

*Hyde Park Wine Experiences  
And  
Culinary Adventures  
Issue 27*

The months of June and July are great times for weddings, outdoor activities, and just having a good time with friends and family, and fun wines are an excellent addition to that list. Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc, or even a nice White Blend are perfect easy drinking wines that go nicely with appetizers, salads, and fish, chicken, pork, or even some beef dishes. I have a few recommendations for you to try.

Other items of interest this month are:

- Rombauer Chardonnay is gone for the year. Will there be more next year?
- Rombauer news Cabernet is something worth a try.
- Odds and ends.
- Member's questions.

## **ROMBAUER CHARDONNAY**

I had the pleasure to stop by the Rombauer booth at the Cincinnati Wine Festival in March and talk to the Greg Graham, winemaker from Rombauer. Of course, the most popular question was about their Chardonnay and lack of it in wine shops.

I was told that Rombauer only produces 200,000 cases of the Chardonnay a year. In the last few years, it has received great press and high ratings – thus, the wine is in high demand by consumers and sells out very quickly. Currently, Rombauer doesn't have any Chardonnay left at their winery. Here in Cincinnati, if you're lucky enough to find some, buy what you can. At the club, we do have the Chardonnay in an allocated supply. Quality is the mark of all Rombauer varietals. *Rombauer Chardonnay 2005 now retails for \$54.99.* Yes the price has gone up with the demand problem. Go figure.

## **ROMBAUER DIAMOND SELECTION CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

While I was at the Rombauer table, I had to try some of the *Diamond Selection 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon*. It was wonderful. The wine has plenty of dark inky fruit, with loads of nice oak blackberry cobbler, cassis, herb and plum, along with excellent structure, firm tannins and the finish is long and elegant. A fantastic \$69.99 bottle of wine that will age for several more years but can be consumed now without compromise.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL WINE FESTIVAL:**

I hope many of you had the opportunity to go downtown to the International Wine Festival in March. This is a great event where one can taste over 1000 different wines from all over the world. Friday afternoon bar managers, food and beverage managers, retail shop owners, wine buyers and chefs had the opportunity to taste the wines before the gala event in the evening.

Of course Ted and I got there near the beginning, as the early bird gets the worm. We tasted some very nice wines mostly from California and Oregon. I always prefer red wines and there was plenty to choose from in that category. Some owners of wineries and winemakers were present at the event and we did talk to several of them. Gathering ideas and drinking nice wines, while networking, is the primary reason I go to these events.

### **LIVE DYNAMITE:**



A rainy Monday is always a good time to stop by Jungle Jims or Sam's Club and check out the wine and food selection. While I was over Sam's Club in March I saw a bottle of Dynamite Cabernet Sauvignon. It had kind of a catchy label on the bottle, so I decided, "What the heck, give it a try."

I gave the Trio's a call and ordered a steak carry out and opened the bottle of wine. Wow, not bad at all, I was very impressed. I can't say I've had it before at any trade tasting, but this Cabernet was well defined and had a solid backbone most often found in a high end Cabernet Sauvignon. It had a firm tannins, oak and hints of milk chocolate. If I remember correctly, the price was around \$16.99 a bottle but well worth the price.

**QUESTION FROM A MEMBER:  
LES, WHAT IS UP WITH MOCHA AND CHOCOLATE THAT IS  
OFTEN FOUND IN AMERICAN RED WINES? I REMEMBER  
BACK IN THE DAY COMPONENT WAS NEVER MENTION IN ANY  
DESCRIPTION OF A RED WINE.**

Mocha flavors, dark, and light chocolate are now often found in most American produced red wine varietals. Winemakers love to add these flavors to their wines as it softens them up and creates more of in depth experience for the consumer. Today's winemakers are almost like chefs as they like to create a different taste sensation in their wines. Of course, some of the flavors come from the toasting of the barrels and the aging process. The more the oak barrels are toasted, the more flavors are found in the wines. The fermentation process contributes to the flavor profile of the wine. Some wines are even subjected to a second fermentation process called malolactic fermentation, which adds even more complexity to the juice. European winemakers produce wine in the old style so they very rarely use a second fermentation process and the barrels are toasted for a shorter period of time.

### **QUESTION FROM A MEMBER: LES, IS IT TRUE THERE IS A DROUGHT IN AUSTRALIA AND MANY OF THE WINERIES ARE GOING OUT OF BUSINESS?**

Yes, there has been a decrease in water supply in the wine regions of Australia for the past few years. Wine production has suffered and production levels are down across the board. Small wineries are in trouble and if water levels don't increase this year, we may see some of the smaller wineries either consolidating or they will have to close their doors.

### **AMERICAN RIESLING, THE ADVENTURE BEGINS:**

Summer is finally here and instead of drinking the same old Chardonnay, get out of the box and try some American Riesling - the most misunderstood wine by the consumer.

Many years ago, Riesling was a wine that consumers liked because it was like drinking White Zinfandel, plus the price was far less than other wines. The German Rieslings were very sweet, like drinking sugar water. Either you like it or poured it down the drain. The wine dropped in popularity back in the late eighties when Chardonnay was the rage.

Then Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Grigio came on strong the last few years. Now wine trends are starting the change again. In 2006, Riesling sales climbed 29percent , so certainly it seems the grape is regaining some of the popularity it lost over the past 10 to 20 years, when people associate it with cheap, poorly made German wine.

Riesling can have so many different incarnations that there's often misunderstanding about what a good Riesling shout takes like. It can range from bone dry to extremely sweet. Its aromas run the gamut from delicate honey, peach, and apricot to assertive minerals and petrol. Its texture can be light and flowery or dense and oily.

While Riesling production has declined in California in the post-Prohibition years, it has risen elsewhere, particularly in the cool climate growing regions of the

eastern U.S., notably New York, Michigan and Ohio, where many top-notch Riesling are now produced.

Here are a few recommendations to put in the cart the next time you visit a wine store:

*Chateau St. Jean Riesling, Sonoma County 2005*

Voluptuous aromas, full of perfume and tree-ripen fruit: mouthwatering and racy acidity with hints of petrol. Delicious! \$12.99

*Clos du Bois, Riesling Sonoma County 2006*

Very inviting with sweet honeysuckle aromas, and hints of pineapple, honeydew, and ripe apples. Just a glaze of sweetness on the finish. \$11.99

*Willamette Valley, Riesling Oregon 2006*

Subtle honey-citrus aromas and luxurious fruit flavors of golden raisins and ripe peaches. Nice balance and structure \$14.99

*Dr. Konstantine, Frank Semi Dry Riesling New York 2006*

Warm aroma with hints of spice and minerals; fruity and friendly, with flavors of pear and sweet apple; round and full-bodied with a crisp and smooth finish. \$16.99

*Standing Stone, Vineyard Riesling (Finger Lakes) 2005*

This is a very inviting Riesling with intense green apple, tangerine, hints of honey and ripe pears. \$13.99

*Harpersfield Riesling, Grand River Valley Ohio 2006*

Big honey aroma with citrus and floral notes' spicy and rich an almost Gewurztraminer like character and delectable flavors of pear, light honey, and pineapple; long on the finish. \$19.99

*Laurello, Riesling Grand River Valley Ohio 2006*

Aromas of honeysuckle, peach cobbler, and pineapple, with mineral/petrol notes; dry style with flavors of citrus and yellow delicious apples; the finish is tart yet crisp. \$13.99

## WINE DEAL OF THE MONTH:

I love to look around at the wine shops in town and I found a wonderful deal for you. *Bohemian Highway Cabernet Sauvignon* is not bad for an inexpensive bottle of wine and it has some backbone. Priced at \$5.99 for a 750 ml; or \$10.99 for a 1.5 Liter.

## SUMMER WINES TRY SOMETHING NEW:

Now is the time to try something new and fresh. Chardonnay is out. Spanish, Italian, Argentinean, Australia and wines from Chile and Pinto Grigio from California are the new rage. Now is the time to get out of the box and try something new for the summer season. These wines below blend nicely with pork, fish dishes, all types of salads, chops, chicken, or turkey dishes.

*Jindalee, Australia Estate Rosé 2006 Retails for \$7.99*

*Aresti, Gewürztraminer Chile 2006 \$8.99*

*Lamura nro d' Avola, Sicily 2005 \$8.99 Alternative to Pinot Grigio*

*Lamura Grillo, Sicily 2005 \$8.99 Alternative to Pinot Grigio*  
*Condesa de Leganza, Sauvignon Blanc Spain 2005 \$9.99*  
*Tamás Estate, California Pinot Grigio 2006 \$9.99 (Owned by Wenté Vineyards)*  
*Nora Albaiño Spain \$13.99 Awesome!*

## **DAY TRIP:**

If you would like to take an entertaining day trip this summer, I would highly recommend going down to the hills of Kentucky and check out one of several different distilleries located in Bardstown.

This year I had the opportunity to visit Maker's Mark Distillery and Woodford Distillery. The two and a half hour drive down to Kentucky was amazing, as the flowering trees were starting to come out in the Spring. It also looks like you're going back in time. The area is filled with pastures loaded with cows, horses along the roadside, old barns, and covered bridges - the countryside is so inviting, Then you arrive at the distilleries. The aromas of wheat and the yeast are the first thing you smell as the distilleries are in full operation. Tours are always available, and of course, you do get to sample the finished product. Every distillery in Bardstown welcomes visitors and tours are conducted Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Suggested distilleries:

Makers' Mark

Woodford Reserve

Wild Turkey

Jim Beam

Heaven Hill

Check out their websites for more information.

## **QUESTION OF THE MONTH:**

What is the most important ingredient in the making of any good Bourbon? The first member who answers correctly will receive a nice gift.

## **WINE DINNER PLANNED IN JUNE:**

Our Spring Wine Dinner featuring Gallo portfolio wines from around the world will take place on Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>. The Gallo family continues to grow as they have purchased many new properties this past year. Last year, we had a wine dinner with Gallo Sonoma and we continue to hear complements about the food and wines featured.

Coming to a wine dinner at the club is a great way to meet new people. We have over fifty new members of the club and this is a great way to spend an evening at the club, taste some good wines and dine on outstanding food selections.

The festivities begin at 6:30 p.m. with a wine reception that will feature hors d'oeuvres and canapés along with an interesting Codax Albano wine from Spain. The sit down dinner will be served promptly at 7 p.m.

*First Course*

*Australian Wild Tiger Prawn Ceviche with Youzu, Pomelo and Pink Pepper  
Whitehaven Sauvignon Blanc New Zealand*

*Second Course*

*Spring Lamb Shanks with Moroccan Spices Couscous, and Rhubarb Chutney  
Clarendon Hills Syrah Australia and Bridlewood Reserve Syrah Santa Ynez Valley  
California*

*Dessert*

*Chocolate Soufflé with Anglaise, Strawberry Zinfandel Compote and Vanilla Ginger  
Ice Cream  
Rancho Zabaco Zinfandel Sonoma County*

The price for this special wine event is only \$66.99 per person, which includes five nice wines, three courses, some very nice hors d'oeuvres, canapés, and a simply awesome menu. If you have never been to one of our wine dinners, this would be the perfect opportunity. Please make your reservations before June 5<sup>th</sup> by calling Kelly at 871-3111 extension 18.

Have a safe and fun summer,

**Les Hemingway  
Bar Manager**

**SPECIAL NOTE:**

**Some of the information in this newsletter came from the following publications**

**Ohio Tavern News  
The Ohio Beverage Journal  
Bartender Magazine  
Cheers Magazine  
The Wine Spectator  
The Wine Enthusiast  
The Wine Advocate  
Food and Wine Magazine  
Market**