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The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS

Australia's Eden Valley: A Garden of Vinous Delights

Visiting the Indiana Uplands Wine Trail

The Perfect Wine for Gouda & Edam Cheeses

A Hot New Wine Bar (Just Don't Call It That)

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EDITOR'S JOURNAL

6 Tips for Grilling Success

By Robert Johnson

Grilling season is in full swing. Here are six tips to help you enjoy not only the food, but also the process.

1. Clean the grill while it is still hot.

This may seem like it should be the last tip, but it's good to be thinking about cleaning from the very beginning of the process. I'm a big believer in doing things the easy way, and a grill is much easier to clean, particularly if you have a sturdy brush for removing residue from the grill rack, before the grill has cooled and that residue has decided to "stick around."



2. Position the grill at least 10 feet away from the house.

This helps prevent fires and also limits fumes from entering the dwelling.

3. You're there to do a job.

True, grilling should be fun, and chances are there will be other people — perhaps lots of other people — around. Resist the urge to "entertain." Focus on the task at hand — which areas of the grill are hotter, how long a piece of meat or poultry has been cooking, and so on. Undercooked food can be saved; overcooked food can't.

4. Chicken tip.

(Warning: Do not attempt to say that phrase fast three times, particularly if you have a glass of wine nearby.) The great fear when grilling poultry is that it will be undercooked. For that reason, many people will move it to the hottest section of the grill — which generally results in a well-cooked outside and a possibly still-undercooked inside. Slow and steady is the best approach to grilling chicken, with medium heat recommended.

5. Sear first, ask questions later.

When you sear meat on both sides, you cut way down on the possibility of it sticking to the grill. Once it has a nice char, it can be moved to a not-quite-so-hot area to cook.



6. Bone up.

There are lots of great grilling books on the market, and two of the newest provide a master's course on the subject. For technique tips, pick up *Where There's Smoke*, written by Barton Seaver (Sterling Epicure, \$30). And for great recipes, get a copy of *The Grilling Book* from *Bon Appetit* (Andrews McMeel, \$45).



Getting to Know the Styles of Chardonnay

A word often used by winemakers when describing Chardonnay is “malleable.” Perhaps more than any other variety, Chardonnay enables a vintner to lend his or her own stamp to the finished product.

That’s good on one hand, because it gives a winery an opportunity to develop a “house style,” or to introduce various aromas and flavors to the cuvee in years when the fruitfulness of the grapes may not be particularly pronounced.

But it also can lead to confusion among wine drinkers, because there is no single, clear “vision” of what Chardonnay is. “Do you like Chardonnay?” is a question that may require much more than a “yes” or “no” answer.

With that in mind, it can be very helpful to get to know the various styles of Chardonnay, and how they differ from one another. Following are the most common traits of Chardonnay wines from various winegrowing regions.

• **Burgundy, France** — Rich and minerally, with vanilla shadings from oak barrel aging. Apple and

lemon flavors are evident in the wine’s youth, morphing into impressions of hazelnuts and truffles with extended aging.

• **Chablis, France** — This area of northern Burgundy produces Chardonnay that is higher in acid and often more minerally, with less evident oak influence.

• **Sonoma Coast and Santa Lucia Highlands of California** — These cooler growing areas can produce Chardonnay that mimics Burgundy in style. Malolactic fermentation typically is avoided so that the wine’s fruit flavors can shine.

• **Napa Valley and Other Inland Regions of California** — These warmer growing areas produce richer, “warmer” (i.e., somewhat higher in alcohol) wines, with fruit flavors complemented by buttery notes from malolactic fermentation.

Barrel fermentation, malolactic fermentation and oak barrel aging are among the “wild cards” that vintners have at their disposal. Each can significantly impact the aromas, mouthfeel, flavors and finish of Chardonnay.

So, while it’s very helpful to know about the general traits of a given region, ultimately, a wine lover will want to get to know the style of a given winemaker.



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The Fontanafredda Estate: A Jewel in Piedmont's Langhe

Winemaking is a way of life in Italy. On many occasions, Italian vintners have commented that their homeland is "one massive vineyard."

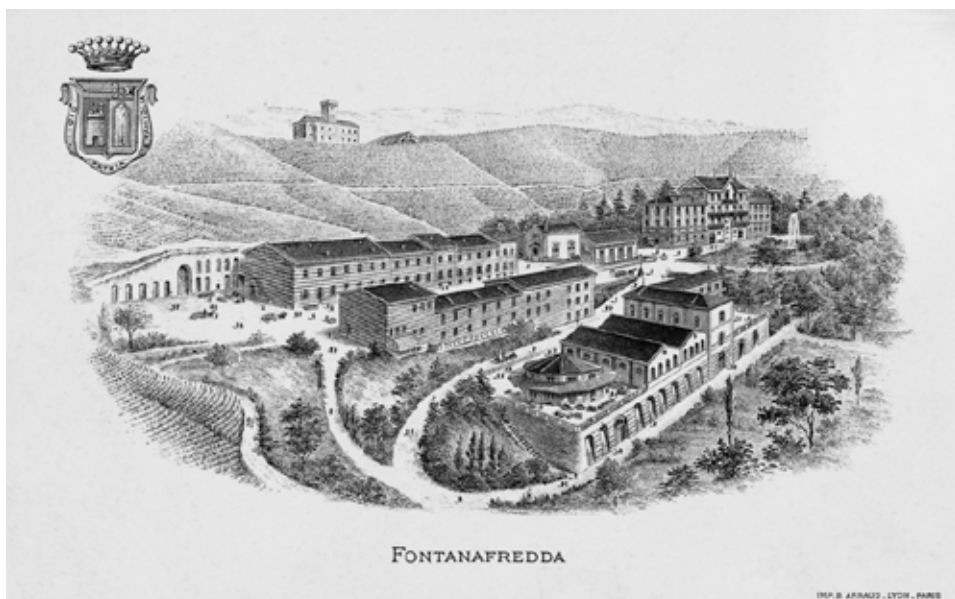
Nowhere is the "wine life" taken more seriously than in the northwest province of Piedmont, in the foothills of the Italian Alps. There, one of Italy's most celebrated wines is produced, one that enjoys the same status as fine art: Barolo.

For more than a century and a quarter, Fontanafredda has provided a benchmark for authentically styled Barolo and other Barbera-based wines — bottlings that deftly balance intense aromas and deep fruit concentration with elegance and finesse.



Fontanafredda was founded in 1878 in the heart of Piedmont's Langhe region. Among its most prized vineyard sites are those in the Serralunga d'Alba commune, a hub of distinctive and intriguing Barolo wines. While the hillsides are evenly contoured, the texture of the calcareous soils can vary





widely within the space of just a few dozen yards — some quite loose, some with a high proportion of silt, and much of it dominated by clay.

The climate is considered “continental,” which equates with wide variations in air (and ground) temperatures from season to season. This is fairly typical for winegrowing regions. The main factor that differentiates Langhe vintages is the amount of rainfall received during the spring and fall months.

Like many Italian wine estates, Fontanafredda’s is steeped in history. In 1858, when Lincoln and Douglas debated for the first time and Macy’s opened its first store in New York, Vittorio Emanuele II made an important real estate deal. The first king of Italy purchased the Fontanafredda estate, and began transforming the former hunting preserve into a country home.

Grapevines already dotted the landscape, and before long, Emanuele was producing fine red wines from the indigenous Barbera, Dolcetto and Nebbiolo grapes.

Today, Fontanafredda is the largest contiguous wine estate in Piedmont, with more than 305 acres devoted to grapevines, including 210 acres in the Serralunga, Barolo and Diano d’Alba communes. In addition to its estate-grown fruit, Fontanafredda has access to many of Piedmont’s other great

vineyard sites, a key to maintaining consistently high quality from year to year.

In addition to its Barolo and other traditional Piedmont table wines, Fontanafredda has gained a reputation as an exceptional producer of sparkling wines. But Barolo will always be the estate’s star.

Nothing is left to chance by lead winemaker Danilo Drocco, who utilizes ultra-modern equipment while embracing traditional cellar techniques. As an example, Fontanafredda’s single-vineyard Barolo completes its fermentation and begins its maturation in 4,000-liter French oak barrels before being transferred to huge, ancient (read: traditional) Slovenian oak vats for extended aging.

As Drocco likes to say, “Barolo should reveal itself little by little, rather than all at once.”

That is the Italian way, and that is the Fontanafredda way.

Winery 4-1-1

Fontanafredda

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Italy

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Delightful Surprises Abound on the Indiana Uplands Wine Trail



French Lick Winery

The United States got a new American Viticultural Area early this year. It's in the south-central part of Indiana, and it's known as Indiana Uplands.

The AVA runs 110 miles from north to south. The line separating Morgan and Monroe counties forms the northern border, while the Ohio River at the Kentucky border forms the southern boundary. All told, it encompasses 19 counties, and its name has been in use geographically since 1920.

Winemaking in Indiana goes back much further than that, however. Historical records show that the Huber family planted grapevines in Starlight, Ind., during the 1840s. Within 40 years, a quarter of all wine being made in Indiana came from Indiana Uplands.

Of course, Prohibition halted all (legal) winemaking in the state, and it wasn't until the 1960s that planting resumed. Oliver Winery, northwest of Bloomington, got the ball rolling, followed by Huber family descendants in the late 1980s. In 2003, several winery owners in the region got together and formed the Indiana Uplands Wine Trail — a path worth following if you're seeking something

a little bit off the beaten path for a "wine country" adventure.

Within the Uplands' 4,800 square miles, there are 19 vineyards spanning about 200 acres. Seventeen wineries are within the AVA's boundaries, and nine of them belong to the Wine Trail, offering visitors everything from welcoming tasting rooms to picnic grounds to full-blown tours.

Here are thumbnail sketches of the nine wineries along the trail...

• **Best Vineyards Winery** — Hosts a summer concert series that kicked off in June with "a little Skynyrd, a little Hank and a whole lot of good ol' boy music" from the Concrete Canyon Cowboys. The estate offers a wide range of dry and sweet wines, including a number of fruit wines and a fortified elixir called Strawberry Flame — strawberries, Chambourcin grapes and brandy.

• **Brown County Winery** — Founded in 1985, this winery has two tasting rooms, one in the picturesque village of Nashville, Ind. (home to more than 200 unique shops and

galleries), and one at the winery in Gnawbone, Ind. It produces a variety of dry, semi-sweet and dessert wines made from grapes, berries and other fruit. Fans of cold winter nights and warm fireplaces will love the Old Barrel Port.

• **Butler Winery** — This winery is the fourth-oldest in Indiana and has three locations: one in downtown Bloomington, one at the winery northeast of town, and one in Chesterton, Ind. Along with numerous dry, semi-sweet and dessert/fruit wines, proprietors Jim and Susie Butler produce a bottling called Cassis Noir — black currant wine with grape brandy added.

• **Carousel Winery** — As this story was being written, Carousel was building a new location and had not yet re-opened to the public. We're guessing the move could have something to do with this website message that accompanied its original address: "Your GPS will not find us!" But Carousel's wines are worth tracking down, particularly its double-gold winning Traminette and an unusual red called Winter Spice.

• **French Lick Winery** — Although it makes Pinot Gris and Merlot, the Doty family concentrates on hybrid



TOURING TIPS

varieties that are tailor-made for the Indiana climate: Vidal, Norton, Chambourcin, Leon Millet, Traminette and others. Its Crema Dolce dessert wine is a double-gold medal winner, and the Heaven's View Port — named for the estate vineyard — is crafted from ultra-ripened Norton grapes.

• **Huber Winery** — The Huber family can lay claim to the longest historic roots in Indiana winemaking, and today offers a family-friendly experience. In addition to its tasting room, the facility is home to the Starlight Café (featuring appetizers, sandwiches, pizza and salads), the Family Farm Park (with mountain slides, mazes, a train and more), an ice cream factory and a cheese shop.



Oliver Winery

• **Oliver Winery** — The winery's downtown Bloomington location is convenient and offers an imaginative small plates and dessert menu, but if you have the time, venture out to

Creekbend Vineyard. There, cheese and other snacks can be purchased for a picnic, vineyard tours are offered and, on Aug. 24, the first Creekbend Bluegrass Bash will take place, featuring music by the Not Too Bad Bluegrass Band, the Whipstitch Sallies and the Indiana Boys.

• **Turtle Run Winery** — Proprietor Jim Pfeiffer has conducted more than 1,000 tours of his winery, and no two have ever been the same because he finds out what visitors want to know and then gives it to them. There are as many as 30 different wines available at any given time, and those who love turtles will love the labels. A free concert series runs most weekends during the summer months.

• **Winzerwald Winery** — Owners Dan and Donna Adams celebrate their German heritage, along with the Swiss and German heritage of the area, with their German- and Swiss-style wines, gift items and festivals. The wines include a Riesling blend called Lieblich, a traditional German May wine (Mai Wein), and a German mulled red wine with cinnamon and cloves called Gluhwein. The Adamses also operate a tasting room in Evansville, Ind.

For Further Information

Best Vineyards Winery
Elizabeth, Ind.
www.bestvineyardswinery.com

Butler Winery
Bloomington, Ind.
www.butlerwinery.com

Brown County Winery
Nashville, Ind.
www.browncountywinery.com

Carousel Winery
Mitchell, Ind.
www.carouselwinery.com

French Lick Winery
West Baden Springs, Ind.
www.frenchlickwinery.com

**Huber's Orchard,
Winery & Vineyards**
Starlight, Ind.
www.huberwinery.com

Oliver Winery
Bloomington, Ind.
www.oliverwinery.com

Turtle Run Winery
Corydon, Ind.
www.turtlerunwinery.com

Winzerwald Winery
Bristow, Ind.
www.winzerwaldwinery.com

Indiana Uplands Wine Trail
www.indianauplands.com

VINESSE

Hot LIST

1 Hot Pacific Northwest Restaurant. For a dining experience that is pure Portland, head to Noble Rot. The restaurant is housed in a Leed Platinum-certified building (as green as it gets), and many of the ingredients come from the 3,000-sq.-ft. garden on the roof. The endive, beet, blue cheese and hazelnut salad is a go-to dish, and more than 40 wines by the glass are offered, along with well-selected wine flights.
www.noblerotpdx.com

2 Hot (Not a) Wine Bar. Et al is a wine bar in San Francisco that owner Ceri Smith doesn't want you to call a wine bar — kind of like a bowling center owner not wanting you to call his place a bowling alley. But whatever you call Et al, expect tasty dishes and plenty of complementary wines.
https://twitter.com/etal_sf

3 Hot Wine Guide. For a wine lover, Germany makes a wonderful destination. It's home to 13 growing regions where one can enjoy not only wineries, but also wine hiking trails, open-air wine-tasting stands, wine pubs (*weinstuben*) and, if you time your trip well, wine festivals. All the info you need is in the book, *A Traveller's Wine Guide to Germany* (\$24), written by Freddy and Janet Price.
www.interlinkbooks.com



Racking. Process of separating wine from sediment following fermentation, and moving it to another barrel or tank.

Sommelier. Restaurant employee who helps guests select wines to complement their meals. There's a new movie out focused on the pursuit of the Master Sommelier title (see "Wine Buzz" for more).

Tastevin. A shallow-sided tasting cup, now rarely seen, that vintners used to taste their still-in-barrel wines in dark caves or cellars. They were favored because they were less fragile than glass.

Undertone. Used in describing a subtle aroma and/or flavor of a wine.

Viertelstuck. An 80-gallon German wine barrel.

Warm. Used to describe a wine with noticeable alcohol, yet still in balance.

VINESSE STYLE

Hand-Sculpted Champagne Bucket

Tina Frey Designs is world acclaimed for its hand-sculpted resin objects that range from fruit and candy dishes to plant and hanging vessels, and from variously shaped bowls to serving boards.



The pieces in the collection are hand sculpted by Tiny Frey in San Francisco, beginning with an idea that is cohesive with the rest of the collection. When a clay design is completed, hand-made molds are created for each object.

As the company's website describes, "the molds are used to cast each item individually by hand in small batches by color. Slight color variations between batches contribute to the beauty and uniqueness of each piece.

"After the pieces are cast and removed from the mold, they are hand sanded. In this way, we can ensure the quality and integrity of each piece."

New to the line this year is a brown Champagne cooler bucket that's crafted with an opaque effect. Dishwasher safe, it's ideal for summertime events ranging from picnics to weddings, and its knotted leather handles make it easy to carry your favorite sparkling wines — well chilled — from place to place.

In late June, the bucket was priced at \$215, and available online from Barney's at www.barneys.com.

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APPELLATION SHOWCASE



Eden Valley, Australia

A question likely to come to mind after traversing South Australia's Eden Valley is: "Why is this called a valley?"

At least in the way we generally think of a valley, the Eden is far from one. Much more noticeable than its occasional flat expanses are the area's steep slopes and windswept hills.

Ultimately, it's those features that define the Eden as a unique wine region, as they provide growers with a variety of "aspects" for their vineyards, and winemakers with a wide range of aromas and flavors in the grapes.

Eden Valley shares its western boundary with the Barossa Valley so, not surprisingly, there are some similarities in wine types and wine styles. Both areas produce a range of red and white wines, and are home to some legendary vintners.

If one were forced to differentiate between the two, it could be said that the Eden Valley is slightly better suited for the production of white wines, while the Barossa has the edge when it comes to red varieties. Climatically, Eden Valley has more in

common with the wine region to its south — Adelaide Hills — than with the Barossa.

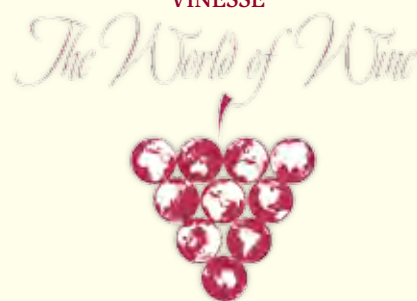
Two of the more famous wines of the region are Jim Irvine's "Grand Merlot" and Henschke's "Hill of Grace" Shiraz. Even so, Eden Valley is known primarily for its Riesling, rivaling the esteemed bottlings of that variety made in the neighboring Clare Valley.

Many of the area's best Rieslings are crafted in the district known as the High Eden, where the cooler climate provides ideal growing conditions. The High Eden is home to Mountadam Winery, where legendary vintner David Wynn has transformed Chardonnay production into an art form.

Another pioneer of the region is Yalumba, which is Australia's oldest family-owned winery, founded in 1849. Rather than resting on its historic laurels, Yalumba has continued to innovate, in recent years bringing rare-to-the-region varietals such as Viognier and Tempranillo to the public's attention.

It may be a valley that doesn't resemble a valley, but the Eden Valley ranks among Australia's most important wine regions.

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Q Is there any difference between rosé wines and blush wines? My friends seem to use the terms interchangeably.

A Lots of people do but, yes, there is a difference. The term “blush” was coined back in the 1970s because many California producers believed the term “rosé” had become antiquated. About the same time, White Zinfandel gained widespread popularity, and it became the flag bearer for blush wines — a term now used to describe bottlings that are soft and typically sweet. Meanwhile, the term “rosé” has come back in fashion, and the high-quality renditions are bone dry and ideal food pairing partners. For many people, rosé is the wine of summertime.

Filmmaker David Lynch, who received the “Best Director” award for “Mulholland Drive” at the 2001 Cannes Film Festival, is a wine lover — with expensive taste. Asked by *Food and Wine* magazine to name his favorite wine, Lynch replied, “I mostly like red Bordeaux, like Chateau Lynch-Bages. On special occasions, I’ll have Latour, and it’s almost like chocolate. It’s got such a flavor, it’s unbelievable.”



“Dandelion wine. The words were summer on the tongue. The wine was summer caught and stoppered.”



— From Ray Bradbury’s *Dandelion Wine*

“**S**OMM” is a documentary, now in limited theater release, that focuses on the process of qualifying for the most prestigious title in the world of wine: Master Sommelier. It follows four MS seekers during the final weeks leading up to the examination, which fewer than 200 people have passed over the course of 40 years. The makers of the film not only sat in on study sessions, but were granted unprecedented access to the Court of Master Sommeliers, whose members administer the test. Check out our review of the film online in the “Editor’s Journal” archives at www.blog.vinesse.com.



3 Number of stars awarded to the movie “SOMM” by reviewer Bruce Ingram, writing for the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

Two research studies sponsored by Wine Institute indicate that the sustainable and eco-friendly attributes of wine are important considerations when making purchasing decisions among key segments of wine consumers as well as the wine trade. The research findings indicate that eco-conscious wine consumers are interested in information about sustainable and environmentally friendly practices in wineries and vineyards



— which underscores the reason for this monthly “green” feature in *The Grapevine*. As the fourth-largest wine producer worldwide, California is a global leader in sustainable winegrowing practices. Through participation in the

California Sustainable Winegrowing Program, the state has one of the most widely adopted such programs in the world in terms of wine acreage and case production.

FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS



Gouda & Edam Cheeses

Gouda and Edam cheeses have much in common, including the type of wine that pairs best with them.

Both originated in the Netherlands, and both are named after the cities in which they were first developed.

Gouda, or “How-da,” as the locals pronounce it, today is perhaps the most popular cheese in the world, accounting for 50 to 60 percent of total cheese consumption. It’s a semi-hard cheese that’s noted for its rich, unique flavor and smooth texture.

In the city of Gouda, the original cheese market is one of the last standing commercial cheese markets in the Netherlands.

Edam is named after the city of the same name, located in the province of North Holland. It’s traditionally sold in spheres with a pale yellow interior and a coat of red paraffin wax.

Both Gouda and Edam are considered “sweet-curd” cheeses. Their manufacturing process is similar to that of semi-soft cheeses, but specific starter cultures and only the highest quality milk are used.

The primary difference between the two is that Gouda is made with whole milk, while Edam is produced

with part-skim. Flavored Goudas have spices or herbs added to their curd prior to pressing.

Very early on, France was extremely vigilant about protecting the names of its wines, since they typically were tied to geography. Today, there are international agreements in place that restrict the use of the designation “Champagne” to the Champagne region of France, the use of the designation “Bordeaux” to the Bordeaux region of France, and so on.

The Dutch did not follow suit, however, and that’s why the Gouda and Edam names have been “appropriated” and now are generic. Fortunately, most cheese makers honor and emulate the traditional styles, which means that we can recommend serving an off-dry, high-acid Riesling with virtually any Gouda or Edam cheese.

And for a special treat, try the Spicy Pumpkin Seed Brittle (featured on page 12) with slices of Gouda and Edam, and a glass of Riesling.

Light & Sweet

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SPICY PUMPKIN SEED BRITTLE

Assuming your dental work can handle it, try this brittle with Gouda or Edam cheese and a glass of off-dry Riesling for a dessert that's crunchy, creamy, spicy and sweet. This recipe is courtesy of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.

Ingredients

- 1½ tsp. baking soda
- 2 Tbsp. butter, melted
- 1½ cups sugar
- ¾ cup water
- ¼ tsp. fine-grained sea salt
- ¾ cup (4-oz.) hulled spicy roasted pumpkin seeds ("pepitas")
- 1 tsp. red pepper flakes
- ¼ tsp. cayenne pepper

Preparation

1. Stir together baking soda and melted butter, and set aside.
2. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper, and set aside a second sheet of the same size. Butter parchment on one side.
3. Combine sugar, water and salt in a heavy 2-quart saucepan. Bring to a low boil.
4. Reduce heat to medium-low, and wash down any sugar crystals on sides of pan with a pastry brush dipped in cold water.
5. Simmer syrup 10 to 12 minutes, until it reaches 240 degrees F.
6. Remove from heat. With a wooden spoon, add pumpkin seeds, red pepper flakes and cayenne pepper.
7. While stirring, return pan to medium-low heat. Melt again until mixture turns amber brown and reaches 290 degrees F.
8. Remove from heat, and stir in butter-baking soda mixture with wooden spoon.

9. Pour mixture onto prepared cookie sheet. Cover with second parchment sheet.
10. Press the mixture with a rolling pin to ¼-inch thick. Remove top layer of parchment.
11. Cool completely. Crack brittle. Store between layers of parchment in a sealed container for up to two weeks.

LEMON-PEPPER HALIBUT

Although our minds typically drift to big, thick steaks or juicy hamburgers, summertime grilling need not be restricted to red meat. This tasty dish is packed with flavor, and pairs beautifully with Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, or a lower-alcohol, fruit-forward Zinfandel. This recipe yields 4 servings.

Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons lemon juice
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 4 halibut fillets (about 5-oz. each)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon lemon-pepper seasoning

Preparation

1. In a large re-sealable plastic bag, combine the lemon juice, butter and Worcestershire sauce. Add the halibut pieces, seal bag and turn to coat.
2. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes, turning occasionally.
3. Drain and discard marinade. Sprinkle halibut pieces with salt and lemon-pepper.
4. Using long-handled tongs, moisten a paper towel with cooking oil and lightly coat the grill rack.
5. Grill the halibut, covered, over medium heat, for 4 to 6 minutes on each side, or until fish flakes easily with a fork.

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