

Hyde Park Wine Experiences

Issue 31



As the warmer months come upon us, lighter wines are in the consumer's eye. Many buyers really don't know what to serve for a reception before the dinner is served. I have some great suggestions in this newsletter.

Also in the issue:

- Alternates to Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay for cocktail receptions.
- A conversation about sulfites.
- "Value" vs. "Quality" in wine
- ... and more!

WHAT TO SERVE FOR A RECEPTION WINE?

Your guests are coming at six, the white wine is chilling in the refrigerator, the red wine is on the table with the cork pulled, you're set to go... or are you? Do you really have the proper varietals for the reception? Are your guests going to like what you selected? What happens if they don't like the wine? Yikes, this could be a problem - It doesn't need to be as there are many options out there.

Starting with the white wines, stay away from Sauvignon Blanc. Why not Sauvignon Blanc, you ask? Very simply, your guests are either going to like it or they won't. Sauvignon Blanc needs to be served cold to bring out the fruit flavors. Some bottles are grassy or too over the top with tropical fruit. This may turn them off from the bottle.

Now, if your having a wine dinner, Sauvignon Blanc is perfect because it is light enough to blend with the food but not too aggressive to detract from the meal. Otherwise, I would recommend an easy to drink Chardonnay, maybe a nice Pinot Grigio, a Rosé, Viognier or Spanish Albariño. These all blend nicely with light reception foods.

Here are my white wine recommendations:

Martin Codex, Albariño Spain 2007

Very aromatic with bold lemon and floral notes; light bodied with a short soft citrus finished. *Retails for \$11.99*

Salneval Albariño Spain 2007

A crisp, light bouquet of lemon with some steeliness and distant effervescence. Light bodied with a smooth, short finish. *Retails for 14.99*

Adelaida, Glenrose Vineyard Paso Robles California Viognier 2007

Pleasant and complex aromas and flavors of pear, honey and spice. Nice long finish. *Retails for 11.99*

Koehler Santa Ynez Valley California Viognier 2007

Elegant aromas of vanilla, oak, and spice with a creamy mouth-feel. Clean and refreshing. *Retails for \$12.99*

Mirassou Pinot Grigio California 2007

Light-bodied with aromas of peach, melon, and citrus. *Retails for \$9.99*

Helfrich Pinot Grigio France 2007

Crisp and clean with nice green apple, apricot and peach flavors. *Retails for \$12.99*

Geysler Peak Block Collection Chardonnay Sonoma 2007

Creamy, yet retains perfect balance with hints of pear and fresh peaches. *Retails for \$9.99*

Windmill Lodi California Chardonnay 2007

Easy to drink with nice green apple, melon and citrus flavors. Nice and lively. *Retails for \$9.99*

Now that we managed to get over the hump of white wines, let's focus on the reds. The red wine selection is much easier. Stay away from Cabernet Sauvignon as the reception wine, as it can be too over-the-top. Wine consumers prefer something light with appetizers. Pinot Noir is a great reception wine. This varietal displays nice fruits, holds up well with almost any appetizer and is a great step before venturing into the dinner wine. Along with Pinot Noir, Malbec is another popular choice that works well before dinner is served.

Here are a few red wine recommendations:

Flinders Bay Malbec Australia 2007

Rich black cherry and plum followed by nice dancing tannins with a nice soft finish. *Retails for \$11.99*

Trivento, Malbec Select Argentina 2007

Nice black cherry, strawberry and plum mingle nicely with a splash of oak. *Retails for \$12.99*

Heron Pinot Noir California 2007

Layers of red plum, ripe cherry and spice with a nice supple finish. *Retails for \$9.99*

Gallo Sonoma Pinot Noir California 2007

Intense with ripe black cherry, blackberry and plum flavors. Hint of oak and spice on the long finish. *Retails for \$14.99*

MEMBERS QUESTIONS:

LES, I READ IN PREVIOUS WINE NEWSLETTERS ABOUT THE SULFITE PROBLEM IN RED AND WHITE WINES. I CAN'T DRINK RED OR WHITE WINES BECAUSE THEY MAKE ME SICK. I BREAK OUT IN RED BLOTCHES ON MY FACE AND ARMS, THEN MY EYES START TO WATER. I JUST STICK WITH MY VODKA AND WORK DOWN TO BEER AFTER DINNER. ARE WINERIES WORKING ON SOME KIND OF NEW PROCESS TO ELIMINATE THE SULFITE IN WINE?

I wish I could say yes but at the present time the answer is, "No." Sulfite is found in all wines, both red and white. It is a natural process that comes from the soil. Some producers induce sulfites into their wines to make them last longer.

It is found in young Cabernet Sauvignon, Red Blends, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Zinfandel and others. I often hear many wine consumers say that wines produced in Italy, Germany, Australia, Spain, France, and even South Africa do not contain sulfites. This is a myth. All wines on this earth contain sulfite.

Many times I hear wine consumers tell me many they drink nothing but Pinot Grigio because it doesn't contain sulfites. The same goes for French wines. This is not true. I cannot stress it enough, all wines have sulfites. Granted, Pinot Grigio and some French wines have lower levels of sulfite in the wines, but they are a natural process found in all wines.

Now, wine producers in Italy and France do not induce in some of their wines, like Pinot Grigio, because the wine needs to be consumed in one or two years. The same goes for light French red wines. Therefore, there may not be any extra sulfites, but there are still some.

Years ago, wine producers found a way to "cone" - this is a process used to take the alcohol out of wines. Down the road, there may be a new process to take soot the sulfites, but at this time, nothing as been invented.

QUESTION FROM A MEMBER:

LES: LOVE THE NEWSLETTER. WE CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE LATEST ISSUE COMES OUT AS IT HAS BEEN VERY INFORMATIVE. MY HUSBAND AND I HAVE BEEN READING THAT WINE CONSUMERS ARE PURCHASING LESS EXPENSIVE WINES BECAUSE OF THE RECENT ECONOMIC DOWNTURN. I FIND THAT THE LESS EXPENSIVE WINES GIVE ME HEADACHES AND THE QUALITY IS NOT UP TO MY

STANDARDS. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT PURCHASING LESS EXPENSIVE WINES?

Barbara, this is a good question and one that has multiple answers. Without going into fine details, let me answer the question like this: There are many cheap wines in the market place today, some noted to have good quality for an attractive price. Still, if one is a serious wine consumer, it is hard to recommend a less expensive wine as the taste and quality are not going to be the same. For example, if one prefers Rombauer Cabernet Sauvignon as a normal “around-the-home” wine, there is no way he or she will enjoy a bottle of Crane Lake, or a Heron Cabernet Sauvignon, which is less than half the price. The serious wine consumer should not trade down on wine.

The novice or everyday wine consumer will look at value over quality. In many trade magazines I read during the course of a month, there have been articles about consumers trading quality for value.

This can be a good thing, but only if the consumer isn't buying wines like: Two Buck Chuck, Box wines, Ghost Pines, Tisdale wines, or wines from Carlo Rossi. These wines are awful, lack character, have little to no quality, contain massive sulfites and are, in my opinion, just good cooking wines.

Now if a consumer trades down from a J. Lohr price point wine, *\$14.99 retail* to wines like Heron, Hess, Red Truck, Dancing Bull or Chateau Ste. Michelle, then the quality is only compromised a little, the price is attractive, and the wines are better - thus the consumer gets a good deal for the money paid. Remember, when a consumer pays less than *\$9.99 retail* for a bottle of wine, one will find that sulfites are higher, the wines do not have as much complexity, and the quality is compromised.

You get what you pay for.

ONE MORE ITEM:

This is your last chance to join one of the most exciting deals at the club. If you enjoy wine, then you need to join the Bacchanalia Wine Club. There is no initiation fee to join. Instead, when you make it to one of the dinners, you will be charged accordingly.

Here is the benefits of joining the Bacchanalia Wine Club.

- We six elegant wine maker's dinners during the course of the year
- Members receive four wine newsletters during the year by email
- Members will increase their knowledge of wine... “guaranteed”
- There are two grand prizes given away at our last wine dinner.

If you would like additional information, please send me an email at les@hydeparkcc.com or call me, at 513-871-3111 and I will get back to you in a timely manner to explain all the details.

Cheers

**Les Hemingway
Bar Manager**

Important Note:

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

Market Watch

The Ohio Beverage Journal

The Wine Advocate

The Wine Enthusiast

The Beverage Journal

Cheer's Magazine

Nightclub and Bar Magazine

