

# *Hyde Park Wine Experiences And Culinary Adventures*

This newsletter is really getting around! As just last week I received a very nice email from a couple who live in England, who somehow are now receiving these email wine newsletters.

Here is a copy of the letter: My wife and I really feel this wine email newsletter is a tremendous publication, well written, extremely educational, very informative, and the wines you select all range in various price groups and quality. You have something for everyone. Les, it must take several weeks to research your material and I hope the membership of the club in which you are employed appreciates the time and effort put forth to increase their knowledge about the enjoyment of wines.

Good luck.

Mr. John Edward Grisham III.

Thank you, Mr. Grisham for the nice note. I can insure you that I have received many letters and email from the members of our Club, and they do appreciate this newsletter. Yes, it does take several weeks to gather the information make sure it is completely accurate. Wine can be very confusing, especially with the increase in varietals that are in the marketplace today. Thank God for Angi Neises, our Banquet Manager who proof reads the newsletter and makes my spelling and grammar errors disappear.

In this current issue of the wine newsletter, we will look at affordable wines to purchase now. We will also continue to look at building your personal wine cellar and stocking it with nice Chardonnays. Selecting good value wines from Chile is included in the newsletter, along with selecting a good cheese for cocktail wines. This can be confusing, so I have put together a cheese list for you to try at home. Over the past two months, many members have been sending in several questions. In this issue, I will cover these questions as well as give you some good insight on buying good Chardonnays for the summer season. What is Pinotage? I will explain this interesting wine varietal.

This edition of the email wine newsletter has plenty of information to digest. So, sit back, take some notes and relax with a nice glass of wine.

## **VALUE WINES FROM CHILE:**

Chile produces a very good amount of wine, yet some bargains may turn out to be losers. You need to stick with the big producers of Chile to get the most consistency out of their wines. Chile, known for red wine production, yet they produce some nice Sauvignon Blanc. Their Chardonnay lacks consistency and can be bland or over done with citrus flavors. Sometimes a deal on a bottle of Chardonnay can be a for a big let down when you pour the first glass. I would recommend to do some research before you buy wine from Chile. Here is another note worth passing on about wines from Chile: They always taste better with food than if used for a cocktail wine.

Look for these labels when purchasing wines from Chile: Carmen, Concha y Toro, Dallas Conté, Santa Rita, Undurraga, and Luis Felipe Edwards. These vineyards stand out for quality and value. You can find any one of these labels at local wine merchants in the tri-state area. Now here are some wines from Chile which are available at your local wine merchant.

### **Carmen Curico, Valley Sauvignon Blanc 2003**

Light and clean with lively acidity, tart green apple and lemon. Crisp lemony finish. Serve with any kind of shellfish. Retails for \$5.99

### **Concha y Toro, Casillero Del Diablo Central Valley Sauvignon Blanc 2003**

Lovely subtle herbaceousness combined with fresh lip-smacking, spicy snap; clean, citrus finish. Serve with crab. Retails for \$6.99

### **Dallas Conté, Casablanca Valley Chardonnay 2002**

Light bodied with some wood tannins, peach, melon, and vanilla flavors. Serve with crab cakes. Retails for \$5.99

### **Santa Rita, Rapel Valley Carmenère 2002**

Medium bodied and rustic with spicy red fruit, earth, and charred meat; firm tannins in the long finish. Serve with grilled meats. Retails for \$6.99

### **Carmen, Rapel Valley 2002 Merlot**

Again, this is a medium-bodied wine with intense dark fruit. Good concentration of black cherry, blackberry and spice. Serve with grilled beef short ribs. Retails for \$5.99

### **Luis Felipe, Edwards Gran Reserva Colchagua Valley Merlot 2002**

Medium acidity; moderate tannins with black cherry, currants, plum, spice and herbs. Great with a good steak. Retails for \$9.99

### **Undurraga, Reserve Maipo Valley Pinot Noir 2002**

Complex with cooked plum, black cherry, coffee and dark chocolate flavors. The finish is long and seductive. Serve with seared Muscovy duck breast. \$8.99

As you can see, these wines are value priced and should be available locally.

## **YOUR WINE CELLAR AND BUYING GOOD CHARDONNAY:**

Now we have entered the wine buying phase of putting together your personal wine cellar. In the last issue, we concentrated on red wines. In this issue, we will focus on nice cellaring Chardonnays. Before we look into buying white wines, you must have a good wine refrigerator in your cellar to store these wines. Here are a few good companies that handle some of the finest refrigeration units for wine cellars. Go to these web sites first and see what units they have available. Shop around and get the best price. Before you make your final decision, please check each company out with the Better Business Bureau:

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

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

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

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

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

Here are some of my recommendations to begin your cellar. All of the wines below are heavy oaked, with layers of butter and cream. Any one of these selections can be held in your wine refrigerator for six to eight years tops:

Cakebread, Napa Valley Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$39.99  
Neyers, Vineyard Napa Valley Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$34.99  
Rombauer, El Dorado Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$39.99  
Far Niente, Napa Valley Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$56.99  
Merryvale, Napa Valley Silowett Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$49.99  
Matanzas Creek, Chardonnay Retails for \$29.99  
Stags Leap, Napa Valley Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$28.99  
ZD, Reserve Napa Valley Chardonnay 2001 Retails for \$49.99  
Grgich, Reserve Napa Valley Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$44.99  
Beringer, Sbragia Reserve Napa Valley Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$52.99  
Chateau Ste. Jean, Robert Young Vineyard Napa Valley 2002 Retails for \$27.99  
Groth, Napa Valley Chardonnay 2001 Retails for \$25.99  
Stags Leap Cellars, Napa Valley Reserve Chardonnay 2001 Retails for \$45.99  
Newton, Unfiltered Napa Valley Chardonnay 2001 Retails for \$51.99  
Rutz, Dutton Ranch Chardonnay 2001 Retails for \$32.99  
Plumjack, Napa Valley **Limited** Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$72.99  
Jarvis, Napa Valley Reserve Chardonnay 2001 Retails for \$49.99  
Rudd, Estate Russian River Valley Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$49.99  
Landmark, Vineyards Overlook Reserve Sonoma Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$53.99  
Mount Eden, Vineyards Santa Cruz Mountains Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$39.99  
Kistler, Reserve Russian River Valley Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$47.99  
Frank Family, Vineyard Napa Valley 2001 Retails for \$29.99  
Jocelyn & Lonen, Napa Valley 2002 Chardonnay Retails for \$49.99  
Paul Hobbs, Richard Dinner Vineyards Sonoma Chardonnay 2002 Retails for \$59.99

All of these Chardonnays have been rated between 89 and 97 by either the Wine Spectator or Robert Parker.

Wow, that was some kind of research! These are the types of Chardonnays that you should always store in your cellar. Not saying you need to purchase all of the wines I listed, just one or two producers would be sufficient.

## CATALOGING YOUR WINES:

To maintain your cellar, it is always best to confirm what you have available. Therefore, a wine log inventory should be kept inside your wine cellar. Here is an example of a simple inventory:

# of Bottles Cost	Producer	Year	Varietal	Rating	Retail
6 \$49.99	Rudd	2001	Chardonnay	91	

**Description** Aged 20 months in French oak, showing bright pear, peach and apricot flavors. Golden color, rich in creamy butter and finishes long and complex.

Using this inventory method helps you control your inventory and enables you to select the proper wine with your meals. You should set one up for each varietal, and a description of the wine would be a nice touch.

This is very easy to do with your computer. Simply set up the format you want to go with, and you can change or add to it as many times as you wish. If you want to purchase a professional inventory program, check out [www.thewineadvocate.com](http://www.thewineadvocate.com) as Robert Parker has designed a fantastic inventory program for individuals who have wine cellars.

In the next issue, we will look into buying blends or Meritage for your cellar.

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

Ok, four members answered our Master Sommelier question correctly. Now I have another hard question for you to answer: In the past five years, there have been several fantastic low-end wines, which have steadily increased substantial growth in the marketplace. One name brand has won over many wine consumers. The wine, priced as a value and sells like hotcakes at wine stores around the world. The juice comes from several different wineries. What is the name of this popular brand and where is this winery located? This is a two part question, so you need to get both parts right to win. Ok, I can give you a small hint: The wine is not produced in the United States. All answers must be sent in by June 18<sup>th</sup> to [les@hydeparkcc.com](mailto:les@hydeparkcc.com). Good luck!

**QUESTION FROM A MEMBER:**

**LES, I KNOW YOU ANSWERED THIS QUESTION BEFORE, BUT LAST MONTH WE WENT OUT FOR DINNER WITH FRIENDS TO A LOCAL WELL-KNOWN RESTAURANT. OUR FRIENDS BROUGHT A BOTTLE OF WINE FROM THEIR WINE CELLAR WITH THEM, AND THE DINING ROOM MANAGER OPENED THE BOTTLE OF WINE AT OUR TABLE AND CHARGED US A CORKAGE FEE. I THOUGHT YOU STATED IN ONE OF YOUR PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS THAT THIS WAS AGAINST THE LAW. LES, HAS THIS LAW BEEN RECENTLY CHANGED?**

Corking fee in the State of Ohio is a violation of the Ohio Revised Code Section 4301.62, and this law has not recently changed. Any restaurant that opens a bottle of wine that has been purchased outside from another source cannot be served by that restaurant. Establishments, including restaurants that do not hold liquor permits and charge corking fees that allow patrons to consume their own alcoholic beverages (including bottles of wine purchased somewhere else), is a violation of the Ohio Liquor Law, and a hefty fine or loss of the establishments liquor license could be enforced by the Division of Liquor Control.

Therefore, we feel it is best to stay within the law here at the club. No matter what kind of liquor license an establishment retains, corkage fees or bringing any alcoholic beverages from an outside source is prohibited.

**QUESTION FROM A MEMBER:**

**LES, THIS IS NOT A WINE QUESTION: WHY DOESN'T THE CLUB HAVE TEXAS HOLD' EM TOURNAMENTS?**

This is another good question, as the subject comes up just about every month from a member. Texas Hold 'Em poker tournaments have become immensely popular throughout the country. However, to have such a tournament at any establishment that has a liquor license is a violation of the Ohio Revised Code 2923.01.

Poker is specifically defined by Ohio law to be a "game of chance." Ohio law prohibits any person, restaurant, private club, club, tavern, store arena, hall, or any other place of public accommodation from playing any game of chance. It does not make a difference that all of the entry fees to participate in the tournament are paid out as winning, and the house does not take a cut in any way.

Only charitable organizations that qualify as an IRS 501 (c)(3) tax exempt organization and are of a type specifically listed as charitable organization by Ohio law may conduct games of chance for profit. Again, no permit holder in Ohio meets these requirements.

Kenny Rogers once sang “you have to know when to hold’em, and know when to fold’em.” The Ohio Liquor Control Board is enforcing all violations of these tournaments by taking the establishment liquor license away with the first violation. Need I say more?

### **QUESTION FROM A MEMBER:**

**ONE OF MY HUSBAND’S FRIENDS COMMENTED DINNER THE OTHER NIGHT “THIS WINE HAS NICE LEGS.” I DID NOT WANT TO LOOK STUPID SO I SAID “YES IT DOES.” WHAT DID HE MEAN BY THE TERM “LEGS” ON THE WINE?**

This is a wine appreciation term referring to the colorless “tears” which continually form along the inside wall of a wine glass after the wine has been swirled. Legs indicate the flavor density of a particular wine.

### **QUESTION FROM A MEMBER:**

**LES, WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MERITAGE AND A RED TABLE WINE?**

Meritage is a blend of up to five varietals, where as Cabernet Sauvignon needs to be the dominate varietal. Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec, and Petit Verdot are also found in most Meritage wines.

The appearance of the wine is dark with a distinctive ruby color. The wine is described as medium to full-bodied. Black cherry, blackberry, plum, strawberry, chocolate, vanilla, herb and spice flavors best describe the wine. Meritage is best served with veal, lamb, pork, roast beef and steaks.

A Red Table Wine designation is again just a blend of grapes. It could be just two varietals or up to five different varietals. Sangiovese, Zinfandel, Malbec, Syrah, Petit Sirah, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon all can be found in a red table wine.

The appearance of this wine is dark and gooey with lingering flavors of black currants, cassis, black cherry, blueberries, blackberries, spice, vanilla, mocha, red plum, licorice, and earth. The wine can be light depending on the blend, or they may be heavy and robust. Blackend seafood, roasted pork, rabbit, chops and steaks all go great with red table wines.

### **QUESTION FROM A MEMBER:**

**LES, A FEW ISSUES AGO YOU HAD AN ARTICLE ON WATER. WE DRINK LA CROIX SPARKLING WATER AT HOME WITH WINES TO CLEANSE OUR PALATE. IS SPARKLING WATER JUST AS GOOD AS STILL?**

This is a good question. Sparkling water is a good alternative to still water and works on the same principle. The only difference is that sparkling water such as Perrier,

Apollinaris from Germany, or Saratoga from New York/Vermont can have a hint of sodium or mineral in the aftertaste. One must watch out for these characteristics in sparkling waters, as these two elements can change any style of the wine. San Pelligrino, Tu Nant, Solé, Calabria and yes, even La Croix, are some of the finest sparkling waters available to cleanse the palate before tasting wine.

### **QUESTION FROM A MEMBER:**

**LES, THIS IS NOT A WINE QUESTION BUT A QUESTION ABOUT VODKA. HOW MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF VODKA ARE AVAILABLE AND WHAT VODKA WOULD YOU RECOMMEND?**

Everyday the number of different types of Vodka increase as this spirit is the hottest beverage in the world. The last count just in Ohio was over 160 different vodkas ranging from the price of \$7.99 retail to over \$65.00 dollars retail. Unbelievable you say? Tell me about it Stolichnaya alone has over seven flavored Vodkas, and they just came out with the highest priced Vodka on the market with Elite, the only cold filtered Vodka so smooth it taste's like water with virtually no bite. Vox just came out with a Lime flavored Vodka last month. Three Olives came out with six flavored Vodkas, Smirnoff has nine flavors, Ketel One is adding another one in the summer, Greg Goose has four flavors coming out with another one in the fall, and it goes on and on.

So which Vodka is the finest? It all depends on your taste. What? Vodka doesn't have a taste! You may be right, but Vodka does have a bite. So, which Vodka is the smoothest? According to a national independent survey conducted by the National Beverage Association, the Vodkas below are the most popular among adults between the ages of 25 – 55 years of age.

Greg Goose  
Ketel One  
Belvedere  
Vox  
Hanger One  
Absolut Mandrin  
Polar Ice  
Vincent Van Gogh  
Kryshtal Charodei  
Stolichnaya Vanilla

Stay tuned... more Vodkas are due out by the spring of 2006

### **THE POWER OF CHEESE:**

Entertaining at home is something of an unraveling affair. You need to plan the menu of the evening, buy the snacks, purchase cheese and fruit, and, of course, buy the wine. Yet the cocktail part of the evening sets the pace for the dinner.

One needs to purchase the proper cheese and appetizers for cocktail hour. If you are starting off with a little bubbly, then a good triple graded Parmesan Cheese would be a

good place to start. Add some strawberries, raspberries, and even some dark chocolate to your appetizer tray.

If you prefer to serve white wine, stay clear of cheese that is heavy or smoked. Go to something light that stands out. Maybe some fresh Mozzarella stuffed with strawberries or blueberries and cream. Wow! This would really work well with any Chardonnay or Pinot Grigio. Green Peppercorn Brick from Coach Farm is a nice pasteurized goat milk cheese clean, elegant and lemony with an herb piquant, peppery spice. This cheese would go nicely with a White Burgundy, or Sauvignon Blanc. Double Cranberry Spread by Northern Meadows of Wisconsin is a well-balanced rich blend of two –year-old cheddar a little tangy, but great with Chardonnay or Fume Blanc. Park Cheese Company in Wisconsin makes a Provolone, which is simply fantastic. Mildly sharp taste, reminiscent of cured meats and salty nuts. This is a good cheese with a Merlot of Cabernet or any blended red wine. Henning Colby Cheese from Wisconsin is a mellow favorite of deep orange-yellow color. It is similar in flavor to an everyday cheddar, but softer in texture and lighter tasting. This is another great cheese that can be served with either red or white wines.

It is always best to stay away from onion during the appetizer part of cocktail hour. Always have fresh, crisp crackers, maybe even a little bread. Have some bottled water available, and always add some colorful, soft fruit and you will be one-step closer to pleasing everyone.

## **RECOMMENDED SPARKLING**

I had the opportunity to taste a nice sparkling wine a few weeks ago that would really work well with entertaining friends at home for cocktails or even for desserts with chocolate and fruits and cream. Prosecco, is an Italian sparkling wine from the producers of Santa Margherita known for high end Pinot Grigio. Prosecco is zesty and refreshing with a crisp elegant character and small bubbles. Hints of fresh peaches, ripe pear and hints of apricot linger in the aftertaste of this beautiful sparkling masterpiece. Give it a try today as it retails for only \$19.99.

## **GOOD VALUE CHARDONNAY NOW AVAILABLE:**

Check out these deals at your local wine merchant:

### ***Queen of Hearts, Santa Barbara County 2001***

Medium bodied with hazelnut, apple, lime and grapefruit flavor. Great with grilled pork with mango chutney. ***Retails for \$7.99***

### ***EOS Novella Paso Robles 2001***

Full bodied and well balanced with papaya, peach and spice. Excellent served with pasta and shellfish. ***Retails for \$7.99***

### ***Château Julien, Barrel Fermented Monterey County 2002***

Rich and buttery with aromas of tropical and citrus fruit. A glaze of toasted oak and cooked pineapple, apple and pear line the center of the Chardonnay. The finish is long and appealing. ***Retails for \$6.99 - \$7.99***

## **PINOTAGE:**

Pinotage is a cross between Pinot Noir and Cinsault (called Hermitage in South Africa and parts of Europe).

Pinotage was first produced in 1925 in South Africa. Pinotage can be described to have distinctive, refreshing and very fruity flavor. There are hints of banana and bramble fruit notes. The wine should be drunk young within two years of the current vintage this way one can savour the wonderful fruits that linger on the long finish of the wine. Some say Pinotage tastes similar to a mature Claret.

South Africa is the number one producer of Pinotage followed by New Zealand, Israel and Brazil.

Pricing of Pinotage is around the low to mid-teens at local wine merchants. I would strongly recommend Umkhulu, South African Pinotage described as big and rounded with plum, banana cream, toasty oak and cedar. Retail for around \$18.99. This wine is best served with a nice strip steak or grilled pork chops.

## **ONE MORE THING:**

Last month I had the opportunity to meet Mike Anagonstou, who is been assigned to head the wine department at the new Biggs in Hyde Park Plaza. Mike has years of experience when it comes to selecting good wines for your particular taste. Mike was telling me the wine department at the Hyde Park Biggs is going to be jammed packed with wines from all over the world. When you have time, check out the wine department at the Hyde Park Plaza Biggs.

## **UPCOMING WINE TASTING:**

Don't forget, we have our Summer Wine Tasting on Friday night, July 15. This event will take place outside on the lower patio or in the Terrace Room depending on the weather. All the wines will be from our wine cellar. This is a tasting you will not want to miss, and the price is only \$15.99 *per person*. The tasting begins at 7:00 p.m. and ends at 9:00 p.m.

Make it an evening as you can dine on the porch or inside until 10:00 p.m. and have after-dinner drinks with William at the Ross Bar. What a great way to begin a weekend at your Club! Make your reservations today!

Have a great and safe summer season!

Les Hemingway, Bar Manager