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# The Grapevine

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VINESSE WINE CLUB MEMBERS

## The Food and Wine of Baja's Guadalupe Valley

A Fresh Look  
at Pairing  
Wine & Sushi

The Secrets  
of 'Grower  
Champagne'

You Can  
Learn a Lot at  
a Wine Bar

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## EDITOR'S JOURNAL

# Lessons Learned While Hanging Out in a Wine Bar

By Robert Johnson

**W**henver I'm traveling and have a free evening, I try to check out a local wine bar.

It's not that I'm looking for that next great bottle of wine, or hoping to enjoy one of my personal favorites. No, I go to wine bars to eavesdrop.

I know that sounds terrible, but hear me out. I see what I'm doing as playing the role of a "secret shopper" — not for the wine bar, but for the wine industry in general. Another term for what I do could be "market research."

I've found that you can learn a lot about wine by hanging out in wine bars and listening to the conversations. When those conversations are about personal matters, I tune out. When they're about the wine that's being consumed, I tune in.

I have always found it fascinating to hear how people describe wine. If I've heard this conversation once, I've heard it a hundred times:

- **Bartender:** "What kind of wine do you like?"
- **Customer:** "Well, I like dry but not too dry."
- **Bartender:** "Red or white?"
- **Customer:** "Red."

The bartender will bring out what I call a "fruit-sweet" wine — one that is dry, but possesses bright fruit flavors.

The customer will taste it, wrinkle their nose, and then say, "That's good."



They'll then proceed to barely touch the wine as they nosh on tapas or other small plates, and leave at least half of the wine in the glass when they depart.

They had received a wine that was just as they had described, found they didn't like it, and then didn't drink it. The bartender never asked if they'd like to try something else, so the customer left with knowledge of a wine they didn't like, but with no knowledge of one they did like. They also left without knowing how to describe a wine they'd like.

Good wine bar-tenders will pay close attention to their customers' words and their actions, with the goal of finding a wine the customer will like and then buy again and again. Paying attention would turn countless occasional wine drinkers into true wine enthusiasts.



## The Exclusivity of ‘Grower Champagne’

***H**ow wine becomes wine can follow many different paths. Of course, it all begins with the grapes, because without grapes, there is no wine.*

The Champagne appellation of France provides a good example of the varying methodology. There, more than 70 percent of the sparkling wine is made at large negociant houses such as Veuve Clicquot and Moët & Chandon. Those houses bottle a number of cuvees — most combining multiple vintages from multiple growers, and some highlighting single vintages in exceptional years.

Much rarer are “grower Champagnes,” which are made at the estate that grows the grapes. It’s the wine world’s equivalent of the “locavore” movement, and because such wines are made in such small quantities, they rarely find their way outside the communities in which they’re produced, let alone outside of France.

In some cases, the grower/winemaker sells most of his wine to local restaurants. In other cases, they depend on tourists to find their estate, do some tasting, and then take some wine home. Some estates have developed a loyal following, with customers making annual or more frequent sojourns to pick up their favorite cuvees.

Until just a few years ago, grower Champagnes amounted

to less than 3 percent of all Champagne shipped to the United States. Now, that figure is “all the way up” to 4 percent. Other countries get even less.

And the exclusivity of grower Champagne is not expected to change, mainly because making Champagne is expensive. It requires more equipment than “regular” winemaking, and it also requires more cellar space for extended aging of wine. That’s where the large negociant houses have such an advantage.

What about the wine itself? Whereas the large houses typically blend to a “house style” that remains consistent from release to release, grower Champagnes are more likely to express their specific terroir — usually a single vineyard as compared to 50 or more parcels that may be tapped by the big houses.

If you’re looking for a special “wine of a place” to celebrate a special occasion, seek out a grower Champagne. The name may not be as familiar as the big houses, but the drinking experience will be unique, fun and memorable.

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- Detailed Tasting Notes for each wine



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## 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.

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- Detailed Tasting Notes for each featured wine

### WINE COLOR MIX:

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### FREQUENCY:

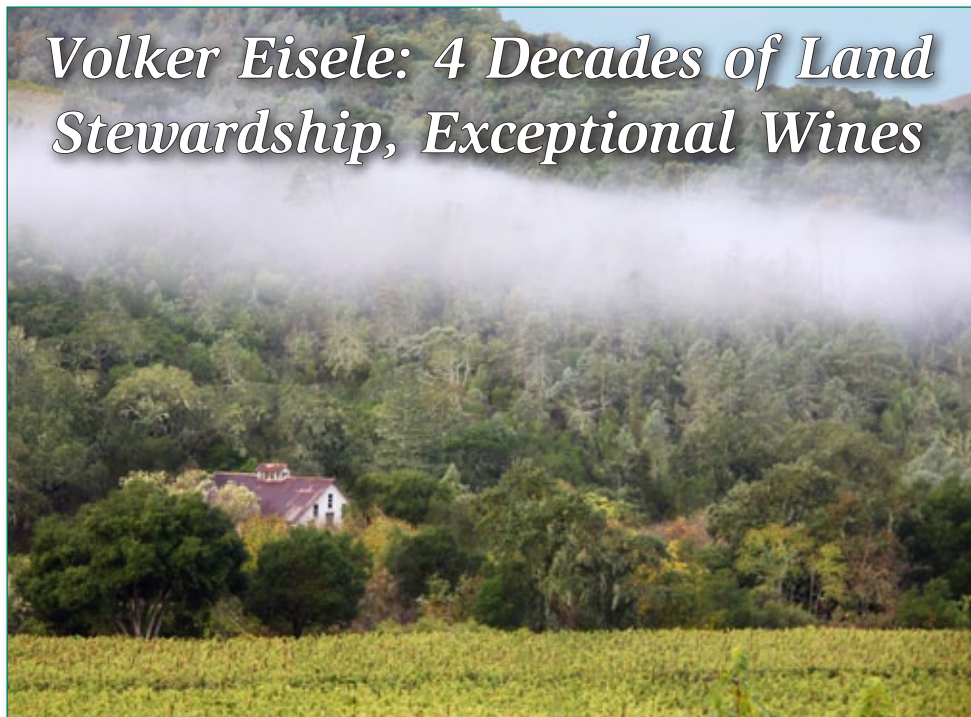
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## Volker Eisele: 4 Decades of Land Stewardship, Exceptional Wines



### **V**olker Eisele Family Estate is situated in the Chiles Valley District of California's Napa Valley.

The 400-acre estate was originally part of the Rancho Catacula land grant, given to Joseph Ballinger Chiles in 1843 by the last Mexican governor of California. The Chiles family later sold a portion of their land to Francis Sievers, a German pioneer.

In the 1870s, Sievers founded Lomita's Vineyard and Winery on the site. The original winery building, some of the tanks, and the original press remain on the property.

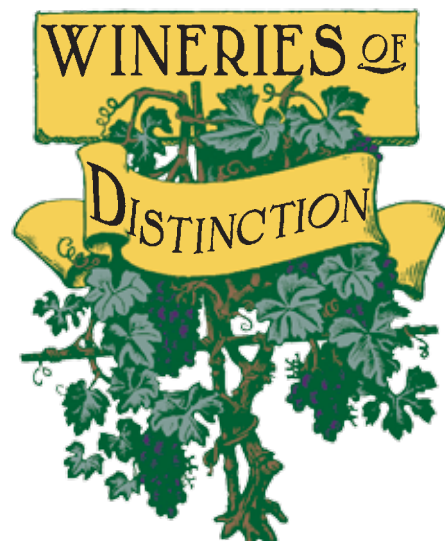
During the early 1970s, Volker Eisele was a graduate student in sociology at the University of California in Berkeley. He found weekend respite from the pressures of academia in the tranquil foothills of the Napa Valley. Enlightened by the peaceful beauty, he and his family moved from their Berkeley home to plant their seeds in the breathtaking estate on which the vineyard is located. In 1974, Eisele became a scholar of grape growing.

Cloaked in frequent Pacific fog, and with elevations of 600-1,200 feet, the Chiles Valley District is one of the cooler areas of the Napa Valley, resulting in a long growing season. The valley's perfect Cabernet Sauvignon climate enhances the development of

wines with subtle flavors, full body and overall complexity.

The estate's 60 acres of vineyards grow at elevations of 900-1,100 feet on east, west and south-facing slopes, as well as on the valley floor. Soils vary from clay-loam to shale. After purchase of the vineyard property, the Eiseles began an extensive redevelopment and restoration of both the vineyard acreage and the riparian corridors.

Presently 72% of the vineyard is planted to Cabernet Sauvignon, 12.5% to Merlot, 10.5% to Cabernet Franc,





3% to Semillon and 2% to Sauvignon Blanc. Seven different Cabernet clones have been incorporated to provide diversity of flavor.

Since 1974, the Eiseles have enriched the vineyard soils through use of organic farming practices. No herbicides, pesticides or chemical fertilizers have been used. The vineyard is certified as organic by both the California Certified Organic Farmers and the California Department of Food and Agriculture. It has been set back from the property's creeks to substantially increase riparian vegetation. Oaks and other native tree species have been planted on the creek banks to prevent erosion.

Volker Eisele dedicated much of his life to mastering the art of sustainable organic viticulture. His passion for grape growing and land preservation serve as a beacon to others. He was past president of the Napa County Farm Bureau and the Napa Valley Grape Growers, and the recipient of several prestigious awards.

Liesel, Volker's wife, winery partner and landscape architect, brings an entirely different dimension to the winery. She concentrates on the aesthetics of the family estate as well as the horticultural well being of plant life in Chiles Valley. Her firm has designed the landscape plans for many residential and commercial projects, including numerous wineries in the region.

Alexander Eisele grew up on the

vineyard and, as a small boy, often snacked on the juicy fruit right off the vine, refining his taste buds at an early age. His choice of career was no surprise. Alexander, who is fluent in German and Spanish, obtained his degree in International Business and is well equipped to manage the challenge and complexity of a family vineyard and winery. With his business degree, foreign language skills, refined wine palate and love for the land, Alexander has committed himself to continue in his father's footsteps by growing high-quality organic wine grapes and producing elegant estate wines.

Catherine, Alexander's wife, is a Napa native and has been exposed to wine and vineyards since childhood. Her degree in Global Studies with an emphasis on Latin America, extensive world travel, as well as years spent working for an accounting firm in St. Helena, have prepared her well for her various roles. Catherine's focus on sales and marketing, guest experience and palate enlightenment make her an integral part of the winery's team.

Simon Finn and Tristan Wolf, Alexander and Catherine's children, are the fourth generation of the Eisele family to roam the land. From wandering through the creek beds to eating fruit right off the vines, they are growing to appreciate the beauty that surrounds them and the flavors of high quality organic wine grapes — just as their late grandfather did for more than four decades.

# Light & Sweet

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## A Wine-and-Food Adventure in Baja's Valle de Guadalupe

**J**ust two hours south of San Diego and 30 minutes from Ensenada, the Valle de Guadalupe provides a fabulous weekend escape for wine lovers.

It's not just the "wine country" that acts like a magnet. The state of Baja California also is famous for the new Baja Med gastronomic concept, the result of a blend of Mexican, Mediterranean and Oriental cuisine influences. The concept has been driven by local chefs, who now are recognized all over the world.

Interested in experiencing Baja Med cuisine? Then you must visit Mision 19, owned by Chef Javier Plascencia, and sample some *tostaditas de minilla* with blue-fin tuna and curdled sauces, a *tiradito* of beef tongue, or seared wild tuna. Manzanilla del Benito Molina is another iconic restaurant in the city of Ensenada, where you can taste the best oysters and clams in any of their different varieties.

While dining in is one option, you also may opt to engage in a gastronomic safari, which begins with the small food carts situated at some street corners. One of the most representative is La Guerrerense, located on the corner of First Street and Alvarado. Sabina Bandera, its owner, offers 14 types of ceviche with unique ingredients, such as sea urchin

or sea cucumber with sauces she prepares in her cart.

Many of the restaurants offer abalone *tiradito*, one of the most traditional dishes. To better enjoy it, you must accompany it with a good white wine from the Guadalupe Valley region.

The Valle de Guadalupe produces 90% of all of the wine that comes from Mexico. Although the valley has been producing wine for nearly 100 years, just in the last decade has the region experienced the incredible

growth that has turned it into an up-and-comer on the global scene. It's now the epicenter of northern Baja for boutique wineries, gourmet restaurants and chic hotels.

Many liken the Guadalupe Valley to California's Sonoma County as it was decades ago. The atmosphere is simultaneously relaxed and sophisticated. You can drive for miles on a dirt road to get to a gourmet restaurant where you'll enjoy a six-course meal with wine pairings. There now are more than 50 wineries in the valley, with more opening every year.

While many wineries and restaurants in the Guadalupe Valley are open all year long, the summer is really when the valley comes to life. Seasonal *campestre* (country) restaurants open up from June to October. Many have outdoor seating, providing sweeping views of the vineyards and valley as you enjoy your wine and artisanal, locally-sourced food.

If you're not comfortable traversing Mexico's roads (especially those dirt ones) on your own... or you simply



## TOURING TIPS



*Fiestas de la Vendimia (Wine Harvest Festival)*

balk at paying the extra insurance needed for driving there... Baja Test Kitchen and Baja Winery Tours offer custom-designed culinary tours to the Valle de Guadalupe and surrounding areas. The unique tasting tours are designed for foodies, and feature everything from hole-in-the-wall taco stands to elegant five-star eateries — as well as world-renowned wineries, of course.

Each August, the Valle de Guadalupe *Fiestas de la Vendimia* (Wine Harvest Festival) takes place. The festival encompasses a series of elite parties and events held mostly at individual wineries. Galas, dinners, wine tastings and grand parties celebrate the harvest season for the grapes and showcase the local cuisine and wine.

There are a few larger events, hosted by the Provino (the organization that puts on the festival), where many of the wineries are present and thousands of people join together to drink wine, eat local cuisine and

enjoy life. Those events include the *Muestra del Vino* (wine tasting event) that kicks off the *Vendimia*, and the *Concurso de Paella* (Paella contest) that closes the *Vendimia*.

Tickets for most events tend to be very expensive, but there are a few less expensive and free ones as well. Hotels should be booked early, as the valley fills up quickly during *Vendimia*. Ensenada and Rosarito offer lodging options if the Valle de Guadalupe is booked.

Fish and seafood provide the basis for Baja California's new cuisine, but meat and poultry, as well as French and Italian fare, also have contributed to achieve this unique gastronomic blend.

Bring your own culinary safari to a close in San Antonio de Las Minas, famous for its apple pie made from green apples, cinnamon, sugar and cheese. It's a treat that will bring a smile to your face, and initiate the planning of your next trip to Baja.

## For Further Information

### Mision 19

[www.mision19.com](http://www.mision19.com)

### Manzanilla del Benito Molina

[www.rmanzanilla.com](http://www.rmanzanilla.com)

### La Guerrerense

[www.laguerrerense.com](http://www.laguerrerense.com)

### Baja Test Kitchen

[www.bajatestkitchen.com](http://www.bajatestkitchen.com)

### Baja Winery Tours

[www.bajawinerytours.com](http://www.bajawinerytours.com)

### Valle de Guadalupe Fiestas de la Vendimia

[www.discoverbaja.com](http://www.discoverbaja.com)

### San Antonio de Las Minas

[www.visitmexico.com](http://www.visitmexico.com)

# VINESSE

## Hot LIST

### 1 Hot New York Wine Bar.

Located on West 51st St., Aldo Sohm Wine Bar is like drinking wine in your (rich) best friend's living room. The bottle and by-the-glass lists are impressive, and equally so is the charcuterie menu — including "The Tower," which features all of the charcuterie selections and condiments, plus a Maison Kayser baguette.

<http://www.aldosohmwinebar.com>

### 2 Hot Emerging Wine Country.

Moldova is the poorest country in Europe. Only about 12,000 tourists visit it each year. But that could change once word gets out about the quality of its wines — which some say are best among all former Soviet Union countries. At the long-established Cricova estate, visitors can explore the vast limestone cellars to work up a thirst for the wines. Yes, the wineries are producing international varieties such as Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, but when in Moldova, do as the Moldovans do, and try the native Feteasca Alba and Rara Neagra varieties.

<http://wineofmoldova.com/en/>

### 3 Hot Olive Oil Tasting Rooms.

In several wine regions around the world, olive groves can be found adjacent to or near vineyards. It's true in California's Central Coast region, and olive oil lovers can taste the oils of numerous boutique producers at the We Olive tasting rooms in Paso Robles, San Luis Obispo and elsewhere.

<http://weolive.com/store-locator/>



**Appellation.** A geographically defined wine producing area. The word applies specifically to France, but often is used in conjunction with growing areas in other countries.

**Blend.** A wine made from more than one grape variety.

**Claret.** Word used in England to describe the red wines of Bordeaux.

**Demi-sec.** French term for a sparkling wine that is sweet (literally, “half-dry”).

**Enology.** The science of wine and winemaking. May also be spelled with an O at the beginning: oenology.

**Fruit-forward.** A tasting term used to describe a wine that exhibits strong aromas and flavors of fruit, sometimes to the point that they overpower the earth and/or oak barrel nuances.

## VINESSE STYLE

### NAPA VALLEY RESORT

*Tucked in a secluded canyon marked by ancient oaks and rolling hills, Calistoga Ranch is a luxury resort in California’s Napa Valley that blends indoor/outdoor living with its natural environment.*

Nature surrounds you wherever you go, and is gracefully incorporated into the architecture to create a unique feeling of intimacy with the environment. Every detail conspires to bring a deep sense of enrichment and renewal.

True to Calistoga’s time-honored tradition as one of the nation’s historic spa towns, the Auberge Spa reinvents the classic curative “taking of the waters” in a rejuvenating natural spa sanctuary. It’s nestled in a wooded canyon, where guests can discover soothing soaking pools overlooking a creek and moss-laden oaks, sample restorative organic Napa spa treatments in restful private rooms, and enter upon a journey to pure relaxation.

And then there’s the food. Calistoga Ranch’s tradition of culinary excellence is showcased in a variety of dining options, each reflecting innovative, locally inspired menus that incorporate the freshest organic, natural and seasonal ingredients.

The Lakehouse provides a romantic and refreshing setting for a culinary feast or casual bite. It celebrates the rich culture of food and wine that the Napa Valley is famous for. Blurring the line between indoors and outdoors, glass walls offer pastoral views of the magnificent oak groves and open onto expansive decks overlooking Lake Lommel.

The dining Lounge is perfect for a taste of one of the region’s renowned wines or a classic cocktail at sunset. And the Pool Terrace offers casual outdoor dining, featuring the best of Northern California produce and specialties from the grill.

To learn more about this stylish resort, go to:  
<https://calistogaranch.aubergeresorts.com>



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**PRICE:** Only \$12-\$15 average per bottle plus shipping

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## APPELLATION SHOWCASE

### Marlborough, New Zealand



*Saint Clair Vineyard.*

**L**ocated at the top of the South Island, Marlborough is New Zealand's largest winegrowing region, accounting for 75% of the country's total wine production.

It has been said that there is no wine anywhere in the world that tastes like the wine of Marlborough. The balance of extraordinary purity and intensity of flavors — set around impressive aroma, distinctive fruit characteristics and balanced acidity — is superb. These are stylish, exciting wines that surprise and delight.

What is it that makes the wines of Marlborough so distinctively exquisite? As with any of the great winemaking regions of the world, the answer lies in a magical synergy of climate and soil, underpinned by the vintners' desire to express this unique terroir.

In the northeastern corner of the South Island, bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the east and towering mountain ranges in the hinterlands to the north and south, a broad alluvial plain stretches from the coastline, gradually rising into narrow valleys with favorable northerly aspects. It's a diverse landscape of spectacular natural beauty and bounty.

In past centuries, Maori hunted

Moa and cultivated vast Kumara crops in the year-round sunshine. Early European settlers established New Zealand's pastoral industry on the fertile rolling downs of the river valleys.

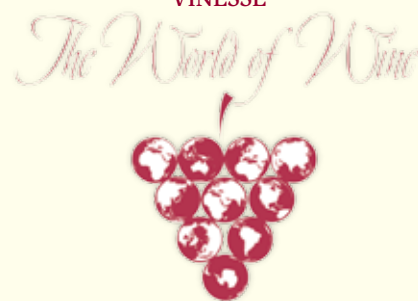
In 1873, long before the modern-day vintners recognized the extraordinary potential to produce great wine in the region, pioneering Scottish farmer and grape grower David Herd planted Marlborough's first vineyard. It was to be another 100 years before that vision took root with the development of commercial viticulture.

Today, Marlborough is recognized as one of the premium wine regions of the world. As New Zealand's leading wine region, it draws international acclaim that far outweighs its size.

In the span of just a few decades, winemakers have embraced this small, geographically diverse region, exploring the nuances offered by its landscape to craft exhilarating flavors in many different wine styles.

Each expresses the indelible mark of place that is uniquely Marlborough.

VINESSE®



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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](http://www.Vinesse.com)



**Q** I've noticed that the word "balanced" comes up quite often in descriptions of wine. What, exactly, does it mean for a wine to be balanced?

**A** There are numerous components to a wine, some of which are determined by Mother Nature, and some of which



are impacted by the winemaker. Among these are the degree of acidity, the level of alcohol, the tannin, the impressions of fruit, the aromas and flavors

imparted by oak barrels, and so on. Everything from when the grapes are harvested to how they're fermented to what type and age of oak barrels are used plays a role in the finished product. When all of those elements come together harmoniously in the bottle and, ultimately, in your wine glass — with no single element dominating — the wine is said to be balanced.

# 40

Percentage of the vineyard acreage in California's Napa Valley devoted to Cabernet Sauvignon.

“A bottle of wine contains more philosophy than all the books in the world.”



— *Louis Pasteur*

**S**t. Patrick's Day is coming up, and that means many people will be drinking Guinness with Irish fare. But if you're not a beer person, there are several wine alternatives available to you:

- **With Corned Beef and Cabbage** — A nice Pinot Noir, preferably from the Russian River area of Sonoma County.
- **With Irish Stew** — Cabernet Franc, or a French Bordeaux with a significant portion of Cab Franc in the blend.
- **With Bangers and Mash** — Pork sausages with a bit of spice call for a fruitful wine with some spice of its own. Try a Syrah-based wine from the southern Rhone (such as Chateauneuf-du-Pape) or a Zinfandel from California.
- **With Fish-n-Chips** — Almost any fried food matches nicely with dry Riesling. Many American Rieslings are made in an off-dry style, so look for bottlings from Germany or France that are completely dry in style.



**T**he California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance focuses on the long-term sustainability of the California wine community. To place the concept of sustainability into the context of winegrowing, the program defines sustainable winegrowing as growing and winemaking practices that are sensitive to the environment (Environmentally Sound), responsive to the needs and interests of society at large (Socially Equitable), and are economically feasible to implement and maintain (Economically Feasible). The combination of these three principles is often referred to as the three E's of sustainability. The program is guided by the following set of sustainability values:

- Produce the best quality wine grapes and wine possible.
- Provide leadership in protecting the environment and conserving natural resources.
- Maintain the long-term viability of agricultural lands.
- Support the economic and social well being of farm and winery employees.
- Respect and communicate with neighbors and community members; respond to their concerns in a considerate manner.
- Enhance local communities through job creation, supporting local business and actively working on important community.
- Honor the California wine community's entrepreneurial spirit.
- Support research and education, as well as monitor and evaluate existing practices, to expedite continual improvements.

## FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS



*Sushi*

**W**ine may not be the first beverage that comes to mind when serving sushi. And when it is, the wine typically thought of is Champagne because of its refreshing mouthfeel.

But at Dutton-Goldfield Winery in Sebastopol, Calif., a new wine pairing experience has been introduced for winery visitors that takes food-and-sushi pairing to a whole new level: Single-Vineyard Wines & Sushi. This tasting experience, and its vegan counterpart, joins other seated tasting options at the winery, including Beast & Pinot, and Wine & Cheese.

The Single-Vineyard Wines & Sushi experience includes four delectable bites of sushi that have been paired with four of Dutton-Goldfield's single-vineyard wines to demonstrate how different tastes complement each other. The pairing changes seasonally with the releases of new wines.

The current pairings include:

- The bright Chileno Valley Vineyard Riesling from Marin County with a veggie dragon roll that includes tempura yam, mango and avocado.
- The Angel Camp Vineyard Pinot Noir from Anderson Valley with an Alaska roll featuring salmon.
- The silky Fox Den Vineyard Pinot Noir from the Green Valley area of Russian River Valley with unagi maki.
- The rich Rued Vineyard Chardonnay, also from Green Valley, with a buttery Hamachi and lemon zest.

The pairing plate is rounded out with a Japanese salad with miso-ginger dressing. A delectable vegan option of each of the pairings also is available, featuring Japanese eggplant, shiitake mushroom and fresh tofu rolls.

The Single-Vineyard Wines & Sushi tasting is available Wednesdays through Saturdays for \$40 per person at the winery's tasting room in Sebastopol. All tasting experiences may be booked by advance appointment online or via telephone.

Dutton-Goldfield Winery is the partnership of grape grower Steve Dutton and winemaker Dan Goldfield. The winery began in 1998 when those long-time colleagues and friends recognized a shared vision — to craft wines that express the personalities of their vineyards, and which they'd enjoy drinking at their own dinner tables.

Yes, including with sushi.

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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](http://www.Vinesse.com)



### PAN-SEARED COD

One can only imagine how many bottles of Pinot Grigio are consumed at family-run restaurants and wine bars along Italy's Amalfi Coast, accompanied by simple but delicious fare like this. This recipe yields two servings.

#### Ingredients

- 3 bell peppers, seeded, veins removed and chopped
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds
- 1 clove garlic
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons plus 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil (separate portions)
- Salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 cup Feta cheese crumbles
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- Two 6-oz. cod fillets
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups arugula

#### Preparation

1. Sauté bell peppers in a splash of olive oil over medium-high heat until soft (about 5 to 8 minutes). Transfer to a bowl and let cool.
2. In a small skillet, toast the nuts over high heat, shaking the pan often, until they're fragrant and begin to brown.
3. In bowl containing the bell peppers, add Feta cheese, lemon juice, parsley, 1 tablespoon of olive oil, salt and pepper. Toss to coat.
4. In a medium nonstick skillet, heat 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil over medium-high heat.
5. Season cod fillets with salt and pepper. Add to the pan and cook, turning once halfway through, until golden-brown (about 11 minutes).
6. Arrange a bed of arugula on a plate and lay the fillets on top. Spoon the bell pepper/Feta mixture over the fish and serve.

### SPINACH SALAD WITH ORANGE VINAIGRETTE

Wines made from the Muscat family of grapes often exude aromas and flavors of fresh oranges. That makes this dish a perfect pairing partner for Moscato, and this recipe yields about 5 servings.

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup walnut pieces
- 2 oranges, zested
- 2 small oranges, juiced
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 12 ounces spinach, pre-washed

#### Preparation

1. Toast nuts over low heat in a small skillet until crisp and fragrant.
2. In a blender, combine the orange zest, orange juice, balsamic vinegar, honey, garlic, salt and pepper. Blend until smooth.
3. With the blender running, add the olive oil in a steady stream until combined.
4. Transfer to a container and store in the refrigerator.
5. To serve, put the spinach in a large bowl, and toss with enough of the vinaigrette to coat. Sprinkle with the toasted walnuts, toss again, and serve.

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