

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

Volume 22

Number 3

©Vinesse Wine Club 2014

SKU 22578

The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS



Wine Pairing Ideas for **Frozen Food Month**

**St. Patrick's Day
Beer Alternatives**

**Wineries With a
Woman's Touch**

**Vintner's Choice:
Terroir or Technique**

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

St. Patrick's Day (Green) Beer Alternatives

By Robert Johnson

If drinking green beer is a St. Patrick's Day tradition for you, all I can say is: Enjoy!

On the other hand, if you'd prefer to drink wine with your St. Patty's feast, but were wondering what kind to have... we're here to help. After all, chances are you'll be noshing on something you don't normally have with wine.

Here are a few pairing ideas...

- **With Corned Beef and Cabbage** — The cabbage presents an almost unsolvable pairing conundrum, so we suggest isolating it and having it between bites of corned beef and sips of wine. Among the wine choices for corned beef are Pinot Noir — preferably one that's somewhat "earthy," that you'd normally serve with mushrooms — and Syrah, another variety known for its earthiness. Avoid the big "fruit bombs" from Australia that go by the name of Shiraz, and opt for a bottling that's more Northern Rhone in style. Feeling adventurous? Seek out an Italian Dolcetto.

- **With Beef Stew** — Meat, potatoes and veggies make for a hearty meal, and call for an equally hearty wine. An Italian Barolo would be a great choice, but also can stretch the budget. A wallet-friendlier option would be Chateauneuf du Pape, or almost any cuvee that includes Grenache as a primary ingredient.

- **With Fish-n-Chips** — A tangy tartar sauces calls for a wine with plenty of citrus flavor, such as a Rueda from Spain. Another solid choice is Sauvignon Blanc. And if you must have Chardonnay, make sure it's a dry, steely style such as Chablis or one that is labeled "unoaked."

If your dinner party is having a variety of dishes and you want to order just one bottle of vino, the go-to choice is sparkling wine. For a splurge, choose a vintage Champagne; for a more affordable option, select a Prosecco from Italy or a sparkler from California.





The Great Debate: Terroir or Technique?

It is a decision that every winemaker must make — perhaps multiple times during any given harvest season: Should a particular wine be more of an expression of terroir, or more an expression of technique?

Opinions vary widely, not only among individual winemakers, but also among wine regions, particularly those steeped in history.

In the Chablis area of Burgundy, for instance, there really is no choice to be made. There, the only variety is Chardonnay, and it's all grown in limestone, clay and white chalk soil. The wines traditionally have a noticeable "chalky" note in their aroma, and many consider that to be the defining characteristic of Chablis. Wines from Chablis are different than wines from Macon, Puligny-Montrachet and Chassagne-Montrachet. No vintner in his right mind would try to blend away that "chalky" aspect of the Chablis aroma spectrum.

In California, those who fall into the "terroir" camp often express their preference by crafting single-vineyard wines.

"To make the finest wines, you must start with great

vineyards," says Paul Draper of Sonoma County's Ridge Vineyards. "The individual character of a fine wine reflects a totality of elements, i.e. the terroir of its vineyard. Ridge bases grape-growing in each vineyard on long experience, while making use of the most recent advances in vineyard practice."

That said, what happens in the cellar remains a critical aspect of the winemaking process.

"In the cellar, winemaking begins with respect for the natural process that transforms fresh grapes into wine, and for the 19th century model of guiding that process with minimal intervention," Draper says. "When you have great vineyards that produce high-quality grapes of distinct, individual character, this approach is not only environmentally and socially responsible, it's also the best way to consistently make fine wine."

Of course, vintners who are not blessed with exceptional vineyards must be more proactive in the cellar, and can invoke their style preference through the type of fermentation selected and the type of oak barrels used for aging. The wines they make can still be high in quality — just different than terroir-driven wines.



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

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.Vinese.com



The Women Behind the Success of J Vineyards

With International Women’s Day being celebrated this month, what better time to revisit a Sonoma County winery where both the proprietor and the winemaker are women?

The story of J Vineyards & Winery begins in 1986, when Judy Jordan followed her dream of starting a winery that specialized in sparkling wine. As a 25-year-old Stanford diploma holder in Earth Sciences/Geology, Jordan understood the land. Her belief that soil enriches the flavors of the fruit of the vine influenced her pursuit of unique terroir and “a sense of place” for growing winegrapes.

After a few years of making critically-acclaimed Russian River Valley sparkling wines — like her signature J Vintage Brut and J Late-Disgorged Vintage Brut — she came to the realization that her vineyards would also be ideal for producing site-specific, varietal wines.

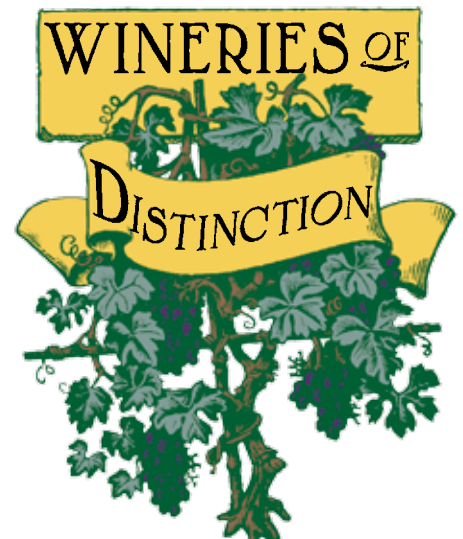
So, in 1994, Jordan launched a single-vineyard Pinot Noir, named after her eldest child, Nicole. Not one to show favoritism, soon thereafter she released a second single-vineyard Pinot Noir named Robert Thomas.

The winery has thrived since that first Pinot Noir release. Today, it counts estate-grown Russian River Valley Chardonnay and single-vineyard Pinot Gris made from Cooper Vineyard among its wines.

The experience of working for her family earlier in her life had enabled Jordan to hone her skills in business, marketing, soils and geology — all from a geologist’s and vintner’s perspective.

In 1996, 10 years after founding J, she purchased the former Piper Sonoma winery south of Healdsburg, in the heart of the Russian River Valley. In addition to a ready-made winemaking facility, it also provided a venue for Jordan to pioneer elegant food and wine experiences for guests.

The tasting room, which opened in 1999, incorporated bite-sized delicacies



to complement each wine and illustrate how wine pairs with cuisine. The award-winning Visitor Center continues to be a popular choice for an ultimate luxury experience.

One of Jordan's great mentors is her father, Tom Jordan.

"I feel very fortunate to have a wonderful father who helped me to start my career and who continues to share his knowledge of the wine business," Jordan says. "His entrepreneurial passion is inspiring."

Jordan credits her mother, Sally Jordan, for her sense of style and social etiquette, an influence that continues to inspire her love and appreciation of gracious hospitality.

Reflecting on the importance of family in her company and personal life, Jordan also credits the late Lew Platt, former CEO of Hewlett Packard and Chairman of Boeing Corporation. Platt mentored her in the importance of building and maintaining a team aligned with the core values of elegance, integrity, respect and a sense of community. Today, Jordan brings her vision into harmony with her entire team to provide wines of exceptional quality that reflect the unique character of her Russian River Valley estate vineyards.

Fully on board with that vision is J's winemaker, Melissa Stackhouse, for whom agriculture has played a crucial role in her life. Growing up in a Michigan farming community, and having grandparents who were farmers in rural Minnesota, she became keenly aware of their dedication to the land at an early age.

"Their hard work resulted in many wonderful meals, cooked with fresh ingredients straight from the farm," says Stackhouse. "I developed an appreciation for fresh food from the garden, and it ultimately led to agriculture as a career choice."

After spending some time in New Zealand working on organic farms,



Stackhouse decided to pursue grape growing and winemaking. She enrolled at the University of California at Davis, where in 1998 she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Viticulture and Enology.

While earning her degree, and in the years following, she worked at such prestigious wineries

as Robert Mondavi, Peter Michael, Joseph Phelps Vineyards, Sterling Vineyards and Alexander Valley Cellars.

In 2003, she moved to Sonoma County to pursue her interest in Pinot Noir by becoming the winemaker at La Crema. It was there that she took notice of the Russian River Valley and its distinctive soils, numerous clonal selections, and cool-climate vineyards. Stackhouse remained winemaker at La Crema until 2010, when she was named Winemaker for all Pinot Noir production at Jackson Family Wines.

In her role at J Vineyards & Winery, Stackhouse builds upon existing programs in J's nine estate-owned vineyards. She also develops long-term relationships with key growers in the Russian River Valley.

"Each one of our vineyards has a unique personality," she says. "We are digging deep into the soil to better understand and encourage the right expression of flavor for each estate vineyard. It is important to distinguish and separate these flavor profiles, whether it becomes a J varietal or sparkling wine."

Winery 4-1-1

J Vineyards and Winery

11447 Old Redwood Hwy.
Healdsburg, CA 95448
888-594-6326
Open Daily, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.



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

Golden State Wineries With a Women's Touch

International Women's Day, held each year on March 8, celebrates and acknowledges the achievements of women. It also seeks to encourage and support women's equality.

To mark International Women's Day 2014, we introduce you to a few of the women who are making a difference in the world of California wine...



Amelia Ceja

• **Amelia Ceja, proprietor, Ceja Vineyards, Napa, Calif.** — At the dining room table that occupies a prominent place at the rural “world headquarters” of Ceja Vineyards, Amelia Morán Ceja reveals her conviction that the diligent pursuit of a passion is key to success.

“My grandmother told me that whatever you do, if you love it and learn everything you can about it, you will be successful — and not dependent on a man,” she says.

It's advice that both Amelia and her husband, Pedro Ceja, have come to bank on at their highly successful winery.

• **Lisa Bishop Forbes, Director of Winemaking, Chalk Hill Estate Vineyards & Winery, Healdsburg, Calif.** — Her teenage years in Lodi offered Forbes her first glimpse of the wine industry. In addition to



Lisa Bishop Forbes

being surrounded by vineyards, her father had a number of friends and associates with ties to local wineries and growers.

When it came time to choose a college, her decision to attend Fresno State to study winemaking was influenced by her exposure to the wine community and her love of chemistry. In addition to the academic strength of Fresno, Forbes appreciated the hands-on training that is a major part of the university's educational programs.

In 1995, she had the opportunity to join the Chalk Hill Estate winemaking team as Assistant Winemaker, working first with David Ramey and then with Bill Knuttel.

“Chalk Hill, for me, was love at first sight,” Forbes says “It's so secluded and hidden that you have no idea how beautiful it is. From a winemaker's perspective, the estate has everything — diverse soils, aspects, elevations, row orientations and exposures. The clones, rootstocks, trellising and farming methods are all matched perfectly to each micro-site. And the wines show



TOURING TIPS

the effects of all this attention. They are concentrated, intense, balanced and specific to their terroir.”



Stacy Clark

• **Stacy Clark, Winemaker, Charles Krug, St. Helena, Calif.** — Clark came on board as Krug's winemaker in April 2011. With Clark at the helm, Krug fuses modern winemaking techniques with traditional French methods to craft ultra-premium wines. The focus is on Bordeaux-style wines brimming with great fruit, amazing balance and food-friendly compatibility.

• **Janet Myers, Director of Winemaking, Franciscan Estate, St. Helena, Calif.** — Traveling a wine road wasn't Myers' original path. In what now seems like another life, she gave up her pursuit of a doctorate in Biological Anthropology to move to London, where she worked in the

VINESSE

Hot LIST



Janet Myers

restaurant industry. Living above a wine shop, she enjoyed sampling the wares of her downstairs neighbor and decided to learn about wine production.

“When I realized that this was an industry that combined science and agriculture — which is my family’s background — I enrolled at U.C. Davis and haven’t looked back,” she says.

Before joining Franciscan Estate in August of 2003 as Associate Winemaker, Myers enjoyed stints in Australia’s Margaret River region and at big Cabernet producers Beaulieu Vineyard, Stag’s Leap Wine Cellars and Louis Martini Winery. She was promoted to Director of Winemaking of Franciscan Estate and Mt. Veeder in August 2005.



Milla Handley

• **Milla Handley, proprietor and winemaker, Handley Cellars, Philo, Calif.** — After earning a degree in Fermentation Sciences in 1975 at

the University of California at Davis, Handley worked for winemaker Richard Arrowood at Chateau St. Jean. Following the birth of her first child in 1978, she moved to the remote winemaking region of Anderson Valley, where she became assistant winemaker to Jed Steele at Edmeades Winery.

Handley struck out on her own in 1982, making the first Handley Cellars Chardonnay in her basement. At that time, Anderson Valley was still uncharted viticultural territory.

“I was captivated by its possibilities,” Handley says. “Anderson Valley’s beauty and isolation appealed to me. My husband Rex and I felt that it was a good place to raise children. The people here possessed an independent spirit, and I felt I could follow my own course, somewhat removed from the entrenched winemaking culture. I wanted my wines to capture the essence of this extraordinary place.”



Chrissy Whittman

• **Chrissy Whittman, General Manager and Director of Winemaking, Wild Horse Winery & Vineyard, Templeton, Calif.** —

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Whittman’s entire career has been spent in decidedly non-urban settings. She joined Wild Horse in 2007 after 10 years of winemaking experience at Scheid Vineyards, Courtside Cellars and Meridian. She earned her degree in Biology and a Master’s Degree in Agriculture from Cal Poly. Whittman says working at Wild Horse makes her feel like a kid in a candy shop with so many great vineyards to choose from.

1 Hot Wine Pairing Dinner at Sea. On board Oceania Cruise Lines’ *Marina* and *Riviera* ships, guests can enjoy a seven-course wine-pairing dinner that includes a Cabernet Sauvignon from Napa Valley’s Silver Trident Winery. It’s no coincidence that the Silver Trident wine is on the menu; the cruise line and the winery are owned by the same man — Bob Binder. www.oceaniacruises.com

2 Hot Las Vegas Wine Event. Nobu Matsuhisa of Nobu at Caesars Place, Julian Serrano of Picasso at Bellagio, and Daniel Boulud of DB Brasserie at The Venetian are among the celebrity chefs scheduled to appear at Vegas Uncork’d by *Bon Appetit* in Las Vegas. The series of wine dinners, brunches, interactive demonstrations and wine seminars is scheduled for May 8-11, and individual event tickets are on sale now. www.vegascuncorked.com

3 Hot Southern Oregon Wine Country Restaurant. Ashland is best known as the home of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. But it also makes a nice home base for exploring the wineries of southern Oregon, and for dining out. Among the best wine-focused restaurants is The Loft, a brasserie and bar with an imaginative menu and a wine list that offers everything from Rogues to Rhones. During the warmer months, al fresco diners can enjoy views overlooking Ashland Creek. www.loftbrasserie.com



Negociant. A trader or merchant who arranges with growers and/or wineries to bring wine to market.

Oechsle Level. In Austria and Germany, a system of measuring the content of sugar in grapes (used for determining wine categories).

Perfume. A scented quality in the bouquet of some wines.

Quaiffing Wine. One that is easy and enjoyable to drink — often white or rosé, and chilled.

Rootstock. The lower rooting part of a grafted vine — and, today, typically resistant to the root insect phylloxera, which has destroyed countless grapevines through the centuries.

Structure. The solids of wine (tannin, acidity, sugar and extract) in balance with the alcohol, and how they feel in the mouth.

VINESSE STYLE

‘ALBERETO’ OLIVE OIL

Badia a Coltibuono — a Tuscan estate specializing in fine wine and olive oil — is about a thousand years old, although its prehistory goes back to Etruscan times.

As it’s known today, Badia a Coltibuono (which means “Abbey of the Good Harvest”) dates from the middle of the 11th century. In 1051, the monks of the Vallombrosan Order, a Tuscan reform of the Benedictines, founded the Abbey and began planting the first vineyards in the Upper Chianti area. In 1810, when Tuscany was under Napoleonic rule, the monks were forced to leave Coltibuono, and the monastery was secularized.

In 1846, Coltibuono was bought by Guido Giuntini, a Florentine banker and great grandfather of Piero Stucchi-Prinetti, the present owner. Under the guidance of Piero, the estate grew and built a solid reputation through the high quality of its products.

A star among those products is an extra-virgin olive oil named “Albereto.” A small section of the estate’s olive groves — those at Podere Albereto — is dedicated to the production of this special oil, made annually in limited quantities.

It is produced from several varieties of olives, principally Frantoio, Pendolino and Leccino, along with smaller quantities of Moraiolo and Maurino.

The groves are cultivated using organic farming methods, and the olives are pressed daily after harvesting in order to obtain a fresh product and to prevent any alteration to the taste and bouquet. “Albereto” is intense green emerald in hue, and is coveted by olive oil lovers in Tuscany and beyond.



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

MENDOZA, ARGENTINA

Mendoza is the main winemaking province of Argentina, producing more than 80% of the country's wines from its more than 395,000 acres of vineyards.

There are five large sub-regions in Mendoza: North, East, Center, South and Uco Valley (Valle de Uco).

• **North** —

Includes the municipalities of Lavelle, Guaymallén and Las Heras. It covers the lowest altitude areas irrigated by Río Mendoza. Altitudes range between 1,900 and 2,300 feet above sea level, with mild slopes. Fine sand predominates in the soils. The region is well-suited to the production of Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Chenin Blanc, Ugni Blanc, Torrontés, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Bonarda and Malbec.

• **East** — With altitudes decreasing from 2,400 to 2,100 feet, this area presents substantial differences in climate, soil and temperature range. It comprises the departments of Rivadavia, San Martín, La Paz and Santa Rosa. All the grape varieties grown in Argentina are found in the East, but Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Chenin Blanc, Torrontés, Viognier, Sangiovese, Syrah, Bonarda and Tempranillo stand out.

• **Center** — This traditional winemaking region covers the departments of Luján de Cuyo and Maipú, and is known as the “premium winemaking area (primera zona)” of Argentina. Its privileged location to the south of the city of Mendoza, its ideal altitudes and the



quality of its soils have significantly contributed to its prestige. Altitude ranges from 2,130 to 3,500 feet above sea level.

Its most characteristic variety is Malbec, which yields the iconic wine of the region, the province and the country. Other varieties found here include Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Syrah, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc.

• **Uco Valley** — This sub-region features the highest altitude vineyards in the province, at more than 5,580 feet above sea level. The Uco Valley comprises the Tupungato, Tunuyán and San Carlos departments. It stands out for its ideal conditions for the production of top-quality grapes, yielding both white and red wines with great aging potential. The most traditional varieties here are the Malbec, Merlot and Pinot Noir of La Consulta district. White varieties grown in the area include Chardonnay and Semillon.

• **South** — Comprised of the San Rafael and General Alvear departments. Altitudes come down from 2,600 to 1,480 feet above sea level. It is the main producer of Chenin Blanc. Other standout varieties include Chardonnay, Malbec, Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon.



**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



Q I like sweet wines, but it seems like a vast majority of wines are dry and somewhat bitter. What would happen if I added sugar to a dry wine?

A We'd honestly never thought about doing that, so we decided to give it a try. We added a spoonful of sugar to 4-ounce glasses of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel, Malbec and Syrah — five of the most popular red wine varieties, and every one of them bone dry. In each and every case, the flavor of the sugar stood out — much like it does in a cup of coffee. It did not enhance the wine, but rather took away from the wine's natural fruit flavors. That said, if you like the flavor of sugar, it's certainly an option — just not one that we would recommend. A better option: Transform those dry red wines into Sangria by adding sugar, orange slices, lemon slices, brandy and club soda.

4.23

Total tons, in millions, of the California winegrape harvest in 2013 — up 5 percent from 2012.
 Source: California Department of Food and Agriculture

“ Wine has been a part of civilized life for some seven thousand years. It is the only beverage that feeds the body, soul and spirit of man, and at the same time stimulates the mind. ”



— Legendary Napa Valley vintner Robert Mondavi (1913-2008)

Daniel Cohn, the son of winery founder Bruce Cohn, has been named CEO of B.R. Cohn Winery in Sonoma County. Bruce Cohn said he will turn his attention to managing the Grammy Award-winning band, the Doobie Brothers.



Tolosa Winery in Paso Robles, Calif., practices scientifically based sustainability practices in its vineyard and winery. All of Tolosa's vineyards are SIP-certified, demonstrating sustainability in practice. All winery waste, including grape seeds and skins, is recycled, composted, or otherwise recovered. The winery uses vineyard tools with tractors designed to perform multiple tasks at the same time. This minimizes the number of tractors traveling through the vineyard and significantly reduces fuel, soil compaction and erosion. Tolosa has integrated pest management practices in place that carefully monitor the balance of insects, soil fertility, soil moisture and vine health to minimize the waste of energy and chemical inputs. These practices make use of natural predators to control insect pests, and even weed species in some cases (the winery actually releases a specific beetle that eats the seeds of star thistle). Tolosa also utilizes non-pesticide management methods, such as using the vine mealybug's own pheromones in small, playing-card size clips hung on the vines, to confuse them during mating and lower their populations.



The ongoing drought in California may result in a 25% reduction in winegrape production in 2014, *Bloomberg News* reports. California vintners, who produced 89% of the country's wine in 2012, won't be able to pass along additional costs or lost profits due to overseas competition. Just expect less wine from this year's harvest.

FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS

FROZEN DINNERS

Take a stroll down the frozen food aisle at your neighborhood supermarket, and you'll notice that frozen dinners claim more shelf space than any other frozen food.

Or to put it another way: Frozen dinners are hot! This should come as no surprise, given the pace of life in America today. Few people have time to prepare meals from scratch anymore, and frozen dinners provide not only convenience, but also great variety.

"Forget the old-fashioned TV dinner featuring Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes and gravy," notes *Redbook* magazine. "Today, you can find ethnic, vegetarian, low-calorie, supersized, natural, and organic meals on your frozen food aisle. Some of the latest frozen meal choices include paninis/grilled sandwiches, gluten-free meals, and steamer bowls."

We have creative cooks in frozen dinner company test kitchens to thank for that. But none of it would have been possible without Clarence Birdseye, the man who invented and developed a method for quick-freezing products in convenient packages without altering the original flavors.

Birdseye knew a thing or two about "preservation" because he was a taxidermist by trade. He got the idea for preserving food from the people of the Arctic, who preserved fresh fish and meat in barrels filled with sea water, which quickly became frozen simply by

placing them outdoors.

In 1923, Birdseye perfected his flash-freezing method. Six years later, he became a rich man when Goldman-Sachs and the Postrum Company (which later would become General

Foods) purchased all of the related patents and trademarks for \$22 million.

The next year, Birds Eye Frosted Foods were introduced to the public. Now, nearly a century later, the recipes and flavors are far more sophisticated,

and we mark Birdseye's contribution to more convenient living each March through Frozen Food Month.

Here are six of today's most popular frozen dinners, accompanied by our wine pairing suggestions:

- **Healthy Choice Cajun Style Chicken and Shrimp** — Syrah, off-dry Riesling, or sparkling wine.
- **Lean Cuisine Sundried Tomato Pesto Chicken** — A dry rosé-style wine, or (red) Zinfandel.
- **Smart Ones Thai Style Chicken Rice Noodles** — Chenin Blanc, Pinot Grigio, or Torrontes.
- **Healthy Choice Sweet Asian Potstickers** — Riesling or Gewurztraminer.
- **Smart Ones Cranberry Turkey Medallions** — Pinot Noir.
- **Healthy Choice Café Steamer 5 Spice Beef & Vegetable** — Sparkling wine, or an off-dry Riesling.



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



IRISH STEW

Try this delicious, hearty St. Patrick's Day favorite with Barolo, Chateaufeuf du Pape or a Grenache-based blend. This recipe yields 6 servings.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup flour
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 3 lbs. lamb for stew, cut in serving pieces
- 3 tablespoons fat
- 1/2 cup sliced onions
- Boiling water to cover, about 2 1/2 cups
- 6 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 carrots, scraped and diced
- 2 white turnips, quartered

Preparation

1. Blend flour, salt and pepper, and dredge the lamb pieces in the flour mixture.
2. Heat fat in skillet, and brown the meat. Transfer to a heavy pot.
3. Cook onion in remaining fat until lightly colored, then add to the meat.
4. Add boiling water to cover meat. Cover pot tightly, and simmer at low heat for 90 minutes to 2 hours.
5. Blanch potatoes by covering them with boiling water, then drain.
6. Add potatoes, carrots and turnips to stew during the last 20 minutes. Cook until vegetables are tender.

FRIED HALIBUT AND CAPERS

This easy-to-prepare recipe yields 4 servings. Made and served as the recipe prescribes, this dish pairs nicely with Sauvignon Blanc. Go light on the capers, and a rich, buttery Chardonnay would work well.

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 (8-oz.) halibut steaks
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- 1/4 cup butter
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 3 tablespoons capers, with liquid

Preparation

1. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Fry the halibut steaks on all sides until nicely browned. Remove from pan, and set aside.
3. Pour wine into the pan; use a spatula to scrape any browned bits from the bottom. Let the wine reduce to almost nothing, then stir in the garlic, butter and capers.
4. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Let the sauce simmer for a minute to blend the flavors.
5. Return the steaks to the pan, and coat them with sauce. Cook until fish flakes easily with a fork.
6. Pour leftover sauce from the pan over steaks, and serve immediately.

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