

Hyde Park Wine Experiences And Culinary Adventures



February is always a cold, cloudy, and depressing month, yet it is a great month to try different wines. Exploring the world of wines is rather interesting, and to find something that fancies your taste entices one to search for new products. Little Black Dress is another inexpensive wine that is making news around the Midwest. I tasted it, and I highly recommend this wine. Red wines are always nice to consume when the temperatures dip below freezing. I have a few recommendations for you to choose from in this category. I always like to find a wine that is affordable, yet is good. There are so many different wines out there today that fit into this category, and I have some suggestions for you. Tequila is the hottest adult beverage of the high-proof liquor category. Who is buying this high proof product, and how much does one pay to buy the best Tequila? I will also answer a few email questions from our readers and give you the heads up on additional beverage promotions here at the club.

TIMES ARE A CHANGING:

Just think, twenty-five years ago there was only mail to move hard copy correspondence from one place to another. Then the fax was the way to get information from one place to another quickly. Then the computer came along and email was the way to move communications to multiple people. Now a new wave of communication has hit the club, as we are about ready to launch our own website. Just by signing in you can pay your account, make reservations, communicate with every department and keep up on all the exciting activities at your club.

Beginning in April the future wine newsletter will come to you every other month on the Hyde Park Golf and Country Club's website, free of charge and all you need to do is log in. On my end what a relief, no more return to sender, or Road Runner cannot handle bulk emails on their server.

Even the non-members of our club will be able to view the public area of the website. Inside the public area, you will be able to read the latest wine newsletter. What a nice idea and to top it off you can download the copy of the newsletter right to your computer. Before the April wine newsletter is ready, I will email the address to the website to all of the non-members of the club so you can read my future newsletters.

LITTLE BLACK DRESS:

If you have not heard about this new wine of late, then here is a news flash. Little Black Dress is owned by Brown-Forman. Several of their California producers located in the Napa Valley and Central Coast region provide the juice for this wine. Little Black Dress Winery produces three *different* varietals: Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay, and Merlot. All their wines are very easy to drink, and are targeted to women who want a wine that is elegant yet stylish.

Little Black Dress Chardonnay 2005

Crisp with nice green apple, tropical flavors, and light oak on the finish. *Retails for \$9.99*

Little Black Dress Pinot Grigio 2005

Nice and dry with light spice, light pear, melon and peach flavors. *Retails for \$9.99*

Little Black Dress Merlot 2004

Soft and supple with dark ripe black cherry, cranberry, mocha and spicy flavors. *Retails for \$9.99*

THE COLD AND DEPRESSING MONTHS OF WINTER:

It sure would be nice to be hitting that little white ball on a warm day at the club, but looking out the window the trees are bare and the snow is barely covering the grass. Way too cold for golf, but a nice glass of red wine would really brighten this day up. Below is a list of some interesting red wines for your home or cellar. Prices may vary from state to state but the wines are very nice indeed.

Viader, Cabernet Sauvignon Vineyards Napa Valley 2003

Elegant, seductive with big black cherry, plum, and blackberry fruit. Robust tannins and a long and timely finish. \$46.99 retail

Lava Cap, Cabernet Sauvignon El Dorado 2002

Nice structure, big and fat with black cherry, jammy strawberry and cassis, showing some oak on the finish. \$22.99 retail

Bettinelli, Merlot Napa Valley 1998

Deep purple fruit with soft dark fruit and hints of mocha, black licorice, tar, and vanilla with added spice, showing a very soft and seductive finish. \$29.99 retail

Pillar Box, Australia 2005 Blend

Nice forward ripe fruit with a soft and smooth finish, showing hints of vanilla and chocolate Retails for \$9.99

Duck Pond, California Pinot Noir 2004

Light and fresh with nice ripe strawberry and plum. Retails for \$15.99

FACTS NOT FICTION:

Decanting wine adds a refined flourish to any occasion. Filling an elegant wine vessel is not just for show. Decanting an aged wine eliminates unpalatable sediment. Aerating a young vintage softens the tannins and intensifies the bouquet.

WHY DOES WINE TASTE BETTER IN A THIN GLASS?

We have covered this subject before, but I continue to receive questions on the subject. The taste zones of the tongue are comprised of the following: bitter, tart, salty, and sweet. The unique shape of the wine glass specifically designed to enhance the flavor and bouquet of any wine varietal by directing the wine to the appropriate areas of your palate. Therefore, selecting the proper style wine glass is important.

LETTER FROM A NON-MEMBER:

I receive a great deal of letters after the wine newsletter is sent out every other month. Here is one of the letters just received that has been abbreviated:

The past two years has been very hectic. My father was seriously hurt and my brother was killed in the same automobile accident just one mile away from our home. After this tragic event happen, my parents began to go separate ways. Our family was always so close but suddenly after twenty-seven years of marriage, my mom and dad divorced. I dropped out of school, got into trouble, and my life began to spin out of control. I had so many emotional problems trying to cope with my brother's recent death and the divorce of my mom and dad I was in complete disarray.

I have been living with my dad in New Hampshire for the past year and I needed to make a change, so I decided to visit my mom in Santa Barbara last winter. I fell in love with the countryside. Rows and rows of vineyards, the light breezes and the scenery was something to behold. Les, I never been to Cincinnati, but my mom has a friend who belongs to a country club in Cincinnati and she sends my mom your wine newsletter by email. After reading several of your newsletters, I became very interested in wines. I did not want to go back to New Hampshire and decided to live with my mom here Santa Barbara and most of all try to get a grip on my life. I decided to go back to college and study Horticulture here at the University of California in Santa Barbara. I really love this field and I even work part time in a winery right up the road from where we live. The winery is so nice and peaceful and I have learned so much over the past few months from the winemaker and the owners of the winery. I must say, I am now am at peace with myself and want to lean everything I can about winemaking and the vineyards.

My grades at school have been outstanding. I really feel that the worst part of my life is over and now I am exploring a completely new field that is so interesting.

I decided to skip the last paragraph, but I must say that Lindsey's story is uplifting and I am glad she has come to peace with her life and that she is moving into a more positive direction. The wine country is an awesome sight and, over the years, I always hear so many member's and non-members stories on how they love the wine country. I too have been there and, I must say it is something to behold. The wine country is a great place to visit, but the problem is one needs to spend one week there to really appreciate the beauty and passion of the winemakers and owners of these small and large wineries. Most wineries in California welcome visitors and love to entertain the public for tours and tasting. If you plan a trip to the wine country, please pick up some maps at AAA or go to www.winecountry.com

THE MANY FACES OF TEQUILA:

Tequila has been around for 472 years, and there are so many myths about this mysterious product that have been exploited over time.

- **FACT: There is no worm in a bottle of Tequila.** The worm idea came from an American bottler in Mexico. The worm in a bottle of Tequila is a marketing idea just to impress the gringos.
- **FACT: Tequila is not a medicine.** Back in the days of the old west, Tequila was used to treat gun shot wounds but it is not considered a medicine.
- **FACT: Tequila is not made out of the entire cactus.** Tequila is made from only one part of the cactus and that is the heart of the plant. This is where the Agava is found. There are 136 types of species of Agava in Mexico, where the blue Agava is only allowed for the use for Tequila.
- **FACT: Blue Agava is becoming very hard to find.** With Tequila, becoming a very hot alcoholic beverage around the world, the cactus plant is becoming endangered. Therefore, Tequila has gone up in price steadily the past five years.
- **FACT: not all Tequilas are the same.** Tequila like Vodka can be distilled up to ten times. Distilling the product several times takes out all the impurities and creates a clean soft taste without the bite.
- **FACT: The best Tequila cost more.** Sorry to say but this is true. The more Tequila is distilled the better it taste. There is most definitely a taste difference in Tequila.

Long before the days of the classic Margarita, Tequila was consumed as a shot with a lime. This is the style it was consumed in the old west hundreds of years ago. Today, Tequila is still served as a shot, but the Tequila is more eloquent, in the distillation process to the bottle presentation. Some bottles are hand blown like Patrón, or Tres Generaciones. Some bottles are signed and numbered; others, like Agavero Tequila, are produced in colored blue bottles and have a wax Cactus plant cupping the bottle. Then there are the different designations of silver, hornitos, blanco, reposado, and gold. The list goes on and on and the brand names are endless.

The consumer who wants to drink Tequila straight always drinks the best. Patrón is the best according to the Beverage Advocate. Patrón or the Patrón Silver are excellent choices served neat with a slice of lime on the side.

Tequila's signature drink is the Margarita. Most well known bar and restaurants use Jose Cuervo Especial for their Margaritas. The gold is the best for any Margarita as it adds more flavor to the drink.

Here are some brand names that I would recommend for use at home. Some of these brands are not sold in Ohio:

Tres Generaciones Silver or Gold

Agavero

Sauza Hornitos

Corralejo Triple Distilled Reposado

Partida 100% Estate Grown Blue Agava Nueva Tradición

Cuervo Traditional

Oro Azul Añejo

QUESTION FROM A MEMBER:

I WAS AT THE CLUB FOR DINNER LAST MONTH AND WE HAD A BOTTLE OF NICE CABERNET. THE SERVER RECOMMENDED A NICE SPRING WATER BY THE NAME OF HILDON. MY WIFE AND I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF THIS WATER BEFORE BUT IT REALLY TASTED GREAT. WE LOOKED FOR IT ALL OVER TOWN BUT CANNOT FIND IT ANYWHERE. WHO HANDLES THIS WATER HERE IN TOWN?

Hildon is a hot seller here at the club and I even saw it on the tables at a meeting in the White House that was aired on CSPAN last month. The only place I know who handles Hildon Water is Jungle Jims. Call first just to make sure they have it in stock.

KOSHER WINE AND THE QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

A few months back we had a wedding reception and one of the guests requested a kosher wine. Interesting really, I had never heard of a kosher wine but then again this is not a Jewish club. Perplexed, I had to find out what is a kosher wine. Kosher is an ancient Hebrew word that is translated as "fit" or "proper," and when applied to food or drink, it signifies that a particular substance is suitable for consumption according to the Jewish ritual law.

The law specifies that for a wine to be Kosher, it must be made under strict rabbinical supervision and with equipment that is used exclusively for the production of kosher wine. The wine barrels must be cleaned three times, no gelatin or artificial additives can be used, and the grapes can be handled only by

Sabbath-observant Jews- in other words, those who refrain from work of any kind from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday.

Now for the question of the month. Wines approved by the Jewish Orthodox Union use two letters on the label. What are the two letters and what do they stand for? The first member to answer this question correctly receives a nice gift.

WINES AT FRIENDLY PRICES:

I always look for a bargain when purchasing wines, but one must know what wines to buy or a bargain can turn into a waste of money. Here are a few recommendations that will turn some heads and raise your wine glass:

Finca El Portilla Malbec Argentina 2003 Retails for \$8.99
Rex Goliath Chardonnay California 2004 Retails for \$7.99
Toad Hollow "Eye of the Toad" Rose California 2004 Retails for \$9.99
Casa Silva Merlot Resevera Chile 2004 Retails for \$9.99
La Fraux Frog Syrah Retails for \$7.99
La Fraux Frog Chardonnay Retails for \$8.99
Schlink Haus Riesling German 2004 Retails for 9.99
Black Ridge Merlot California 2004 Retails for \$9.99
Pepperwood Grove Viognier 2004 California Retails for \$7.99
Redwood Creek Cabernet Sauvignon California Retails for \$9.99
Red Diamond Merlot 2003 Retails for 10.99
Banrock Station Australian Shiraz/Cabernet 2004 Retails for \$5.99
Wyndham Pinot Noir Bin:333 2004 Retails for \$8.99
Black Elk Chardonnay Argentina 3004 Retails for \$8.99

A TASTE OF ELEGANCE: A NEW IDEA:

I am always looking at new and interesting ideas that will entice members to entertain here at the club. Wine sales continue to increase each year here at the club, as I continue to focus on new and interesting products in the market place. Members love to entertain guests and purchase wines off our expanded wine list.

The Taste of Elegance has been an idea that I have been tossing around for many months, and after discussing it with Chef Paul last month it will be an idea that will work nicely at your club. Here is how it works:

Let's say you want to entertain a few clients without having a big dinner at the club. We would reserve the Old Main Bar for you and your guests. A few weeks before the event, you would select some nice appetizers, hors d'oeuvres, some specialty desserts or take some suggestions and ideas from Chef Paul. Then you would select some wines off the wine list or from our cellar...Maybe a bottle of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Cabernet, Medoc, Bordeaux, Merlot, Meritage, or Champagne and Porto. I would be your personal sommelier for the evening,

informing you and your guests about the wines selected, and Chef Paul would be coming out of the kitchen and answering questions about the foods you have selected for your event.

- **How much would this kind of event cost us?**

The prices all depend on what you select, but it will not be a formal sit-down dinner, but rather a nice reception with wines and elegant foods.

- **How many guests can the club accommodate for this type of event?**

It would be best to keep the attendance anywhere from six to fourteen people.

- **When can I set up an event like this?**

Please call Angi first, to make sure we have the room available on the date you would like to plan the event.

If you have any questions or suggestions, drop me an email at les@hydeparkcc.com

UPCOMING BEVERAGE PROMOTIONS:

We are now in the early stages of planning our next wine maker's dinner. The date is tentatively booked for Tuesday night May 22nd with The Beringer Group.

We were going to entertain either Rombauer or Merryvale winery, however pricing and availability is questionable for this event.

This will be unlike any wine dinner you have ever attended. More details will be available about this special dinner in the months ahead.

Have a safe winter, and stay warm with a glass of wine of your choice.

Les P. Hemingway
Bar Manager

Some of the information in the newsletter was taken from the following magazines:

Cheers
Market Watch
The Ohio Beverage Journal
The Wine Advocate
The Wine Spectator
The Ohio Tavern News
Bar and Nightclub Magazine
Santé
Beverage Concepts