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The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS

NAPA VALLEY: Beyond the Tasting Rooms

Sparkling Advice
for the Wedding
of Your Dreams

Fritz Winery: Go
Underground in
Sonoma Country

Celebrities in the
Cellar: How Many
Can You Name?

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
Katie Montgomery

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EDITOR'S JOURNAL

Two Cures for the Wedding Cake and Champagne Blues

By Robert Johnson

One of my most vivid memories of childhood involves wedding cakes.

My folks owned a bakery, and several times each summer, orders would come in for special cakes to be served on those special days. Dad would sell customers any kind of wedding cake they wanted, as long as it was a standard white cake with buttercream icing — three layers, stacked, with a plastic bride-and-groom figurine on top.

Actually, customers did have one option: They could choose the color of the decorative icing that lined the edges of the cake: pink, yellow or light green. Yes, those were simpler times.

Each summer, I would help Dad deliver the cakes in the family station wagon, which was painted a hideous "mist-turquoise" color courtesy of Earl Scheib (which my dad no doubt selected because of the \$29.95 price... no ups, no extras). We would recline the back seat, creating a large flat space, and I would sit back there with the three cake boxes. My job was to make sure they didn't move around, bump into each other and mess up the icing job.

There was no seat belt, but then, at that point in my development, the cake was worth a lot more than I was. Yes, those were simpler times.

Dad drank Champagne (or some



iteration thereof) only once a year — on New Year's Eve, as long as someone else was picking up the tab. But even with his limited knowledge of wine, he knew instinctively that the dry sparkling wine typically served at wedding receptions would not go well with the sweet icing on the cake. He didn't have a solution, but he knew it was a pairing nightmare, akin to sucking on a lemon.

Well, with wedding season upon us, and possessing a modicum more wine knowledge than Dad had, I'm here to offer two solutions for the upcoming wedding season:

1. Serve the sparkling wine and the cake separately. Conclude the toasting, then slice the cake, and place pitchers of ice water on the tables.
2. Serve a slightly sweet sparkling wine (look for "demi-sec," "sec" or the misleading "extra dry" verbiage on the bottle) with the cake.

Sweet with sweet can work. Sweet with dry can't. You don't want your first argument as a married couple to be over wine.



How to (Safely) Remove a Champagne Cork

Champagne can be dangerous. And, no, we're not talking about the stupidity of getting behind the wheel of a car after drinking too much bubbly.

The “don't drink and drive” mantra applies to *all* alcohol, not just sparkling wine. We're talking about the process of opening a Champagne bottle — which, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, is the most common cause of holiday and wedding-day eye injuries.

How could this be? There are two factors involved: The Champagne cork is under about 90 pounds of pressure (about three times that inside a typical car tire), and many people have never before opened a bottle of bubbly.

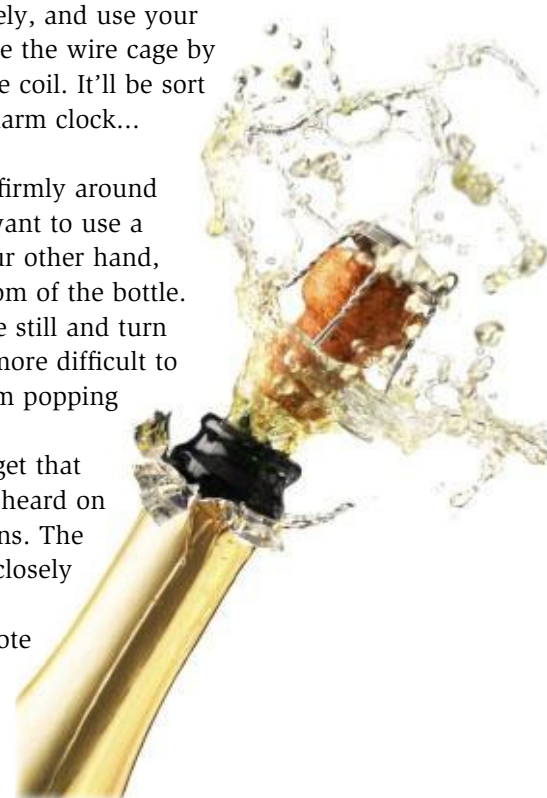
There's not much we can do about the first factor, but we *can* help with the second. Here's how to safely open a bottle of sparkling wine...

1. Remove the foil that covers the capsule. In some cases, there's a small tab — similar to those found on an orange juice bottle or the plastic covering a CD case — to help get you started. If not, use a fingernail or small knife to get the removal process going.
2. Place one hand firmly atop the cork to prevent it from

“popping” prematurely, and use your other hand to remove the wire cage by slowly untwisting the coil. It'll be sort of like winding an alarm clock... only backwards.

3. Place one hand firmly around the cork (you may want to use a towel), and with your other hand, slowly turn the bottom of the bottle. If you hold the bottle still and turn the cork, it's much more difficult to prevent the cork from popping out and flying.

The goal is not to get that loud popping sound heard on Lawrence Welk reruns. The sound should more closely resemble the “poof” heard when the Coyote hits the ground after falling over a cliff while in pursuit of the Roadrunner.



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**Fritz: Wine Tasting
Goes 'Underground'**

***I**t was Jay Fritz's embracement of sustainability and quality that ultimately made Fritz Winery — known as "the underground winery" — what it is today.*

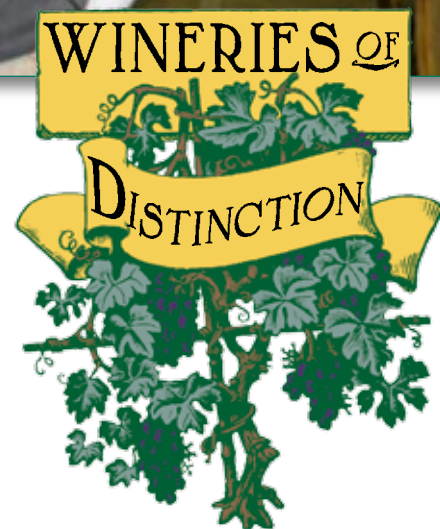
The company's ongoing respect for the vineyards, as well as the traditions of artisan, hand-crafted winemaking, are a testament to its founding in 1979 and its commitment to the future.

Clayton Fritz is the family member in charge these days, and as he likes to say, "Why would anyone in their right mind ever look outside Sonoma County for fruit? We have everything here and sufficient soil variation to provide a wide assortment of truly great varietals."

The winery is located in northern Sonoma County — Cloverdale, to be precise — and its wares have earned praise from wine enthusiasts and critics around the world.

Fritz Underground Winery is a visionary wonder built ahead of its time by Jay Arthur Fritz in the Gaudi architectural style, reflecting forms found in and complementing nature.

Built into the side of a picturesque hill atop the northernmost region of the famed Dry Creek Valley, the Fritz Winery operates with a modern



sensibility for efficiency and awareness by utilizing the unique attributes of its subterranean design.

Naturally cool temperatures, ideal for winemaking and cellaring, are maintained without any use of expensive or carbon-heavy devices common to modern wine production. The three-tiered structure maximizes energy efficiency by capitalizing on the gift of gravity.

"By harnessing gravity to move our juice from the crush pad down to the tanks and barrels, we're not only saving energy by foregoing pumps, we're also saving our precious juice from the detrimental effects of excessive pulsation and buffeting," Clayton Fritz explains. "It's in this way that the delicate nuances present in our Pinot Noir and other prized estate fruit is maintained and then nurtured

by our winemaker, Brad Longton.”

And what wonderful fruit it is.

“At Fritz, we choose to hand-craft fine wines from the most famous and reputable growing regions in Sonoma County, including the Russian River Valley and the Dry Creek Valley,” Longton notes. And because most of the bottlings are made in quantities of 200 cases or fewer, Longton is able to embrace a true artisan approach, giving each and every barrel a great deal of attention prior to bottling and release.

Among Fritz’s offerings are regular and/or “Reserve” renditions of Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. The winery also offers an unusual (and refreshing) 50/50 blend of Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc called Vino Valpredo Bianca Mia.

The public is welcome at Fritz by appointment, and several tasting options are offered:

• **A Taste of Fritz** — If you’ve never been to Fritz, or if it has been a while since your last visit, this is the way to go. The “Fritz Flight” features a taste of all the different varietals made and showcases the variety of flavors that Sonoma County vineyards have to offer. It includes wines made from fruit grown on the estate, as well as wines made from grapes grown in some of the best vineyards of the Russian River Valley. Cost: \$10.

• **Reserve Wine Tasting** — This flight includes Fritz’s Reserve Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel and Cabernet Sauvignon, and concludes with the Estate Late Harvest Zinfandel. These wines are available only at the winery and made in extremely small quantities. Cost: \$15.

• **Artisan Chocolate Truffle and Wine Pairing** — When the weather is gorgeous, and the views from the patio can’t be beat, Fritz likes to offer guests a truly special experience. The winery pairs delectable, handmade, artisan chocolate truffles from Salt Side Down Chocolates with Reserve red wines to elevate the tasting experience from delicious to divine. “This really is the ultimate tasting experience, and your

very own slice of heaven here in our little corner of the Dry Creek Valley,” Fritz says. This pairing is available from late spring to autumn, when the weather is the best. Cost: \$35.

• **Explore the Hidden Depths of Fritz** — Built into a picturesque hillside, the tasting room at Fritz offers sensational views at every turn, along with delicious wines. But to fully understand what makes Fritz unique, one must venture underground and take the Underground Tour. “We’ll show you how we utilize our unique design to produce wines by employing a full gravity-flow process of winemaking,” Fritz says. “This is your opportunity to not only explore Fritz from top to bottom, but to taste some of our wine straight from the barrel.” These tours are offered on weekends only. Cost: \$20.

• **Create Your Own Unique Fritz Pinot Noir** — Have you ever wondered what it’s like to make wine? At Fritz, Brad Longton has been scoring high and winning gold medals with all of his Pinot Noir bottlings, and will provide you with the tools to become a winemaker for a day. During this experience, guests blend, bottle and cork a Pinot Noir that they get to take home when finished. “You’ll learn about the various components involved in the bottling process and what it takes to create a balanced wine,” Longton explains. Cost: \$175.

A number of wineries now embrace “gravity-flow” winemaking and other wine-friendly techniques in the cellar, but Fritz was among the first to do so. If you’re looking for a winery tour like no other, the Fritz Underground Winery is the place to go.

Winery 4-1-1

Fritz Underground Winery

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www.fritzwinery.com

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TOURING TIPS

Yes, we go to California's Napa Valley for the wine. But those tasting rooms can get pretty packed during the summer months, and every so often, we need a break from the elbow bumping.

Fortunately, there's more to the Napa Valley than wine. Lots more. Here are a few ideas to help you fill in that idle time between sips...



- **Take a mud bath.** The up-valley town of Calistoga and mud have a long history. Mud baths — said to relax muscles, sooth aches, improve circulation and smooth the skin — have been drawing relaxation-focused visitors ever since Sam Brannan reined in the thermal springs at the foot of Mount St. Helena and opened his Calistoga Hot Springs Resort in the 1860s. Spa after spa followed, and today there are more than a dozen. That makes Calistoga the most “spa-fified” town in the West.

- **Go on a picnic.** Many wineries have picnic tables, but there also are a handful of parks in the valley that offer a respite from the throngs of tourists at the tasting rooms. Oakville Grocery's historic and beloved



Napa Valley: Beyond the Tasting Rooms

flagship store in Oakville was founded in 1881, and has been serving locals and visitors ever since. For decades, it has been a must-stop destination for food, wine, picnic provisions and gifts. All of its food can be taken to-go, or enjoyed on its picnic grounds. But if it's a park you prefer, head for Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, where you can work up an appetite on the hiking or biking trails before sitting down for your picnic in a picturesque setting.

- **Take a ride in a balloon.** If you've been to Napa Valley, you've probably seen those colorful hot-air balloons hovering above the vineyards during the early morning hours. Balloons Above the Valley has experienced, friendly pilots who will provide you with an incredible birds' eye view. Each ride includes pre-flight café and pastry service, and a post-landing Champagne brunch.

- **Golf in the vineyards.** Well, not exactly *in* the vineyards — unless you really shank a shot, that is. Chardonnay Golf Club in American Canyon features a unique blend of golf holes that consist of six par-5s, six par-4s and six par-3s that meander through more than 150 acres of Chardonnay vineyards. There are numerous lakes and creek crossings, and a wide variety of native trees, shrubs and wildlife.

Several areas of the property are designed as wildlife preserves, dedicated to maintaining wildlife habitat among the vineyards and fairways. Sharing the property with the golfers are several species of

birds including hawks, kites, kestrels, hummingbirds and even an occasional golden eagle. In the early morning or late evening hours, rabbits, squirrels, foxes, a bobcat family (on hole 16) and many other “critters” stroll through the fairways.



- **Pay homage to California's legendary winemakers.** The Vintners Hall of Fame, located on the Culinary Institute of America's campus in St. Helena, celebrates the men and women whose collective vision, determination and hard work have been responsible for the growth and worldwide prestige of the California wine industry.

Bronze sculptures of the inductees, crafted by renowned artist Lawrence Newlan, are displayed on historic 2,200-gallon redwood wine barrels in the former Christian Brothers' Barrel Room. Each plaque includes a biography of the inductee, capturing that person's unique accomplishments and role in making California one of the most legendary places in the world for fine wine.

The CIA's Vintners Hall of Fame also includes “A History of California Wine: The David and Judy Breitstein Collection,” the first major educational exhibit to document the rich history of California wine as told through rare bottles and their accompanying

informational placards. Meticulously curated by Karen MacNeil, chair of the CIA's Rudd Center for Professional Wine Studies, the Breitstein Collection will display some 40 of the 150 bottles in the collection at any one time.

• **Take in a classical music concert.** This year's Music in the Vineyards series features 16 performances at venues ranging from the Hudson House at Beringer Vineyards to the stunning, art-filled grounds of the Hess Collection. The 2012 season runs from July 29 through Aug. 19.

• **Dine at a Michelin-starred restaurant.** There are 10 of them in Napa Valley, including the 3-star French Laundry and The Restaurant at Meadowood.

Thomas Keller describes his French Laundry in Yountville as "a uniquely American restaurant whose inspiration is in the countryside of France." Don't try to decide on your entrée in advance; every day is a new day at the French Laundry, as Keller and company serve up a pair of nine-course tasting menus (one devoted exclusively to vegetables) that offer delicious twists and turns with each plate. There's also an extensive (and equally expensive) wine list, or



French Laundry, Yountville

you can bring your own bottle — a maximum of one bottle for each two people in a party — for a corkage fee of \$75 per bottle.

The Restaurant at Meadowood in St. Helena also features multi-course dining extravaganzas, created by Christopher Kostow, along with wine pairings for each course (for an additional cost). "What excites us most," says Kostow, "is the concept of curation: creating menus that speak to each guest's individual preferences and sense of adventure."

Other Michelin-starred restaurants in the valley include Etoile at Domaine Chandon (Yountville), La Toque (Napa), Solbar (Calistoga), Ubuntu (Napa, on sabbatical as this issue was going to press), The Restaurant at Auberge du Soleil (Rutherford), Bouchon (another Thomas Keller enterprise in Yountville), Redd (Yountville) and Terra (St. Helena).

For Further Information

Mud Baths

www.calistogaspas.com/mud-baths/index.html

Oakville Grocery Company

www.oakvillegrocery.com

Bothe-Napa Valley State Park

www.napanet.net/~bothe

Balloons Above the Valley

www.balloonrides.com

Chardonnay Golf Club

www.chardonnaygolfclub.com

Vintners Hall of Fame

www.ciachef.edu/california/vhf.asp

Music in the Vineyards

www.napavalleymusic.org

French Laundry

www.frenchlaundry.com

The Restaurant at Meadowood

www.therestaurantatmeadowood.com

Etoile at Domaine Chandon

www.chandon.com/etoile-restaurant.html

La Toque

www.latoque.com

Solbar

www.solagecalistoga.com/solbar

Ubuntu

www.ubuntunapa.com

The Restaurant at Auberge du Soleil

www.aubergedusoleil.com/napa-dining/restaurant

Bouchon

www.bouchonbistro.com

Redd

www.reddnapavalley.com

Terra

www.terrarestaurant.com

VINESSE

Hot LIST

1 Hot Island Wine Festival.

Barbados is a mere 166 square miles in size, and this fall, a very high percentage of the people on the island will be wine drinkers. They'll be there for the Barbados Food & Wine and Rum Festival — described by organizers as "a delicious excuse to take a much needed vacation." It's scheduled for Nov. 16-19.

www.foodwinerum.com

2 Hot Georgia Winery. You won't encounter even a trace of pretension at Three Sisters Vineyards & Winery, which is located in the steep foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in Georgia. And that's what visitors love about the facility, which is owned by Doug and Sharon Paul. Among the more popular bottlings is a blend of Norton, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon named "Fat Boy Red." According to Sharon, it's named after her husband.

www.threesistersvineyards.com

3 Hot Santa Barbara Restaurant.

The food and wine pairing possibilities are seemingly endless at Bouchon. Among them: Dungeness crab cakes with Viognier from Cold Heaven Cellars. The proprietor is a co-owner of Santa Barbara's iconic Wine Cask restaurant, so he knows a thing or two about wine. And at Bouchon, the extensive wine list is made up entirely of Santa Barbara County bottlings.

www.bouchonsantabarbara.com



Tannin. Group of compounds found naturally in grape skins, contributing to the structure and aging potential of red wines. Extra tannin is sometimes added during winemaking; oak-derived tannin comes from aging wine in new barrels.

Urban Wine Trail. Name given to a group of tasting rooms that are located in downtown Santa Barbara, Calif. At present, there are 15 stops on the “trail.”

Vanilla. One of the common descriptors for a wine that has been aged in new American oak barrels. Spelled “vanillin” by some wine writers.

Winzergenossenschaft. German name for a winery cooperative (an association of multiple growers).

Xylem. The tissue that carries water and mineral salts from the root of a grapevine to all of its other parts.

VINESSE STYLE

CELEBRITY WINES

Lots of celebrities are making wine these days. (Or having it made for them.) Some are more creative than others in naming their vinous ventures. Here's a sampling...



Adrian Crenier: Stomping Ground.

Antonio Banderas: Anta Banderas.

Dan Ackroyd: Dan Ackroyd Wines.

Dave Matthews: The Dreaming Tree.

Emeril Lagasse: Emeril's Classics Wines.

Francis Ford Coppola: Francis Ford Coppola Winery.

Gerard Depardieu: Gerard Depardieu Winery.

Jason Priestley: Blackhills Estate Winery.

Jeff Gordon: Jeff Gordon Collection.

Kyle MacLachlan: Pursued by Bear.

Lil Jon: Little Jonathan Winery.

Lorraine Bracco: Bracco Wines.

Mario Andretti: Andretti Winery.

Mario Batali: Mario Batali Selection.

Martha Stewart: Martha Stewart Vintage.

Mick Fleetwood: Mick Fleetwood Private Cellar Wine.

Miranda Lambert: Red 55 Winery.

Olivia Newton-John: Koala Blue Wines.

Peggy Fleming: Fleming Jenkins Vineyards & Winery.

Ramona Singer: Ramona Singer.

Sam Neill: Two Paddocks.

Sting: Sister Moon and Casino delle Vie.

Vince Neil: Vince Vineyards.

Wayne Gretzky: Wayne Gretzky Estates.



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APPELLATION SHOWCASE



Long after the early Mission vineyard plantings were abandoned, the Paicines growing region was rediscovered some 40 years ago by Almaden.

It then was again deserted as a bulk brand growing region for more lucrative areas, but now is being reclaimed, this time as a high-end growing region.

Donati Family Vineyard is the only brand located in the Paicines appellation, which is in the center of coastal California, about an hour from San Jose to the north and Monterey to the west. There are approximately five other vineyards within the appellation, growing primarily Bordeaux varieties. Neighboring appellations are home to Calera Wine Company, Chalone Vineyard, Leal Vineyards and DeRose Vineyards.

The Paicines appellation is about 17 miles north of Pinnacles National Monument and Park, and consists of about 4,500 acres of grape-growing area. On the western side are the Cienega Vineyards and the Gabilan Mountain Range, which separate Paicines from San Lucas and King City.

The San Luis Dam, New Idria and the Panoche Valley are on the eastern edge. The San Benito River forms a portion of the western boundary and continues on through the vineyards.

The Paicines area is in a wind tunnel of cool ocean air flowing to

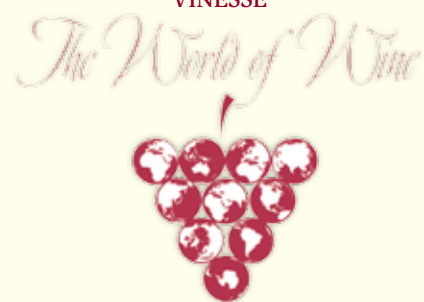
the San Joaquin Valley. Because of the relative lack of trees adjacent to the vineyard areas, Paicines is open to the direct influence of these winds. In the afternoon, it experiences a slight cooling breeze that comes in off the Monterey Valley.

At night, Paicines is more protected from the fog than much of the surrounding area because of its open location. However, during periods of extremely heavy fog, the area tends to hold the fog longer.

Elevation ranges from 500 to 1,200 feet above sea level. The average elevation is lower than much of the surrounding area, which is closer to the Gabilan Mountain Range. The climate differs greatly from the area surrounding the Gabilans, with annual rainfall between 12 and 15 inches.

The Paicines area is comprised of various soil associations, including Sorrento, Mocho, Clear Lake, Willows, Rincon, Antioch, Diablo, Soper, San Benito and Linne. The soils are generally well drained and of various depths, and the root zones are quite deep. There are some steady alluvial fans and terrace escarpments with rapid runoff — all in all, ideal for growing cool-climate winegrapes.

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Q We are tailgating at a baseball game next month, and I'm going to make my famous Crab Cioppino. In the past, I've always served beer with this dish, but this time, we'd like to have some wine. Any ideas?

A Assuming you make your Cioppino with a tomato-based broth and a certain degree of spice, this will be one of those "red wine with fish" occasions. Zinfandel is always a good choice when spice is involved, and don't be afraid to chill the wine down a little bit before serving. A nice dry rosé (also chilled) is another option. And then there was this short answer from one member of our Vinesse tasting panel: "Rioja. Case closed."

“Wine has become more approachable. This generation has more access to wine and decreased formality. They don't have to know which wine to drink with what, and that atmosphere was not there for baby boomers.”



— Beverage analyst Garima Goel Lal, on the rise of Millennials as wine drinkers.
(Source: Chicago Tribune)

The history of organic grape growing in California's Mendocino County can be traced to the early Italian immigrants who first planted grapes there in the late 1800s. Before the introduction of agricultural chemicals following World War I, all grape growing and food production was, in essence, organic. Many of the early grape-growing families resisted the pressure to accept modern chemicals in favor of their traditional "organic" methods. Frey Vineyards, along with a handful of other family-owned vineyards in Mendocino County, joined California Certified Organic Farmers in 1980 and created the first wines in the U.S. to be made from certified organic grapes. In 2008, fruit from more than 30 certified organic grape growers was utilized to make 12 varietals of Frey organic wine. Over the years, Frey has helped many of these growers through the process of certification, increasing the total organic vineyard acreage in Mendocino County to more than 3,500 acres.



5,000

Number of acres of grapevines planted in California's Livermore Valley. For more on that region and a special food-and-wine pairing event in July, turn to page 11.

Wine on tap? What kind of restaurant would serve wine on tap? Isn't that like drinking wine from a box? That was then; this is now. A number of restaurants around the country are embracing the concept of the "wine keg," and it's not a new idea. For generations, Italian families would lug small kegs or jugs to their neighborhood vintner to have them refilled right out of



barrels. It's too early to call it a trend, and up to this point, the number of premium wines available in the keg format is pretty limited. But as an alternative way of presenting a wine-by-the-glass program, kegs provide a decent product at a decent price point.

And we wouldn't be surprised at all to see the practice expand to a degree that we could describe it as a trend.

The 7th annual Lake Michigan Shore Wine Festival is right around the corner. It's scheduled to be held on June 16 on Weko Beach in Bridgman, Mich. The

expected turnout of 4,000 wine lovers basically doubles Bridgman's population for the day. In addition to local wines — available by the taste or the glass — guests will enjoy extraordinary cuisine from local restaurants, plus live music in the "Big Top Tent." And because the festival runs from 1 to 10 p.m., organizers are reasonably confident that they can promise a dazzling sunset as well. For further information, visit: www.miwinetrail.com or www.swmichigan.org.



FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS



A Taste of Livermore Valley

If you enjoy the hedonistic synergy between food and wine, you need to attend “Taste of Terroir.”

Also known as “The Livermore Valley’s Wine & Food Experience,” the 2012 edition is scheduled for July 19 at The Palm Event Center in Pleasanton, Calif. It runs for three hours beginning at 6 p.m., providing guests with plenty of time to sample local wines paired with complementary food.

Early bird pricing is in effect until July 1, enabling guests to save \$10 off the \$85 ticket price. In addition to the food-and-wine pairings, the event features a silent auction and live music.

Livermore wine country is less than an hour east of San Francisco, where picturesque canyons, ridges, lush vines and convivial tasting rooms intermingle with outposts of suburbia. Spanish missionaries first planted grapevines there in the 1760s, and today there are more than 40 wineries, and some 5,000 acres devoted to grapevines.

The valley’s historic roots are significant. Concannon Vineyard pioneered the Petite Sirah variety in California... Wente Vineyards is known as the oldest continuously operated, family-owned winery in America... and the first California wine to carry a “Chardonnay” designation on the label came from

Livermore Valley.

At “Taste of Terroir,” guests sample multiple vintages and varieties from all of the valley’s top producers — served as they should be: with equally amazing food.

In 2011, the “Taste of Terroir” award winners were:

- **Most Innovative Pairing** — Cedar Mountain Winery and Porter’s Restaurant at Poppy Ridge. The 2007 Hansen Vineyard Zinfandel was paired with local lamb meatballs on black bean sopapillas with jalapeño jelly.
- **Best Classic Pairing** — Concannon Vineyard and Market Café at Pleasanton Marriot. The 2007 Reserve Petite Sirah was paired with braised short rib bruschetta.
- **Judges’ Best Pairing** — Nottingham Cellars and Wild Vine Hideaway Bistro & Lounge. The 2009 Malbec was paired with seasoned and garnished lamb skewers, drizzled with a zesty Malbec wine sauce.
- **People’s Choice Award** — Ruby Hill Winery and Casa Real at Ruby Hill Winery. The 2008 “Intesa,” a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Barbera, was paired with braised goat with hints of cloves, coriander and vanilla, served on creamy goat cheese polenta with fresh cherry and micro-arugula garnish.

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RED WINE-BRAISED SHORT RIBS

You'll need three bottles of Cabernet Sauvignon for this dish — one for the ingredients, and two to drink with friends, as this recipe yields 6 servings.

Ingredients

- 5-lb. bone-in beef short ribs, cut crosswise into 2-inch pieces
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 3 medium onions, chopped
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 bottle (750-ml.) Cabernet Sauvignon
- 10 sprigs flat-leaf parsley
- 8 sprigs thyme
- 4 sprigs oregano
- 2 sprigs rosemary
- 2 fresh or dried bay leaves
- 1 head of garlic, halved crosswise
- 4 cups low-salt beef stock

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Season short ribs with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Working in two batches, brown short ribs on all sides (about 8 minutes per batch). Transfer ribs to a plate. Pour off all but 3 tablespoons of drippings from pot.
2. Add onions, carrots and celery to pot and cook over medium-high heat, stirring often, until onions are browned (about 5 minutes).
3. Add flour and tomato paste, and cook, stirring constantly, until well combined and deep red (2-3 minutes).
4. Stir in wine, then add short ribs with any accumulated juices. Bring to a boil. Lower heat to medium and simmer until wine is reduced by half (about 25 minutes).

5. Add all herbs to pot, along with garlic. Stir in stock. Bring to a boil, cover, and transfer to oven.
6. Cook until short ribs are tender (2 to 2 1/2 hours).
7. Transfer short ribs to a platter.
8. Strain sauce from pot into a measuring cup. Spoon fat from surface of sauce and discard. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper.
9. Serve in shallow bowls over mashed potatoes with sauce spooned over.

PEACH COBLER

A lighter-styled, slightly sweet white wine makes the perfect pairing partner for this dessert. This recipe yields 10 servings.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups sugar, divided
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup milk
- 4 cups fresh peach slices
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Ground cinnamon or nutmeg

Preparation

1. Melt butter in a 13-inch x 9-inch baking dish.
2. Combine flour, 1 cup sugar, baking powder and salt. Add milk, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened. Pour batter over butter (do not stir).
3. Bring remaining 1 cup sugar, peach slices and lemon juice to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Pour over batter (do not stir). Sprinkle with cinnamon or nutmeg.
4. Bake at 375 degrees for 40 to 45 minutes, or until golden brown.
5. Allow cobbler to cool to room temperature, and then serve.

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