

THE AMERICAN WINE SOCIETY

# wineJournal

WINTER 2014

PART 2

UNUSUAL WINES

VIA RAIL

CANADA

CAYMUS

VINEYARDS

CHAMPAGNE

LeLARGE-PUGEOT



*May the Spirit  
of the Holidays  
be with you throughout  
the New Year*





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LETTER

JIM RINK

**W**ell, November is off to a wintry start in many parts of the country, while California continues to suffer from severe drought. It is certain that Mother Nature will assert her many moods in each glass of wine that we drink. But let us not forget the winegrowers, who must adapt to these changing conditions, while maintaining a consistent, quality product. Kudos to all those who toil in the vineyard so that we may enjoy our favorite drink.

In this issue of the *Journal*, longtime contributor and travel writer George Medovoy kicks off a three-part series on Nova Scotia wines. Part 1 finds George on a VIA Rail train leaving Montreal for his final destination. As they say, half the fun is getting there. Another intrepid traveler, Bill Wilen, finishes the second of his two-part series on unusual wines. Bill revisits and reviews some interesting wines he found in Serbia, Nicaragua and Ohio (well, they really found him).

Our favorite sommelier, Ellen Landis, CS, CSW, presents her exclusive recurring feature: "21 Wines to Watch." In this issue, Ellen features outstanding wines from France, Michigan, Montana, Oregon, Portugal and Virginia. Wine prices in this issue's collection range from \$14 to \$100.

AWSEF scholarship recipient Alison Reeve has written an interesting piece on the relationship between vineyard floor management and cluster thinning as they affect the quality of Pinot Noir grapes and wine.

Old world meets new as a well-established champagne maker in France has now made their product available in America. Rosemary Carroll spent time with, and has the inside scoop on, the Lelarge-Pugeot family, which has been making quality champagne since 1782. The *Journal* also spent some time with winemaker Chuck Wagner, who gives us his thoughts on the family business, Caymus Vineyards, as it celebrates its 40th anniversary. We talked with Chuck about family, winemaking, shifting trends — and how the journey continues.

If you enjoy chocolate and wine, the two may not be mutually exclusive. Michael Schafer, CSW provides us with some of his favorite pairings. Did you know that Banyuls, a fortified wine from France, is especially suited to dark chocolate?

Last, but not least, in an effort to increase interactivity between *Journal* readers and writers, we will include contact information in the "About the Author" section of each article. Feel free to contact our contributors if you have comments or questions about their work. For story ideas or other matters relating to the *Journal*, feel free to contact me at [rink@americanwinesociety.org](mailto:rink@americanwinesociety.org).

Stay thirsty,



## wineJournal

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The AWS is the largest consumer based wine education organization in the U.S. A non-profit group, the AWS is devoted to educating people on all aspects of wine. Its members include wine novices, experts, grape growers, amateur and professional winemakers, chefs, wine appreciators, wine educators, restaurateurs and anyone wanting to learn more about wine.

## AWS ACTIVITIES

**AWS Chapters:** Local community groups of AWS members sponsor programs, usually monthly. Activities include: tastings, dinners, lectures, picnics, winery tours, winemaking and cooking demonstrations, viticulture conferences, amateur wine-judging events, and other wine-related social events. Guests are welcome and novices have nothing to fear. Chapters are self-supporting, so expect a nominal charge to attend a tasting, dinner, etc. If a local chapter does not exist in your area, the national office will be glad to assist in forming a chapter. All that is needed are a few interested wine lovers. Meeting can be informal and held in member' homes or in other settings, such as restaurants and wineries.

**AWS Regional Events:** Organized by regional vice-presidents, include statewide wine judging, contests, special tastings, regional wine conferences, regional picnics and dinners.

**AWS National Conference:** Held each fall—a two and one-half day national conference and extravaganza of wine. Attendees become part of a tradition that has drawn wine-lovers, winemakers and gastronomes together every November for over 45 years. Prominent American and international speakers conduct seminars and lectures on all aspects of wine appreciation, wine production, grape growing and cuisine. Members experience fine food at connoisseur luncheons and dinners, tastings of hundreds of wines and royal treatment by the finest American hotels and resorts. The annual conference brings professionals, serious amateurs and novices together to discover what is new in wine.

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# VIA RAIL CANADA:



## Wine Tasting and Great Meals on a Northern Excursion-Part 1

Story and photos by George Medovoy

**ON BOARD THE OCEAN** – I call it “wine tasting on the rails.” My wife and I are traveling from Montreal, Quebec to Halifax, Nova Scotia on *The Ocean*, VIA Rail’s wonderful overnight train, with accommodations in cozy Sleeper Plus class, mixing heavenly views of the passing countryside and great meals with daytime wine tasting of Nova Scotia wines in the dome car.

As we take the escalator downstairs to the waiting train, I glance up at the words to “O Canada,” Canada’s national anthem, emblazoned on the art deco interior of Montreal’s big central train station.

Around 6:45 p.m., *The Ocean* eases its way out of the station and begins its voyage, as Montreal’s modern skyline recedes behind us. We travel along the St. Lawrence River past farms with distinctive red barns and bright blue roofs, slipping in and out of small towns and villages with odd-sounding names like Trois-Pistoles.

Later, in the northern darkness, we tunnel through canopies of thick New Brunswick forest until we cross into Nova Scotia. Our Sleeper Plus accommodations include upholstered

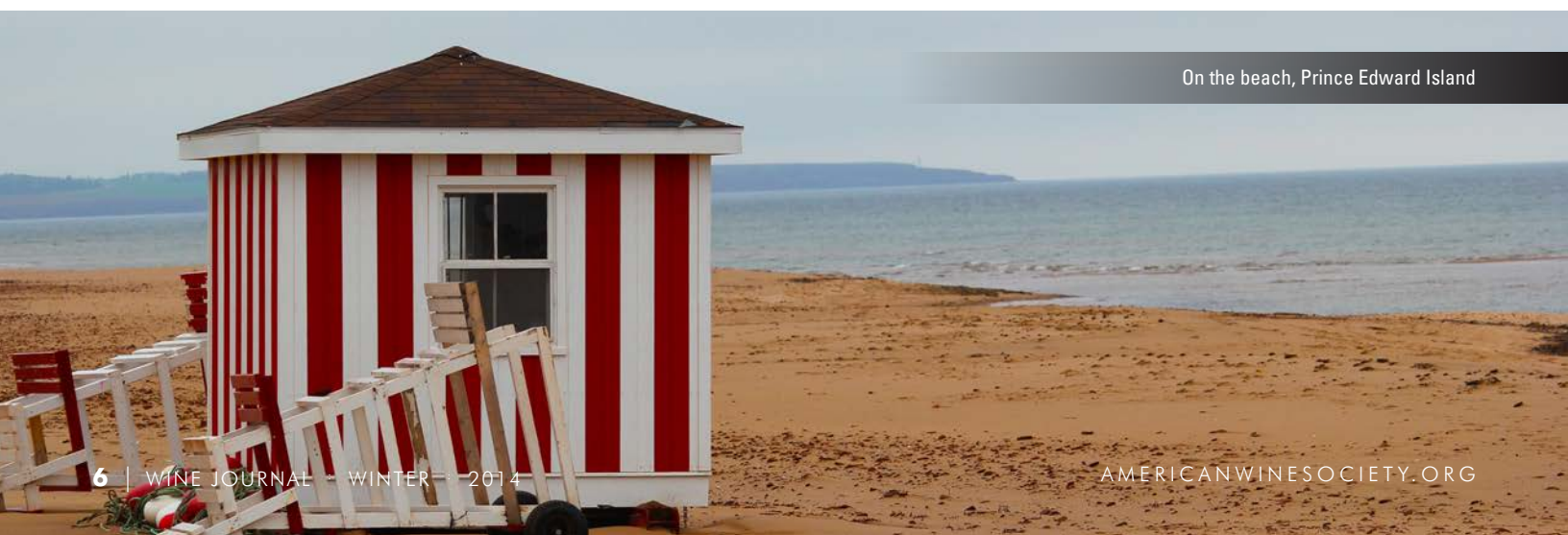
seats which convert into lower and upper sleeping berths, and we have our own small bathroom. And I have to say, there is nothing quite like waking up in the early morning, lifting up the shades, and taking in the wonderful sunrise!

While still in the Montreal station’s business lounge, we book a table for the early evening dinner, one of our memorable VIA food adventures. The dining car is decorated with images of the iconic Peggy’s Cove lighthouse, a nice afternoon drive that we’ll do from Halifax. A waiter escorts us to a table for two covered with a white table cloth as the train passes St. Lambert, gateway to the St. Lawrence Seaway.

### ELEVATED FOOD EXPERIENCE

In keeping with Canadian bilingualism, the menu is in English and French; it also reflects an approach, according to Cathy Drozdowski of VIA Rail, that is “definitely much more elevated and much more of an experience than, say, airline food.”

“It’s not just about getting from point A to point B,” she says, “it’s about the experience...The food is one of the highlights of the trip.” For appetizers, the evening’s menu



On the beach, Prince Edward Island



Pete Lockett and his daughter at Lockett Vineyards near Wolfville

includes: a choice of Maritime Fish Chowder or Citrus-Infused Shrimp and Scallops with marinated shaved fennel. I order the Maritime fish chowder and for a main course, the Old-Style Atlantic Salmon in honey-mustard, served over saffron rice and seasonal vegetables, along with a glass of very nice Jost Vineyards Nova Scotia Pinot Grigio.

Other entrees include: Braised Beef in Demi-Glace Sauce, served with baby carrots and mashed potatoes, or chicken breast lightly coated with crushed black pepper and served with a cheese sauce on fettuccine tossed with garlic and basil and accompanied by asparagus and ratatouille. A waitress offers warm dinner rolls, as the dining car fills with the chatter of travelers settling in and getting comfortable in their new surroundings.

We linger over our dessert of cheesecake and coffee for as long as we can – who wants to leave? – until we decide to head back to our compartment, where the steward has already converted our seats into upper and lower berths and provided us with two requested extra pillows. It's a good time to relax, do some reading, and review the VIA Rail pamphlet of the train's route.

But I have to admit – dining is still on my mind because I anticipate morning coffee, which will come with a Latin omelet, filled with red and green peppers and tomato salsa. Among route details, we'll be passing an area where 18th century French colonists, the Micmac Indians and the Acadian people fought against the British.

Around Campbellton, New Brunswick, which hosts a salmon festival in summer, we'll set our watches ahead by one hour.

## A WINE RAIL

A major ingredient of Sleeper Plus class is wine tasting in the dome car, as VIA Rail's very knowledgeable Francois Cote

offers Domaine de Grand Pre "Tidal Bay," Nova Scotia's white appellation wine, characteristically dry and aromatic, with Nova Scotia Gouda cheese. Looking at my notes, I remember scribbling this happy wine moment: "Wine and cheese in the New Brunswick woods!" Of course, from the elevated dome car on the return trip we have a superb daylight view of the thick woods.

Besides discussing Nova Scotia wine, Cote reviews the history of the Acadian people who settled in Atlantic Canada. Our voyage also recalls Jacques Cartier's famous 1534 journey: the French explorer, hoping to get to India, sailed through the waters separating Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Cartier eventually sailed down the St. Lawrence River to what is Montreal, where he planted a cross on Mt. Royal.

We eventually take a break from wine-and-cheese tasting for lunch in the dining car, where today's menu includes soup or salad and these options: Marinated Chicken Breast Penne; Lobster Roll; or Grilled Vegetable Salad.

There are also Canadian beers and Canadian wines by the glass.

If you include the passengers from around the world – Europe, Northern California, Canada (and even a couple with a 6-week-old baby) – it all goes into the mix of a memorable VIA Rail voyage.

...TO BE CONTINUED. ●

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## About The Author

George Medovoy is a longtime contributor to the Journal. George is a veteran travel writer, whose website, [www.PostcardsForYou.com](http://www.PostcardsForYou.com), covers regional California destinations, as well as national and overseas travel. George can be reached at [tpostcard@aol.com](mailto:tpostcard@aol.com).





# CHAMPAGNE Le OLD WORLD

**A**fter seven generations of champagne making in France, Champagne Lelarge-Pugeot has arrived for the first time in the USA. What goes into making this great champagne? Meet the winemaker and discover his answer.

While visiting a small village in southern France in November 2011, the Lelarge-Pugeot family sent me three

bottles of their champagne to taste. "Just tell the post office that you are the lady with the champagne," Clémence Lelarge, daughter of the winemaker, told me. I found the local bureau de poste and waited my turn in line. "Je suis la femme avec le champagne..." I muttered, hoping my accented French would get by. I heard a ruckus in the back room as the postal workers searched for the

box. "Le champagne, le champagne, le femme avec le champagne est ici." The woman with the champagne is here. I liked my new moniker.

I had become friends with Clémence Lelarge, who now manages their international market, while she was living in New York. We had sipped champagne together but never Champagne Lelarge-Pugeot because it was not yet available in the USA.

I received my precious package from the post office and went back to my place to chill it. That evening, my friends and I shared an electronic toast, by cell phone, with the champagne makers as I sipped my first taste. So impressed with its flavor, I decided to bring back one of the bottles to my wine retailer, Carl Weber of Central Liquors in New Jersey. Equally impressed, he asked if Lelarge-Pugeot had any interest in expanding their market to the USA. When they said yes, he created opportunities for them. In 2012, Champagne Lelarge-Pugeot became available in U.S. mar-

Home of Champagne Lelarge-Pugeot, Vignys France





kets for the first time. In 2013 I would toast with the champagne makers again, but this time, in person, at their vineyard in France.

A two-hour train ride from Paris brought me to the premier crus village of

They are hard workers. No vacations, working 7 days a week, and 15 hours a day. It was amazing to have parents so passionate about something they were making from the beginning to the end." When did she have her first taste of their champagne? "At my Bap-

waited for nature to put its final touches on the ripening grapes. Soon, 25 hired hands would engulf the vineyard to harvest the Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Chardonnay grapes. The harvested grapes then take a short journey from vineyard to the cellar and are dropped

**by Rosemary Carroll**

# LARGE-PUGEOT: MEETS NEW

Vrigny, in the Montagne de Reims. I was greeted by Dominique Pugeot, business manager and wife of the winemaker, Dominique Lelarge. It was about two weeks before the 2013 harvest, so they both had time to spend with me as I toured the cellars and the vineyards.

A family-run business since 1782, Lelarge learned his craft from growing up in the vineyards and from studying oenology in Beaune, the center of Burgundy. His daughter, Clémence, shared with me what growing up amidst vines and viticulture was like.

"Growing up in a champagne making family was amazing. From the ages of 3-7 I would spend my days with my dad in the vineyards. He would bring a blanket and I would stay with him and play for hours with my brother. It was growing up in nature." Now an adult, she speaks fondly of learning important values from her parents. "Having parents that are passionate about what they are doing taught me so much.



Pinot Noir Grapes

tism; I was one year old. Mom dipped her finger in our champagne and put a drop on my tongue."

In Vrigny, I was first invited to tour the Lelarge-Pugeot wine cellar. Its immaculate presentation offered an atmosphere of being prepped and ready as the winemaker watched and

through a chute, into the wine press one floor below. The resulting juices, stored in steel tanks, go through two fermentations. The first fermentation changes the pH and develops the alcohol. The second fermentation is about developing flavors. A tasting from the tank during my tour revealed quite an acidic flavor. I found it difficult to taste



Winemaker Dominique Lelarge with his wife Dominique Pugeot

the future; that skill was reserved for the experienced palate of the winemaker who will create eight perfect blends to then be bottle aged.

Once fermented, the sugar that fed the yeasts is exhausted. These yeasts die and form deposits called the lees. In the bottle storage area, Lelarge lifted a bottle to display this sediment. Resting on the lees enriches the flavor of the champagne. The Lelarge-Pugeot remuage/riddling, which will separate this sediment from the wine, is mechanical and carefully computerized. The lees need to be removed for the clarity of the champagne. When the inverted bottle's sediment settles into the neck of the bottle, the sediment

is frozen. The bottle is then turned upright and the temporary crown cap is removed. The yeast plug is forced out by the pressure in the bottle. Removing the lees from the bottle is the disgorgement.

After removing the lees, wine is added to the bottle to compensate for what was lost in this process. Dosage (adding sugar) manages the sweetness of the final product. Lelarge-Pugeot uses juice from the grapes, not sugar, to control the sweetness. Their dosage ranges from 0g/L (Brut Nature) to 28g/L (Demi-Sec.)

Eight different award-winning champagnes will ultimately be created in

these cellars with a total production of 60,000 bottles. These bottles will be distributed throughout France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Japan and the United States. Their champagnes are already attracting attention from wine critics in the USA. Quintessence received 94 points from Wine Enthusiast and their 2004 Premier Cru Quintessence Champagne made the 2013 top-100 list coming in at #38. It was also awarded Wine Enthusiast's Editor's Choice.

A real highlight of my visit was seeing the vineyards. Miles of lush vines filled with plump, ripening grapes overlooked the small village of Vrgigny. It was there that I learned the secret: to make an amazing champagne you must have a respectful passion for the grape that will create it. Dominique Lelarge has exactly that.

Assuming responsibility for the 8.6 hectares (21 acres) of vineyards in 1985, Lelarge immediately turned to sustainable practices for his thought-through viticulture. He applied new growing methods in order to re-establish the natural equilibrium between the environment, the vineyard and the terroir. He became increasingly aware of the negative effects of pesticides. "Why should we put the vine through something we wouldn't like to be put through ourselves?" He considers the

All 8 cuvees are represented in the tasting room, along with their Coteaux Champenoise, a Pinot Noir with a small production of 1000 bottles.





vine as alive as the human body. "It is capable of naturally fighting off disease if the natural-defense organisms are preserved," he said.

By 2000, he had eliminated the use of weed killers and let nature run its course. This brought the return of a more natural habitat to the vineyard. "Letting the wildlife act" became their watchwords. "Biodiversity is indeed in our vineyards," said Clémence Lelarge. "The birds make their nests and hares give birth to their young. New insects and bugs, some rare that we've never seen before, exist amidst our vines."

In some parcels Lelarge started to use a horse-drawn plough in order to not compact the land. He started green harvesting, pruning some of the green, unripe fruit in summer in order to concentrate the flavor and increase the quality of the remaining grapes. Why all these changes? "While watching my three children growing up, I realized I couldn't leave them a polluted, damaged heritage," he said. The vineyards are now 100 percent organic; 2012 was their first completely organic harvest. "We decided to become organic not only to respect the terroir, the plants, the soil and the fauna but also to give an identity to each champagne we are making," he said.

As I walked through the vineyard photographing the grapes and the vines I could see the impact of the decisions he has made. Lelarge-Pugeot vines are healthy, flourishing and vibrant. Other vineyards nearby looked diminished, different. They are all growing the same three grapes but the differences in the vines were quite apparent.

Of course, this new direction did not come without its challenges. "Every year we have to watch and listen to each vine in order to give it the best attention possible while letting

them express themselves," said Lelarge. The vines are fed and managed through the use of natural composts, herbal tisanes and preparations made from animals and minerals. "We love each of our vines and we bring them all the attention they need, kind of like parents taking care of their children."

What is next for Champagne Lelarge-Pugeot? Soon they will be biodynamic. "Becoming biodynamic goes beyond organic. It involves considering the vines as a whole and fully respecting

their market grows in the USA, she hopes their winery will be recognized as a quality, small organic champagne house with a winemaking style that reflects minimal input and a careful selection of juice during the press. "We want to appeal to sommeliers and champagne drinkers who search for a distinctive quality in the champagne they choose," said Clémence. I think that is exactly what is happening.

A final note. The sunny summer days of July and August in France made



Carl Weber, Rosemary Carroll and Clémence Lelarge at an in-store tasting at Central Liquors, in Flemington NJ.

the environment in which the vine lives," said Clémence. Biodynamic wine is reputed to represent a true taste of the terroir. "We don't make wine, we grow wine," says Lelarge. "We pay attention to every elaborate detail of viticulture and winemaking in order to make natural champagnes that reflect the taste of the terroir and our know-how."

Clémence couldn't be happier with her champagne heritage. "It was impossible for me not to be involved in the family business," she said. As

2013 a great harvest. It is their first completely organic declared vintage.

#### **IF YOU GO CHAMPAGNE LELARGE-PUGEOT**

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In USA, contact Clémence at:  
[clemlarge@wanadoo.fr](mailto:clemlarge@wanadoo.fr)

## Cuvées of Champagne Lelarge-Pugeot

### BRUT NATURE

**Blend.** A perfect balance of Meunier, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, a selection of their very best cuvees, its uniqueness comes from the fact that there is no added sugar (dosage).

**Flavor:** With a 0 percent dosage, this champagne has an inviting freshness, aromatic complexity, and expresses a perfect harmony of the three grapes.

**Aging:** Aged for three years.

**Dosage:** 0

**Food pairing:** Seafood

### BRUT ROSÉ

**Blend:** Created solely with Pinot Noir, this rosé is a blend of 90 percent of white wine and 10 percent of red wine. This blend is made with selected grapes from three of their vineyards: Les Maupas, Les Clos and Les Champs Chevaliers.

**Flavor:** Refined and fruity thanks to its notes of cherry, strawberry and toasted bread. A pale pink robe, enveloped in an aromatic persistence.

**Aging:** Aged for three years.

**Dosage:** 7.8g/L

**Food pairing:** White or pink meat, red fruit desserts

### DEMI-SEC TRADITION

**Blend:** A blend of 65 percent Meunier, 20 percent Pinot Noir and 15 percent Chardonnay, this brut also contains 20 percent of reserved wines. Having the same blend as the Brut Tradition, its taste is influenced by a higher dosage.

**Flavor:** Fruity, soft and well-balanced, this wine emits a honey-like sweetness.

**Aging:** This wine ages in the cellar for three years.

**Dosage:** 28g/L

**Food Pairing:** Fois gras as well as dessert.

### BRUT TRADITION

**Blend:** 65 percent Meunier, 20 percent Pinot Noir and 15 percent Chardonnay, this brut also contains 20 percent of reserved wines. This blend emanates from the selection of their following vineyards: Les Cumines, Les Pierres, Les Forts Monts, Les Maupas.

**Flavor:** It is fruity, soft and well-balanced. This blend lets the local soil of Vignay fully express itself, along with the family know-how. Thanks to its ample, round mouth, this wine gives off a perfect balance of structure and finish.

**Aging:** Aged for three years in the cellars.

**Dosage:** 11 g/L

**Food Pairing:** Works wonderfully as an apéritif.

### BRUT RESERVE

**Blend:** The result of a blend of 65 percent of Meunier, 20 percent of Pinot Noir and 15 percent of Chardonnay, this brut also benefits from 20 percent of reserve wines and extra aging. The Brut Réserve comes from carefully-selected grapes from vines over 60 years old in Lelarge-Pugeot parcels of Les Dos, La Côte des Glaïses et Les Quatre-Vents.

**Flavor:** Tender and nuanced, this rich, intense bouquet, has notes of yellow fruits, evokes a plum-jam taste with a bit of slightly-toasted brioche.

**Aging:** This wine ages in the cellar for five to six years.

**Dosage:** 6.60g/L

**Food Pairing:** White meat.

### EXTRA-BRUT MILLIÉSIMÉ

**Blend:** A selection of cuvées from remarkable years, this Milliésimé is created with equal parts of Meunier, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

**Flavor:** This blend, with a luminous golden robe, is endowed with great

amplitude and sweetness right from the first sips. It is blessed with notes of honey and yellow fruit.

**Aging:** It is allowed to age for 5 to 6 years in the cellar.

**Dosage:** 4.2g/L

**Food Pairing:** A perfect blend to be savored with a meal. It is a great match especially for foie gras.

### BLANC DE BLANCS

**Blend:** 100 percent Chardonnay, from vines over 30 years old, this champagne expresses a marvelous balance of acid and fruit.

**Flavor:** This airy champagne, full of finesse, has a great freshness with a wonderful finish. It reveals notes of pear and peach and just a hint of orange peel.

**Aging:** This wine is kept in the cellars for three years.

**Dosage:** 10 g/L

**Food Pairing:** Works wonderfully as an apéritif.

### QUINTESSENCE

**Blend:** Using a careful selection of grapes from wines of over 50 years old, such as Les 4 Vents, Les Montciaux, Les Maupas, Le Jour, this blend is made with a 70 percent majority of Chardonnay, plus 20 percent Pinot Noir and 10 percent Meunier.

**Flavor:** Elegant and ample in the mouth, 30 percent of the blend spends some time in oak casks, giving it a lingering bouquet. Flowery notes, as well as notes of yellow fruit can be enjoyed right from the first mouthful.

**Aging:** 30 percent of the blend spends some time in oak casks. Left to age 5 to 6 years in the cellar.

**Dosage:** 6g/L

**Food Pairing:** Perfect for brunch, and also seafood. 🍷

## About The Author

Rosemary Carroll is an editorial photographer and wine and food writer. Her passion for travel, food, and wine has been encouraged by visits to most of the wine regions in France and Northern Italy. This is the first time Rosemary's work is appearing in the Journal. Contact Rosemary at [rosemarycarrolltd@gmail.com](mailto:rosemarycarrolltd@gmail.com).



# new or noteworthy

by Jim Rink

## MAKING YOUR OWN WINE AT HOME

Americans are drinking more wine than ever. This year the U.S. even surpassed France as the world's top wine consumer. So it should be no surprise that interest in home winemaking is also on the rise. If you're thinking about trying your hand at do-it-yourself winemaking, you may find it's easier than you think. A new book, *Making Your Own Wine at Home* (Fox Chapel Publishing, Sept. 2014), shows beginners how to successfully make wine in their own kitchens, without investing in expensive equipment.

Author Lori Stahl demystifies essential winemaking techniques with friendly, jargon-free instructions and gorgeous color photography. She begins by taking you step by step through making wine from a kit, and then shows you how to go beyond the kit with creative additions. Soon you'll be making your own flavorful wine with her creative recipes for fresh grapes, apples, berries, and even flowers and herbs.

### Making Your Own Wine at Home features:

- Easy ways to make delicious wine at home
- Seasonal recipes for grapes, fruit, flowers, and herbs
- Essential winemaking techniques
- Basic terminology, tools, ingredients, and equipment
- Tips for serving and enjoying wine

Lori Stahl is a winemaking enthusiast based in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Lori has studied oenology and viticulture in both the United States and Spain. She has worked long harvest seasons in commercial wineries, and has personally created more than 200 batches of wine. For more information please visit [foxchapelpublishing.com](http://foxchapelpublishing.com).

## THE CHINA (WINE) SYNDROME

The Chinese wine market is booming, as evidenced by the fact that their citizens now drink more red wine than the French. The color red is, of course, associated with

the Communist Party, but is also considered a lucky color. That luck has been recently extended to the newly minted Kieu Hoang Winery in Napa Valley, formerly a Michael Mondavi property.

In its effort to expand its distribution network in China, the Kieu Hoang Winery recently announced its exclusive agreement through Shanghai KHKMY Import & Export Co., Ltd., with Jianmin Pharmacy, a subsidiary of Guangzhou Pharmaceuticals Corporation.

According to Ian Scally, General Manager of the Kieu Hoang Winery, the recent distribution agreement will help the winery market its wine both online and offline towards its Chinese customers. Scally said, "Marketing wine in a pharmacy in the United States is a very usual practice, whereas in China, this is unique as Jianmin Pharmacy Chain is the only pharmacy with a license to sell wine."

Jianmin Pharmacy will start marketing Kieu Hoang Winery wines to its existing 500,000 online customers on November 1, 2014. Scally commented, "The Winery is pleased to tap into the existing customer base of Jianmin Pharmacy, and bring our wines to the Chinese customers."

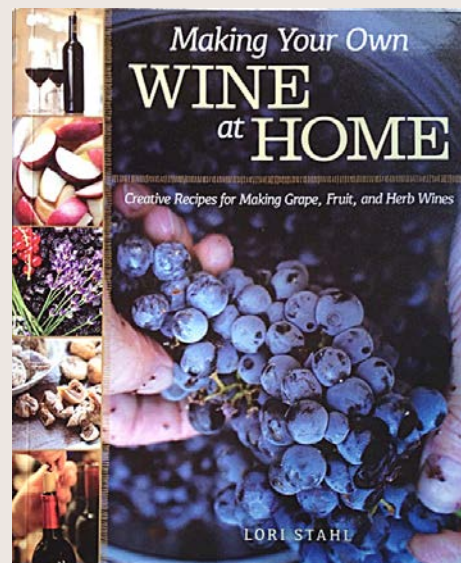
The Kieu Hoang Winery is located in the Napa-Sonoma Valley region and is owned and managed by an American businessman, Kieu Hoang. The winery includes the crushing facility located in the prestigious Carneros region of Napa, two parcels of vineyards, and the newly renovated tasting room beautifully appointed by the Michael Mondavi Family, former proprietors of this 20-acre property. The winery is permitted to produce up to 100,000 cases annually.

For more information about Kieu Hoang Winery, visit the winery's website at [KieuHoangWinery.com](http://KieuHoangWinery.com), or contact the winery directly at (707) 253-1615.

## WINE & METHANE DON'T MIX

*We Are Seneca Lake*, comprised of residents of the Finger Lakes, continues to peacefully demonstrate its opposition to

methane gas storage expansion by blockading the gates of the Crestwood compressor station on the shore of Seneca Lake, the largest of New York's Finger Lakes. The methane gas storage expansion project is advancing in the face of unparalleled public opposition and unresolved questions about geological instabilities, fault lines, and possible salinization of the lake, which serves as a source of drinking water for 100,000 people.

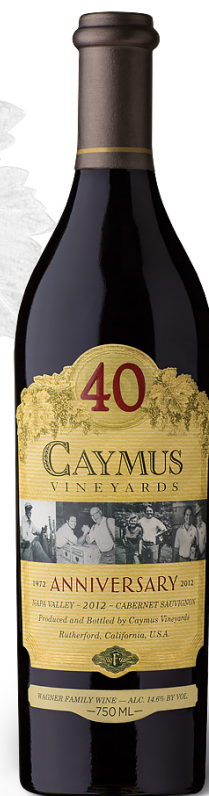


Inexplicably, a Capital New York investigation just revealed that Governor Cuomo's DEC excised references to the risks of underground gas storage from a 2011 federal report on methane contamination of drinking water, and has allowed key data to remain hidden.

According to other sources, the gas storage expansion is a threat to the "billion dollar wine and tourism industry," which provides thousands of sustainable jobs in the region. The Crestwood facility is just two miles from the Village of Watkins Glen and five miles from the Watkins Glen International Speedway that regularly hosts over 90,000 spectators. ●

For more information, visit [www.WeAreSenecaLake.com](http://www.WeAreSenecaLake.com).

# CAYMUS VINEYARDS CELEBRATES 40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY



**F**orty years ago, winemaker Chuck Wagner had no idea what lay ahead for Caymus Vineyards, the small family business he started with his parents, Charlie and Lorna. The three of them packed the first bottles of Caymus Cabernet in old prune boxes, filling and hand-corking each one. Today, that same wine is one of the most celebrated in Napa Valley. In fact, Caymus is the only winery to win *Wine Spectator* magazine's Wine of the Year award twice.

As Caymus Vineyards celebrates its 40th anniversary vintage, we talked with Chuck about family, winemaking, shifting trends – and how the journey continues.

**AWS - How did you decide to go into the wine business?**

**CW** - At the time, I was 19 and my folks were 60 and 57. We have a long family history in Napa. My Dad's parents came to Rutherford in 1906, planting grapes and running a

successful bulk wine business until Prohibition closed their doors. My mother's great grandfather captained a wagon train here from Missouri, purchasing 70 acres of farmland in 1857; his son, Lafayette Stice, started making wine in the late 1800s. My parents met in high school, got married during the Depression and made a living growing prunes and walnuts, eventually pulling out their trees to grow grapes instead. My Dad sold his grapes to other wineries such as Inglenook and Beaulieu while he honed his home winemaking skills. One day in 1971, he and my Mom sat me down and said that either we could open a winery or they would move to Australia. I think I made the right choice.

**AWS - What do you remember about those early days?**

**CW** - A lot of hard work and a lot of excitement. As our first harvest approached in 1972, my Dad and I worked on pruning our 55 acres of grapes – our shears fit in our back pocket. My Dad covered planning and development, my



Mom covered the books, and I covered vineyard and winery work. We put some old family photos on our special 40th anniversary label, and they reflect some of my happiest memories.

***AWS - When did you know that Caymus would make it as a business?***

**CW** - We got on the map with a favorable write-up in 1973, which was very encouraging because we were just an up-start operation. Then in 1987, my Dad was featured on the cover of *Wine Spectator* holding a bottle of our 1983 vintage under the headline "Best Damn Cabernet in California." I still feel happy whenever I see that picture.

***AWS - How have your wines changed over the years?***

**CW** - A lot of our philosophy is the same – my Dad said that "consistency is king," and that's still true. From the start, we believed in making wines with character and complexity. What's changed is our understanding of place, of how the unique climate and soil of Napa enable us to create a truly singular expression of Cabernet Sauvignon. We moved away from the tradition of Bordeaux and I think we have our own unique style – dark in color, with rich fruit and ripe tannins. Our 40th anniversary vintage is no exception. We had an ideal season from start to finish, and I believe 2012 is a new high-water mark for Napa and California. Another change is we have a lot more competition. When we started, Napa had only about 40 wineries, compared to about 500 today. That makes things more interesting as we work to get better and better. We still experiment with new growing and winemaking techniques.

***AWS - What are you focused on these days?***

**CW** - Just making the very best wines we can – this business doesn't allow you to rest on your laurels. We're always pushing to stay ahead of the curve. When we looked into starting the brand Mer Soleil to produce a Chardonnay, for example, we decided that the Napa climate wasn't as ideal for this variety as the Santa Lucia Highlands. We wanted to take advantage of that region's cooler temperatures, which create a slow ripening effect on the grapes and allow for greater complexity. So Cabernet is no longer



our sole focus. I'm very blessed that three of my four children have gone into the wine business, and Caymus has evolved into the Wagner Family of Wine. My kids are in charge of their individual wine brands and are focused on different varietals, and it's great to see them build their own success. I never wanted to push them into the business, but I'm very glad they caught the bug – we all spend a lot of time in the vineyard.

***AWS - What's one thing you would like people to know about Cabernet Sauvignon?***

**CW** - That very high-priced is not necessarily better. The same goes for wine from small lots. I taste many expensive wines, and some seem more collectors' items than special wine. To me, "small production" simply means that the supply is short. I think you should buy what tastes best to you, even if it is a million case production.

***AWS - What's in store for you in the next 40 years?***

**CW** - We have plans to expand the winery and have bought land in Solano County, which reminds me a little bit of Napa in the old days. It's only 38 miles from Caymus but very far off the map as far as many wine drinkers are concerned. I really like taking a piece of land and seeing what you can do with it. Hopefully in the next 40 years my kids – and their kids – will keep building on our tradition. As for me, I feel lucky that I've lived in Rutherford my whole life, and this is where I plan to stay. ●

In the Fall 2014 issue of the *Journal*, longtime contributor Bill Wilen regaled readers with tales of some of the more unusual wines he has tasted during his many travels around the globe. In this issue, we conclude with Part 2 of the series.



# Unusual Wines from Ar

by Bill Wilen

## SERBIA (2009)

I took a trip through the five Balkan countries over a two-week period several years ago. Most Serbian vineyards were unaffected by the war, which mainly was fought in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina until the Kosovo conflict erupted in the late 90s. Most of my sources said that one of the best wine grapes is Prokupac, which dominates the vineyards and is produced in a light fruity style. But my interest was in an unusual wine that I had read about and is produced as a dessert wine, the grapes of which are grown in one of the oldest viticultural areas of

Europe, Fruska Gora. This region was originally developed into vineyards by the Romans. The wine is Bermet and it is the region's "authentic wine" according to a booklet on Serbian wines.

We traveled from Belgrade where we were staying for several nights to Novi Sad, which is a small medieval town at the confluence of the beautifully scenic Danube and Sava Rivers. On the way we went to the Fruska Gora region to visit the Museum of Beekeeping and Wine Cellars. No, I am not imagining such a combination of tourist sites! After touring through the wine cellars we tasted a variety of young wines

which was a very sweet white with 20 spices, according to the label, although none were named. It was a delightful surprise and quite pleasant. The only spice I could identify with certainty was orange peel. I could imagine this being served as a delicious dessert by itself. It was at 17.7 percent alcohol and because it was unusually high, I wondered if it had been fortified like vermouth.

Then we were served a red, 2009 Bermet, which was an exceptionally sweet red with 20 spices none of which I could identify. They could have been the same combination of spices served in the white Bermet with different percentages. The alcohol was also at 17.7 percent. I recall wondering if it was the same wine with red dye. It was obvious that both dessert wines were the hit of the tasting and many of my fellow travelers bought bottles to take home. I bought the red to share with my wife and have as a dessert on some special occasion. The cost was the equivalent of \$7 in dinars. Visiting a Balkan vineyard during our tour was a

made mainly from traditional European varietals: Italian Riesling, Chardonnay, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. But, then came this region's and winery's specialty – Bermet. We were served a 2008 Zivanovic Cellars Bermet,





special treat especially having such an unusual and famous local, and super spicy, wine.

## NICARAGUA (2010)

We took a spring break trip to Nicaragua arranged through Kent State's Center for International and Intercultural Education. Our 9-day spring break tour took us all over the Pacific side of

my group at a social gathering we had in San Juan del Sur overlooking the beautiful bay, and it was not a hit. Most thought it was just "okay" especially after having some good rum and another said "cleanser" came to her mind. I found it gold in color but cloudy, fruity with a little lime in the nose, semi-sweet earthy fruit in the taste but fairly smooth. The finish was slightly bitter. It was non-vintage and

had made was a maple syrup wine made from blending Ohio maple syrup into their Vignoles wine to create a late harvest, dessert-style wine. Although I had made a dessert style Vignoles wine about 10 years ago I was a little skeptical about combining it with maple syrup because I assumed the taste of the syrup would overwhelm the nose and palate. I was wrong because the winemaker had managed

# ound the World, Part 2

the country from the capital, Managua, to Leon and we could easily validate the claim that Nicaragua is the "land of lakes and volcanoes."

Our very capable guide mentioned that there was only one wine produced commercially in Nicaragua but, when we visited a grocery store and found the label, I realized it was vermouth. I did find, though, Vino de Noni on the shelf, which is supposedly a medicinal wine. Since one person in our group had heard of noni in the U.S., I thought I would try it as my only opportunity to taste an indigenous wine – "hecho en Nicaragua."

From a guide book I found out that noni is a kind of mulberry grown in the Caribbean but it is not very appealing raw or cooked. It is sometimes fed to pigs. But there are many medicinal uses including as a gargle for a sore throat, application to wounds or deep cuts, or to relieve pain and reduce inflammation. A caveat said that there is also a lot of hype about its health qualities. I shared my noni wine with

at 14 percent alcohol. We had quite a bit of fun talking about it especially after the tour conductor translated the bottle's rear label. It supposedly cures high blood pressure, prevents cancer, and "serves as a cure for rejuvenation." No one admitted wanting to be rejuvenated!

## OHIO (2011)

My most recent wine experimentation was to make an unusual wine from maple syrup. Where would I get such an idea? I was invited, along with Larry, who is a fellow winemaker from the Kent area, to serve as consultants to a new winery in northeast Ohio, Auburn Twin Oaks. Our primary purpose was to demonstrate the use of my electric wine filter to the owner and his winemaker and for all of us to determine the impact filtering had on their wines.

We were also asked to taste some of their current wines and suggest how they might be blended to produce different styles. One of the wines they



to create a very sweet Vignoles wine blended with the added complexity of maple syrup flavors.

In short, the winemaker balanced wine, sugar and syrup beautifully to form a delightful dessert wine. I was so impressed that a couple of months later I decided to create my own version using Vidal wine, which I had just made. But my efforts produced a wine that tasted more like a maple syrup-dominated blend than the more balanced blend I was aiming for. But, I bottled it in very small (185 ml) bottles and serve it very cold in place of dessert when family and friends visit.

## CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

I really do not search for unusual wines in my travels; they just seem to happen. I suspect that in cultural reality, none of these wines would be unusual in their regional country settings. They were only unusual to me. To report that there is something strange about these wines would be xenophobic because I would be suggesting that if we don't make

them in the U.S. then something must be wrong with them, which couldn't be further from the truth.

I have been working on this manuscript while living in Mexico for a couple of months. I have been tasting different varieties of well made wines mostly from their premier wine production area of Baja California but I have also tasted some locally produced wines here in the state of Guanajuato, including some that are organic. I have heard that Mexicans produce a cactus wine, which I will search for just because I am curious and would enjoy having another indigenous wine experience. This may also fall under my heading of "unusual."

I recall tasting Retsina wine when living in Greece ten years ago and considering it also quite unusual because of its pine resin nose and taste. I started to enjoy its possibilities particularly with meals that included meat. I am reading a book, "Inventing Wine: A New History of One of the World's Most Ancient Pleasures" by Paul Lukacs (2012) and he talks about Retsina. It has been around for thousands of years because archeologists

have discovered wine residue in Neolithic period Transcaucasian pottery that contains tree resin. It was hypothesized that it may have been used as a preservative and it probably added taste to oxidized wines of the time.

So, Retsina is still an indigenous wine today and it may be considered unusual according to our standards but history and cultural appreciation easily trumps the label of "unusual wine." I'm sure some people visiting north-east Ohio from abroad have found our Concord and Niagara wines unusual even though they have been around here for hundreds of years. Perhaps I should have used the term "different" to describe wines that are not the norm. In any case, they have all been great indigenous wine adventures. ●

## About The Author

Bill Wilen is a wine educator, amateur wine maker and certified wine judge. He can be reached at [wwilen@kent.edu](mailto:wwilen@kent.edu)



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# CHOCOLATE & WINE?

by Michael Schafer, CSW

## TOGETHER!



Ah, who doesn't love chocolate? Wine enhances the flavors of so very many foods, but chocolate and wine together? Do they complement each other? Some chocolate and wine lovers swear that it's one of the best taste sensations on the planet. Others scoff at even the idea of enjoying the two together. If you're willing to explore this culinary realm, the following will be your guide to determining what, if any pairing(s) you'll enjoy this season!

So, what wines pair best with your favorite chocolate dessert? Well, it all depends on you, the chocolate and the wine. The following presumes your use of fine Belgian, Swiss or local fresh chocolate.

The most important factor is, as always, you and your guests. If you like a big Cabernet Sauvignon with milk chocolate then that's the best pairing. It's truly what you enjoy that matters, regardless of what the experts say. With that "rule" in mind, let's explore pairing wines with chocolate.

White chocolate followed by milk chocolate, finishing with dark chocolate, each type pairs best with different types of wine. The wine should be at least as sweet as the chocolate. This is critical. If the dessert is sweeter than the wine the wine will taste flat and bitter. However, many individuals want to drink dry wines with their chocolate, so those options are provided for as well as the preferred dessert wines

As you know, white chocolate is the softest, mildest form of chocolate. It's actually derived from true chocolate. White chocolate lacks the cocoa solids found in milk chocolate and dark chocolate. From a technical perspective it isn't really chocolate, As cocoa butter is the primary ingredient, white chocolate is creamy, mellow and buttery. Sweet Spanish sherries pair well with lighter chocolate. Popular sparkling wines like a Moscato d'Asti or Prosecco from Italy, and champagnes that are demi-sec (much sweeter than brut or extra-dry) can complement white chocolate. The bubbles in the sparkling wines



compliment the buttery taste of white chocolate. Orange Muscats can be fun and a bit unusual to enjoy with light chocolate. Lastly, really sweet Rieslings such as Eisweins (ice wines) add to the chocolate experience. These wine are lighter in style than many sweet wines. As a result, they pair well with light white chocolate.

Milk chocolate is the most popular style of chocolate. It must contain 10 percent chocolate liquor, 3.7 percent milk fats, and 12 percent milk solids. The best wine to drink with milk chocolate is Brachatto d'Aqui' a sweet, slightly sparkling wine from Italy. This sparkling Italian is fruity and highlights the sweetness of the chocolate. If you want to serve a red wine with milk chocolate, choose a lighter, fruitier red instead of a big bold red wine. A fruity Merlot or a bigger style Pinot Noir is best. Tawny ports also pair with milk chocolate, especially if there are nuts in the chocolate, because the nuttiness of the Tawny port compliments the flavor of the nuts. A Hungarian Tokjai is an interesting choice if your budget allows for this rather unusual wine



Dark or bittersweet chocolate is very popular, especially in many desserts. Usually ranging from 35 percent cocoa solids to 75 percent cocoa solids, this is the richest, most intense chocolate available. As these chocolates are less sweet than white chocolate or milk chocolate, a bolder wine is required. Many people choose a Cabernet Sauvignon to drink with dark chocolate but be careful: much tannin can make the wine taste harsh. Try a Cabernet Sauvignon that's softer than the one you would serve with that rib-eye steak. Zinfandel can be a great match with darker chocolates. Port wines are a classic pairing with darker chocolate. From simple ruby ports, to LBVs (late bottled vintage), to vintage ports, these fortified

wines have the structure to enhance the flavors of your desserts. Tawny ports compliment nutty desserts.

Banyuls, a fortified wine from France is *The Wine Counselor's Choice* for pairing with chocolate, particularly dark chocolate. This wine morphs itself to fit the type of chocolate you're enjoying. Try it, you'll be amazed, and so will your guests! ●



## Cheers!

### About The Author

Michael Schafer Esq. is a sommelier and a CSW (Certified Specialist of Wine), based in Michigan. As an instructor at the International Culinary School of the Art Institute of Michigan, he teaches classes in Viticulture & Enology and in Food & Beverage Operations Management.

For more information, visit Michael's blog at [WineCounselor.net](http://WineCounselor.net).



For those of you who attended the wine conference in Oregon's Willamette Valley in 2012, you may have learned that it is expensive to produce the state's flagship variety, Pinot noir. Pinot noir is a naturally low yielding cultivar and can grow quite vigorously at some sites in the valley. Despite low yields, growers commonly remove crop with the intent to further ripen the remaining crop, especially in cooler seasons.

The vineyard floor consists of two primary management areas, including (1) the alleyways, the ground between the vine rows where people and machinery pass, and (2) the area under the vine row. Our vineyard floor management treatments were only implemented in the alleyway and consisted of either tilling to expose bare soil, growing a permanent grass, or a combination of bare soil and grass. The Tilled treatment consisted of tilling the

treatments were also subjected to one of two crop levels. Vines were cluster thinned to one cluster per shoot (about a 40 percent reduction in crop) or were not cluster thinned.

The presence of the turf flanking the vine row in the Grass treatment reduced canopy size, which increased the amount of sunlight reaching the grapes during ripening. The reduction in vine size was due to a lower nitro-

# FLOOR MANAGEMENT

## *How does vineyard floor management and cluster thinning impact the quality of your Pinot?*

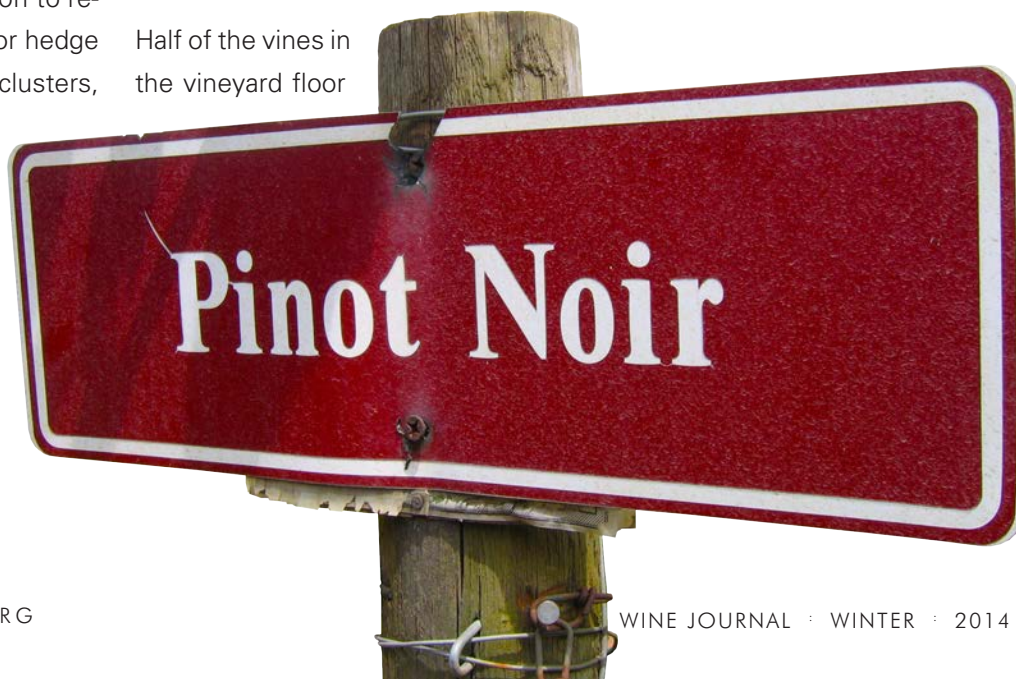
by Alison Reeve

Aside from the expense of manually cluster thinning and the potential loss of income from reducing yields, high expenses associated with managing the dense canopy of vigorous vines also contributes to the costly endeavor of growing quality Pinot noir. Laborers make several passes through the vineyard during the growing season to remove leaves in the fruit zone or hedge the canopy to avoid shading clusters, with the goal of increasing quality. Rather than constantly manipulating big canopies, we wanted to know if we could reduce labor costs and maintain or even enhance fruit quality by using vineyard floor management practices that control vine vegetative growth.

soil in the alleyways on both sides of the vine row to eliminate competition with weeds for water and nutrients. The Grass treatment had a perennial grass turf established in both alleyways. The Alternate treatment had soil tilled in one alleyway while the other had turf established.

Half of the vines in the vineyard floor

gen status of the vine, not reduced water. Nitrogen is one of the most important nutrients that fuels plant growth and development. The reduced nitrogen status of these vines also led to reduced yeast assimilable nitrogen (YANs) in the fruit, which is required for a healthy fermentation.



Furthermore, the Grass treatment led to increases in compounds that enhance wine quality, including tannins. Through cluster thinning, we were able to increase sugars and the anthocyanin content (responsible for the color in red grapes), in both years. Cluster thinning increased the pH from 3.2 to 3.3 in 2012 but had little impact in other years.

Wines were made by harvesting and processing fruit from each treatment separately. The fruit was de-stemmed, inoculated, punched down daily, pressed after primary fermentation was completed, moved to secondary fermenters, inoculated for malolactic fermentation, and then bottled.

Sensory evaluation was conducted using professional and consumer panels after two years of bottle aging.

Sensory evaluation conducted by the professional panel included wine industry professionals who had been in the industry for at least five years. For consumer panels, enlisted individuals had never worked in the wine industry nor had specialized training in wine evaluation, and drank at least one glass of red wine a week.

Three flights of wines were presented to the consumer panel and four to the professional panel. During the first two flights, the panelists were asked to place the wines in groups of high and low quality; one flight was presented in clear glasses while the other was in black wine glasses to mask the color-effect. During the third round of tasting, the panelists were asked to rate how much they liked each wine on a linear scale. The professionals were

then presented each of the wines a fourth time and were asked to evaluate each wine for the intensity of particular aromas and mouthfeel descriptors commonly associated with Pinot noir. Since 2011 was a high yield year and a cool growing season, wines made from vines without cluster thinning had visibly lighter color. We wanted to know if the professionals and consumers were basing their wine quality ratings on color, so wines were presented in both clear and black glasses. Professional panelists did not rate any of the wines to be of higher quality than the rest when presented in black or clear glasses.

However, if we combine their rankings of the wines in the two types of glasses, we found that the wines made from the Tilled treatment where cluster





thinning was performed were considered high quality (largest vines relative to the crop level), and wines from alternate tilled alleyways and were not cluster thinned were considered low quality by our professional panelists. The consumer panel did not find any differences in wine quality among the wines presented. When we asked both panels to rate how much they liked each wine, neither group liked one wine more than the others. The professional panelists were also subject to a descriptive analysis of the wines, but once again, no differences were found based on the aroma descriptors chosen for this study.

Color was more similar among treatments in 2012 wines compared to 2011, but once again, professionals and consumers did not consistently rate any treatment to be of higher quality when presented in black or clear glasses. Both groups of panelists did not like any one treatment over the others in 2012 either. However, the professional panel did find differences in aroma in the 2012 wines. Vines that were thinned to one cluster per shoot in the Grass and Tilled treatments had stronger green aromas and had a more bitter taste. The vines that were Tilled but were not thinned had a stronger jam aroma. The other three wines had more dark fruit, red fruit, floral, spice, butter, and earthy aromas.

Differences were noted in the wine aroma between the 2011 and 2012 vintages. The 2011 vintage was found to have more spicy and buttery aromas, while the 2012 wines had more dark fruit, red fruit, earthy, floral,

and jammy aromas and a more sour and astringent taste.

Interestingly, the cooler 2011 vintage wines exhibited few differences during sensory evaluations conducted by professionals and consumers despite differences in fruit chemistry, wine color, and approximately 50 percent higher yields than 2012. In the warmer 2012 season, the professional panelists were able to determine aroma differences, but thinned vines were considered to have less desirable qualities than those that had not been cluster thinned. Vineyard floor treatments did not seem to show definitive differences in wine quality, although the Tilled vines were considered higher quality by trained panelists in 2011 and had stronger jammy aromas in 2012.

Despite differences in vine size based on vineyard floor management, little differences were evident in wine quality. With no clear trends of the impact of tillage on wine quality, these findings may suggest that the presence of a competitive cover crop could be beneficial for managing the costly problem of high vine vigor without reducing wine quality in the Willamette



Valley. With regards to thinning, professional panelists liked the thinned vines when yields were high (2011), but found less desirable aromas when thinning was performed in a low yield year (2012). This finding, may suggest that cluster thinning does not always improve Pinot noir wine quality.

This work was funded by the Oregon Wine Board and the USDA-ARS/Northwest Center for Small Fruits Research. This work was in collaboration with Stoller Family Estate, Dr. Elizabeth Tomasino, and Dr. Patricia Skinkis' labs at Oregon State University. 🍷

## About The Author

Alison Reeve is studying viticulture as a Ph.D. student under Dr. Skinkis at Oregon State University. She has won the AWSEF Silent Auction Scholarship in 2013 and the Columbus, Ohio AWS Chapter Scholarship in Appreciation of the Strength and Vitality of the Columbus Chapter in 2014. Alison can be reached at [reeveal@onid.orst.edu](mailto:reeveal@onid.orst.edu)

# 21 Wines to Watch

Ellen Landis, CS, CSW

## **Stoller Family Estate | 2010 Cathy's Pinot Noir**

Dundee Hills, Willamette Valley, Oregon

From Stoller's oldest sections of their estate vineyard comes this impressive PN, planted to 80 percent Pommard and 20 percent Dijon 667 clones. Tantalizing forest floor and dark orchard fruit aromas seduce the senses. Cascading onto the palate are lip-smacking layers of black cherry, black raspberry, exotic spices, tangerine, a trace of smokiness and forest floor nuances wrapped around finely grained tannins. Aged in 100 percent new French oak, this immaculately balanced Pinot Noir is intensely flavored and complex in style, finishing long and memorably.

Food pairing: Roasted salmon filet with mushrooms | SRP: \$100  
www.stollerfamilyestate.com

## **L. Mawby | Domaine Leelanau "Leland" Brut Rosé**

Leelanau Peninsula, Michigan

The shimmering rosy pink hue and captivating aromatic of this Methode Champenoise Brut Rosé will really get your juices flowing. Crafted of 60 percent Chardonnay, 30 percent Pinot Noir and 10 percent Vignoles, this dry sparkling wine struts a tiny, consistent bead. Cavorting across the palate are gorgeous yeasty characteristics with fresh pear, pineapple and raspberry fruit amidst spirited citrusy notes. Hints of spice and buttered toast add dimension to the delightful, vivacious finish.

Food pairing: Shrimp tempura | SRP: \$27 | www.lmawby.com

## **Delaplane Cellars | 2013 Barrel Fermented Chardonnay**

Delaplane, Virginia

The brilliant hue is just the beginning of the enjoyment you'll receive imbibing this gem. Take in the mouthwatering aroma and you will be diving straight into the glass. There you'll find minerality linking with crisp apples and creamy pears surrounded by a bright splash of citrus, spicy accents and remarkable purity. Lean and vibrant with elegantly understated oak from its French oak barrel aging, this Chardonnay displays on the mark precision and streamlined acidity with a lingering aftertaste.

Food pairing: Pumpkin ravioli with a sage cream sauce | SRP: \$27  
www.delaplanecellars.com

## **Brengman Brothers | 2012 Crain Hill Vineyards Dry Riesling Reserve**

Leelanau Peninsula, Michigan

From Brengman Brother's southeast facing slope of Crain Hill Vineyards Block 3 comes this pristine, mineral-laden Riesling. At first whiff, the wine is exceptionally expressive, with beguiling wet stone and citrus blossom notes exciting the senses. Fresh white peach, apricot, lime zest, lemon verbena and minerality explode onto the palate in a streamlined fashion with bracing acidity. The flavors continue to captivate through the long, focused finish; a dynamic Riesling.

Food pairing: Tuna carpaccio | SRP: \$21.95 | www.brengmanbrothers.com

## **Black Star Farms Winery | 2012 Arcturos Pinot Blanc**

Old Mission Peninsula, Michigan

Wow, here's a stylish, deeply flavored Pinot Blanc. Tempting aromas of tropical fruit draw you into the glass. Flourishing on the palate are exotic flavors of guava, dragon fruit and fresh cut pineapple with an ample squeeze of lemon, hints of mandarin orange and a trace of herbs wound together with invigorating acidity, balancing the succulent fruit. Finely crafted and structured through the lasting finish.

Food pairing: Grilled prawns | SRP: \$18 | www.blackstarfarms.com

## **Domaine Garnier et Fils | 2012 Chablis Montmains 1er Cru**

Chablis, France

Aged 12 months in 70 percent French oak barrels and 30 percent stainless steel, here is an intense, gorgeously structured Chablis. The compelling floral, citrus aromas promise plenty, and when that first sip flows through your lips you'll fast be a fan. Crisp green apple, lime peel, a sprinkling of herbs and stony minerality interplay with brisk acidity enlivening the palate; irresistible.

Food pairing: Kumamoto oysters | SRP: \$38 | www.chablis-garnier.com

## **Bel Lago Vineyards & Winery | 2012 North Vineyard Reserve Pinot Noir**

Leelanau Peninsula, Michigan

Beautifully perfumed floral aromatics soar from the glass. The wine's skillful balance interweaves dark cherry, fresh raspberry and pomegranate fruit with seductive earthy, dried mushroom notes, Christmas spices, vivid acidity and perfectly integrated oak, leaving your mouth watering and longing for more. Crafted from vineyards planted to a combination of clones including Pommard, Martini and Dijon, this exquisite, masterfully built wine is complex and cellar worthy, and an incredible value, too.

Food pairing: Pork tenderloin en croute | SRP: \$30 | www.bellago.com

## **Laporte Estate | 2013 Sancerre Grandmontains Rosé**

Loire, France

This 100 percent Pinot Noir Rosé offers up inviting stone fruit aromas and a beautiful element of minerality throughout. It is deliciously dry with spice notes accenting red cherry, raspberry and plum flavors that stream across the palate. The balance is precise and the wine is lively with lees aging contributing considerably to the wine's depth. The satin-like texture is heavenly, and the finish pure and elegant.

Food pairing: Caesar salad | SRP: \$24 | www.laporte-sancerre.com

## **Brys Estate Vineyard & Winery | 2011 Signature Red**

Old Mission Peninsula, Michigan

This striking blend of 50 percent Cabernet Franc, 45 percent Merlot and 5 percent Pinot Noir, aged in 50 percent new French oak barrels, is layered and complex. The spicy, dark fruit aroma boldly jumps out of the glass. Blackberry, blueberry and boysenberry fruit interlace in harmony with black licorice, tobacco spice and cocoa notes, creating a multi-faceted kaleidoscope of luscious flavors on the palate. Precisely balanced with firm tannins and impeccable oak management persisting through the radiant finish.

Food pairing: Beef bourguignon | SRP: \$50 | www.brysestate.com

## **Niepoort | 2013 Dócil Loureiro**

Vinho Verde, Portugal

This 100 percent Loureiro (a grape grown widely in Northern Portugal) bursts forth with inviting aromas of fresh white flowers and spice. In the mouth it is bright and pleasingly dry with citrus notes framing green apple, crisp pear and bay leaf herb flavors. On the delicate side, the wine boasts a lovely freshness, and remains lively through the upbeat aftertaste.

Food pairing: Bay scallop ceviche | SRP: \$17 | www.niepoort-vinhos.com

## **RdV Vineyards | 2010 Lost Mountain**

Delaplane, Virginia

A magnificent blend of 64 percent Cabernet Sauvignon and 36 percent Merlot, you may think you are in France when you taste this remarkable jewel. Aerate the wine if you chose to drink it now; or practice patience and lay it down for future enjoyment; it is unquestionably cellar worthy. Cassis and earthy aromas waft from the glass. Black currant, blueberry and wild berry notes meld with graphite and tobacco spice on the palate, all framed by chalky, refined tannins. Complex, intensely structured and immaculately balanced, this wine is extraordinary.

Food pairing: Spice rubbed beef tenderloin | SRP: \$95 | www.rdvineyards.com

## **Chateau Grand Traverse Winery and Vineyards | 2013 Gamay Noir**

Old Mission Peninsula, Michigan

If you yearn for lighter style red wines, don't miss this one! The glorious magenta-purple hue is eye catching. Scents of fragrant rose petals and fresh fruit give you a lift and lead to a broad brush of palate pleasing red cherry, tart cranberry and raspberry flavors with sassy highlights of multi-colored fresh ground peppercorns coating the mouth. This well balanced, fruit forward wine is graceful and winsome with the suggestion of oak ideally placed in the background.

Food pairing: Braised chicken thighs | SRP: \$14 | www.cgtwines.com



**Ponzi Vineyards | 2012 Reserve Chardonnay** | Willamette Valley, Oregon

Here is a charming Dijon clone Chardonnay aged for twelve months in 25 percent new French oak and racked to neutral oak for an additional six months. Floral aromas and sweet oak notes delight the nose. The wine is smooth and seductive on the palate with an inviting leesy quality weaving through layers of McIntosh apple, Asian pear and tangy lemon bar notes. A nice thread of minerality and spirited acidity hold firm throughout.

Food pairing: Roasted garlic chicken | SRP: \$35 | [www.ponziwines.com](http://www.ponziwines.com)

**Left Foot Charley Urban Winery | 2012 Tale Feathers Vineyard Pinot Gris**  
Old Mission Peninsula, Michigan

Here is a wonderfully aromatic Pinot Gris that broadcasts tropical fruit and spice components on the nose and a wonderful silky mouth feel. Showcased on mid palate are juicy flavors of pineapple, Tuscan melon, kiwi fruit and flaky, butter-dotted pastry notes divinely interlacing with fragrant tea spices. The prolonged aftertaste is clean and fresh; delectable.

Food pairing: Crab and avocado cocktail | SRP: \$18 | [www.leftfootcharley.com](http://www.leftfootcharley.com)

**Archery Summit | 2012 Arcus Estate Pinot Noir**  
Dundee Hills, Willamette Valley, Oregon

This stunning wine is sourced from their Arcus Estate Vineyard which is planted to Pommard and Dijon 667 clones. Aged 12 months in 44 percent new French oak, this scrumptious wine offers a graceful, subtle oak impression. Painting a masterpiece on the palate are tiers of black cherry, rhubarb, earthiness, black tea spice and mushroom notes balanced skillfully with lustrous acidity. Complex and full bodied with immaculate tannin and oak management, this Pinot Noir finishes long and is undoubtedly one for the cellar.

Food pairing: Chicken and morels with a savory cream sauce | SRP: \$100  
[www.archerysummit.com](http://www.archerysummit.com)

**Domaine Monthelie | 2011 Douhairet Porcheret Monthelie 1er Cru Le Meix Bataille** | Burgundy, France

Here's a brilliantly hued, flavor packed wine that is complex and artfully balanced. Spice-scented aromas tempt the senses and flavors of red and black cherries, wild mushrooms and a thread of earthiness explode vividly onto the palate like a bursting firecracker. The elegant mouth feel is velvety smooth, and the wine persists at great length with vibrancy and panache.

Food pairing: Mushroom ragout over polenta | SRP: \$57  
[www.domainemontheliedouhairet.com](http://www.domainemontheliedouhairet.com)

**Tongue River Winery | 2013 La Crescent** | Montana

This palate pleasing, semi-sweet La Crescent opens with wild flower and honeysuckle aromas luring you into the glass. Tangy and spicy in the mouth with herbed jicama, fresh orange and tropical fruit flavors unwinding deliciously on mid palate. This bright wine showcases good vitality with a level of sweetness that is noticeable but not at all cloying; nicely made.

Food pairing: Butter lettuce salad with strawberries, mandarin oranges and roasted pecans | SRP: \$15 | [www.tongueriverwinery.com](http://www.tongueriverwinery.com)

**Shady Lane Cellars | 2012 Gewürztraminer** | Leelanau Peninsula, Michigan

Fragrant aromatics of orange blossoms and a dash of allspice blast from the glass leaving no doubt Gewurz awaits. Floral and spice notes continue their parade, accenting colorful, tasty morsels of mandarin orange, lychee, fresh guava and passion fruit on the palate. Here is a classic example of this expressive grape, boasting a smooth texture and plenty of verve with noteworthy acidity from start to invigorating finish.

Food pairing: Tandoori chicken | SRP: \$20.95 | [www.shadylanecellars.com](http://www.shadylanecellars.com)

**Domaine Rion | 2011 Nuits-Saint-Georges 1er Cru Clos des Argillières**  
Burgundy, France

This complex red Burgundy is fascinating on the nose with rich dark cherry and exotic tea spice engaging the senses fully. On the palate, black cherry and black currant flavors entwine with minerality, mushroom and sandalwood nuances. Aging in 50 percent new French oak for 18 months contributes a complementary underpinning of oak. The texture is satin smooth, and the smart balance combined with firm, well integrated tannins suggests it will age gracefully for years.

Food pairing: Lentil stew with roasted beets | SRP: \$85 | [www.patricerion.com](http://www.patricerion.com)

**Naked Mountain Winery | 2013 Chardonnay/Riesling** | Markham, Virginia

This off-dry blend of 66 percent Chard and 34 percent Riesling incorporates a nice level of sweetness into the fruity, well balanced wine. Offering lovely floral tones on the nose, it captures the essence of each variety uniquely, while also displaying how the two mesh harmoniously. Delectable tropical fruits, crisp apples and stone fruit interplay on the palate with minerally notes intermingling all the way through. The wine remains spunky and vibrant to the last tasty drop.

Food pairing: Chickpea salad with harissa roasted squash | SRP: \$22  
[www.nakedmtwinery.com](http://www.nakedmtwinery.com)

**Forty-Five North Vineyard & Winery | NV Peach Cremant**  
Leelanau Peninsula, Michigan

On the sweet side (5.5 percent residual sugar), but even dry wine fanatics find this delightfully effervescent wine irresistible. It is a lively melding of 75 percent of "45 White" wine (a blend of Vidal Blanc, Cayuga White, La Crescent and Riesling) and 25 percent cold-pressed local peach juice. Delicate in body at 9 percent alcohol yet full of sweet-scented floral aromas, citrus accented peaches, ripe nectarines and a bit of spice, sip as an uplifting treat in the afternoon, or a gratifying nightcap in the evening.

Food pairing: Grilled peaches drizzled with raspberry sauce | SRP: \$17  
[www.fortyfivenorth.com](http://www.fortyfivenorth.com)

**CORRECTION**

In the Fall 2014 issue of the Journal the food pairing, price and website address for Josef Leitz were incorrectly listed. The correct information is as follows:

Food pairing: Crab Louie | SRP: \$18 | <http://www.leitz-wein.de/>

## About The Author

Ellen Landis, CS, CSW, a published wine writer, certified sommelier and wine consultant, is involved with many aspects throughout the world of wine. As wine director and sommelier at Landis Shores Oceanfront Inn (Half Moon Bay, CA), which she co-owns with husband and chef Ken Landis, she coordinates and hosts wine events to help further educate wine aficionados. She was also a sommelier at the Ritz-Carlton for four years. Ellen has traveled extensively to many wine regions throughout North America and overseas.

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