

■ *Tim Mondavi, one of Robert's two sons:* "He developed friendships with other winemakers and exchanged ideas with many people. Not only did he learn from them, but we shared what we had learned."

■ *Richard Sands, chairman of Constellation Brands, which now owns the Robert Mondavi Winery:* "Robert's passing leaves a void in the world of wine which can never be filled."

Q AND A

Because I'm single, I never finish a bottle of wine in one sitting. Could you recommend one of the wine sealers that's on the market?

We could, but before you make that kind of investment — some of the devices are pretty pricy — we'd suggest you try something else. The No. 1 enemy of wine is prolonged exposure to air, and most of the devices are intended to keep air away from the remaining wine in a bottle through the use of an inert gas. But you can accomplish the same thing simply by pouring the leftover wine into a smaller container — such as an old peanut butter jar. A glass container is better than plastic, but plastic is fine for a day or two. Just make sure the container has an airtight top. Most white wines will hold up fine for one or two days, and most reds will still be good after two or three days. In fact, some reds taste even better on the second or third day, as long as they're resealed after each use.

Is it true that the bigger the punt of a bottle, the better the wine is inside?

Is this some kind of trick question, like those dealing with the size of a man's shoes? Before getting to the answer, we should explain that the punt is the indentation in the bottom of a wine bottle. It's most commonly found in Champagne bottles, making it easier for cellar workers to rotate the bottles during the aging process — a procedure known as riddling. Other than that, the punt serves no truly useful purpose, and absolutely is not an indicator of a wine's quality.

You'll find archived questions and answers about wine in the "Wine FAQ" section of VinesseTODAY.com. To submit a question online, click on "Ask a Wine Question."



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2058: A DIFFERENT WINE WORLD AWAITS

Australia could be forced to give up its place among the world's biggest wine exporters within 50 years, a new report predicts. Britain's oldest independent wine merchant, Berry Bros. & Rudd, believes that hotter temperatures and water shortages will spell the end of mass wine production in Australia. It also has forecast China to become the world's top wine producer by 2058.

TOP TOUR PROGRAM OFFERED AT MONDAVI

One of the lasting legacies of Robert Mondavi will be his efforts to educate the American public about wine, food and the arts. Under his direction, the Robert Mondavi Winery in the Napa Valley town of Oakville developed one of the most admired tour programs in the wine industry. If you're planning a visit to California's North Coast wine country, a Mondavi tour is a must, and advance reservations are advised. To learn more about the tours available, visit robertmondaviwinery.com.

AN ONLINE 'TOAST' TO A NAPA VALLEY LEGEND

Just days after Robert Mondavi's death, vintners in the Napa Valley launched an Internet tribute to their legendary compatriot. The Napa Valley Vintners Association created an online "toast" to Mondavi on its Web site at napavintners.com, inviting people to share their memories. "In all of the years I have

been privileged to talk about Napa Valley wines, I always mentioned two prominent members as the 'godfathers' of the Napa Valley wine industry," wrote Peter Huwiler. "Robert Mondavi was one of them... His stewardship for the valley will be the benchmark for generations to come." For more remembrances, see the "Quotes du Jour" feature in this issue of *The Grapevine*.



NEW WINE BAR OPENS AT COPIA

COPIA: The American Center for Wine, Food, & the Arts has opened a wine bar that features the largest by-the-glass wine-tasting room on the West Coast, as well as a casual dining bistro. The creation of the new wine bar and bistro dining area is part of the institution's reorganization, which aims to strengthen COPIA while continuing to build on its rich heritage in wine, food, art and culture. Robert Mondavi played a key role in developing and funding the center. For more on the changes, check the archives of "Our Wine Travel Log" on VinesseTODAY.com.

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The Grapevine COOKBOOK



GARLIC GRILLED CHICKEN

The following recipe, which serves 4, transforms a classic white wine dish — chicken — into a perfect partner for red wines such as Merlot and Syrah. The secret? The generous use of garlic.

Ingredients

- 4 boneless chicken breast halves
- 1 cup salsa or picante sauce
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon lime or lemon juice
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1/2 teaspoon dried leaf oregano, crumbled
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon chili powder

Preparation

1. Place each breast between sheets of plastic wrap or food storage bags and pound gently with flat side of meat mallet until about 1/4-inch thick.
2. Cut each flattened chicken breast

into strips about 1-inch in width. Place chicken strips in a glass baking dish or nonreactive shallow container.

3. Combine remaining ingredients; pour over chicken. Cover and chill chicken in marinade for 1 to 2 hours.
4. Thread chicken onto metal skewers or well-soaked wooden skewers. Grill over hot coals for 6 to 8 minutes, turning a few times and basting with remaining marinade.
5. Serve with additional salsa, if desired.

BRAISED OXTAILS

Here's a dish that isn't exactly top-of-mind, but matches beautifully with Cabernet Sauvignon. This recipe yields 6 to 8 servings. (Note: In the culinary world, an oxtail is the name for the tail of a beef animal.)

Ingredients

- 3 tbsp. butter
- 1 onion, chopped

- 2 carrots, sliced
- 1 small turnip, diced
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 2 tbsp. flour
- 2 oxtails
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. pepper
- 2 cloves

Preparation

1. Melt butter in saucepan.
2. Add onion, carrots, turnip and celery. When very lightly browned, stir in flour; blend well.
3. Cut oxtails into 2- to 3-inch pieces; add to pan. Add salt, pepper, cloves and 2 cups water. Bring to boil, stirring constantly.
4. Reduce heat; let simmer 2 to 3 hours.
5. Serve oxtails hot with the remaining juices for gravy.

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CELLAR SPECIALS

WHITE WINES *Member Price*

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2005 Skyline Cellars California Chardonnay	\$12.99
2005 Big Ass Chardonnay	\$16.99
2004 Sergio Traverso Mendoza, Argentina Chardonnay	\$16.99
2006 Don Rodolfo Salta, Argentina Torrontes	\$18.99
2006 Hope Estate Hunter Valley, Australia Chardonnay	\$18.99
2006 Henry Estate Umpqua Valley, Oregon Pinot Gris	\$19.99
2006 Ledgewood Creek Three Clones Suisun Valley, California Chardonnay	\$19.99
2006 Pennautier Vin de Pays d'Oc, France Viognier	\$19.99
NV Duval Leroy Brut Champagne	\$40.00

RED WINES *Member Price*

2004 Soaring Aces California Cabernet Sauvignon	\$12.99
2005 Montgomery Vineyard Napa Valley Merlot	\$12.99
2005 Shady Bay California Cabernet Sauvignon	\$12.99
NV Stella Rosa Piedmont, Italy Sparkling Red Wine	\$16.99
2003 Torreveja Mendoza, Argentina Malbec Reserva	\$17.99
2006 Alto Cedro La Consulta Mendoza, Argentina Malbec	\$20.99
2005 Kilikanoon South Australia Killermans Run Shiraz	\$22.99
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2004 Rotta Dino Bonesco Vineyard Cabernet Franc	\$26.99

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