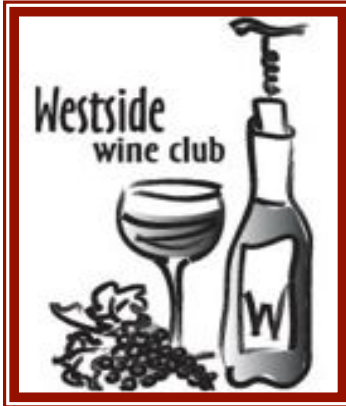


WestSide Wine Club

December 2010

President's Musings



Staying Cool

As I write my slightly late muse, I am enjoying the longer days, which unfortunately have yet to be followed by warmer weather. But May usually heats up more. Either way my thoughts now turn to refrigerating my "wine shack". But I face several issues. One is that since I built mine in the garage, the wine shed is set amongst one of the hottest places in the house. This reminds me that I need to put a vent in the garage and attack to remove hot air. The warm garage is another factor I need to consider as I contemplate where to place the air conditioner and what type to buy. I keep debating between a portable and a regular air conditioner that will push air into the space. While using a portable is tempting since I can easily have it vented to the outside, I am bothered by the fact that whatever air I push out means that warm air is brought in from the garage to replace it. If I use a "wall unit" I can push air out. The problem is that cooling the hot garage air can be quite a load on the air conditioner. So I continue to complete the physics of air conditioning. But I can't wait too long. Before I know it warm weather will be here and warm wine is a bad thing.

The other concern of mine is that I am simply building up too much wine. It is hard to believe that one can have too much wine, but by the middle of summer I will have at least 16 more cases of wine. While much of this is pinot and will age well, this leads me to think about reducing my wine making. I guess this is as good a time to make friends with wine as any. I have noticed that most of the wines are pretty good. I like my pinot and my Viognier is virtually always good. My chardonnay and rose are also looking pretty fine.

I would like to think that my wine making has improved a lot. There are aspect of winemaking I think that have really contributed to my greater success. One is to work with other winemakers and combine ideas. The other more technical aspect is using larger batches, which for me is 15 gallons rather than single carboys. I also use a barrel that I think adds a certain quality to the wines making them fuller and more complex. Some people will insist that this is due to micro-oxygenation, and it might well be. While some people insist it is the reactions that take place where the wine meets the barrel. If you are interested in making wines from barrels Robert Brittan will be presenting at one of the wine seminars coming up. I will try to keep you updated.

So remember to prepare for the warmer weather. Wine does not like a warm summer and can gain unusual flavors if the temperature rises too high. Keep it cool. And start thinking about what wine you would like to make this fall. When bud break occurs we will get an idea of what the season looks like for the Willamette Valley and how badly the freeze burned eastern Washington.

As always, drive safely.

Jon Kahrs

Scheduled Meetings

January 19, 2011

Crush talk

January 22, 2011

Holiday Party/Awards
Gala

February 16, 2011

Red Bordeaux tasting

February 27, 2011

Argyle Winery Tour

March 16, 2011

Speaker: Robert Brittan of
Brittan Vineyards

April 20, 2011

Speaker: Darcy
Pendergrass, winemaker
at Amity Vineyards

May 18, 2011

Speaker

May 29, 2011

Soter Vineyards Tour

June 15, 2011

Other whites / Fruit Wine /
Mead / Sparkling tasting

July 17, 2011

Annual Picnic at Oak Knoll

August 17, 2011

Chardonnay Tasting

September 21, 2011

Other Reds Tasting

October 19, 2011

Pinot Noir tasting

November 16, 2011

Pinot Gris/Viognier tasting

December 7, 2011

Planning, tours, speakers,
events

Drink Responsibly.
Drive Responsibly.

Interesting Information

"Burgundy makes you think of silly things, Bordeaux makes you talk of them and Champagne makes you do them." Jean- Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

"I made a mental note to watch which bottle became empty soonest, sometimes a more telling evaluation system than any other." --- Gerald Asher, On Wine, 1982

The average age of a French oak tree harvested for use in wine barrels is 170 years!

When Mount Vesuvius buried Pompeii in volcanic lava in A.D. 79, it also buried more than 200 wine bars.

"Wine... the intellectual part of the meal." --- Alexandre Dumas, 1873

"A bottle of wine begs to be shared; I have never met a miserly wine lover." --- Clifton Fadiman

"Wine is at the head of all medicines; where wine is lacking, drugs are necessary." - Babylonian Talmud: Baba Bathra

Bessie Braddock, a well-known socialist in England, attended a dinner party at which she was seated next to Winston Churchill who had had quite a bit to drink. She said to him, "Winston, you are drunk!" He replied, "Madame, I may be drunk, but you are ugly, and tomorrow I will be sober."

Without question, the greatest invention in the history of mankind is beer. Oh, I grant you that the wheel was also a fine invention, but the wheel does not go nearly as well with pizza." --- Dave Barry

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 20 at 7:00 p.m. at Oak Knoll

Agenda: Speaker: Darcy Pendergrass, winemaker at Amity Vineyards

Snacks: Bill Marilyn Brown, Thanks

Place: Oak Knoll Winery

WSWC Website: <http://www.westsidewineclub.com/>

Message Board: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Westsidewineclub/>

A few reminders:

- 1.) Please bring a glass for tasting wines. Members, bring a sample of your wine(s) for everyone to taste.
- 2.) For all our protection, all members must sign a waiver every year. You can also pay 2011 dues at this time.
- 3.) Meetings begin at 7pm and end by 9pm. If you can get there a little early to help set up, please do and help to put away chairs and tables at the end.

Note: We will all need to fill out and sign a new waiver for 2011. The waiver form and score sheets can be obtained from our web site (above) under "Current News".

March Meeting Minutes

Twenty-one members were present. Delicious snacks were provided by Terry and Deborah Swan, thanks. Bill & Marilyn Brown will provide the April meeting snacks, thanks.

Welcome new member, **Nina Tonabe**.

Jon opened the meeting by saying that we would have Marcie Pendergas.....details.... as a speaker for our April meeting.

Jon passed around brochures for Bouchard Cooperage. Jon will get pricing info for barrels including small format if available.

It was noted that Oregon bill #444 passed both houses and awaits the Gov's signature. Looks like it will now be legal to take our wine off premises and to enter competitions.

The Soter Vineyards tour is set for sometime in May, no date set yet. Tony Soter will lead the tour. He is a producer of Pinot Noir, Cabernet Franc and sparkling. The price will be the purchase of a bottle of wine.

We are still working on a Columbia River Gorge tour.

Our guest speaker was Robert Brittan of Brittan Winery. He described his background starting in 1969 making his first wine (apple) in the Dorm room at OSU. From there he served as a lab technician at the Grower's Co-op in the Central Valley in California before gaining his degree from UC Davis. He made wine for several prestigious wineries in Napa Valley including Stag's Leap. He tired of making bold reds and wanted a more challenging grape so he moved to McMinnville to make Pinot Noir. He has 22 acres outside of McMinnville where he grows Pinot Noir and some Syrah. He believes in sharing his knowledge and consults regularly. Robert passed along many good tips and answered many questions from members. He recommends "Bouchard Cooperages" and considers "Tonnellerie Billon" barrels to be the standard for Pinot Noir. He also recommends checking out "Barrel Works" in McMinnville for barrels made locally from Oregon, French and Hungarian oak.

He talked about yeast selection. He doesn't recommend relying on native yeast which will require adding more aggressive yeasts in order to finish fermentation. Yeasts that have low Nitrogen needs and low acetic acid production are most reliable. Some whites may require a short skin contact and a little oxygen at pressing to reduce bitterness. Pay attention to pH as opposed to TA. Pre-heat the wine to 70 degrees before malolactic to get the malolactic finished in 30 days or less so sulfite can be added as soon as possible. Get oxygen into reds early in the ferment stage. Be as sanitary and clean as possible.

Robert generously provided the following bottles for us to taste:

Brittan 2007 Pinot Noir Basalt Block

Brittan 2007 Pinot Noir Gestalt Block

Brittan 2008 Pinot Noir Basalt Block

Brittan 2008 Pinot Noir Gestalt Block

Stags' Leap 2002 Merlot, Napa

Stags' Leap 1992 Petite Syrah, Napa

Stags' Leap 2001 Red Blend "Ne Cede Malis", Napa, field blend

There were several member wines also available for tasting.

The following information was submitted by WSWC member Phil Bard.....

CellarTracker

Software for Wine Cellar Management and Wine Reviews

About a year ago I became aware of, and started using, a piece of software for managing my wine cellar (such as it is, with no actual cellar). I figured even though my collection of bottles might be scattered about the various rooms of my house, at least it would be gathered up in one place on my computer. It's called CellarTracker and was written a few years ago by former Microsoft engineer/wine nut Eric LeVine. It has since blossomed into the most successful software of its kind. At its heart, it is a database where you can record information about the bottles in your collection. But it also provides access to comments and reviews made by anyone else using the software. This is because CellarTracker is actually a website, and since its entirely web based, its accessible from anywhere you go and is likewise not prone to loss when your computer gets amnesia. Given that you can record a lot of data if you choose to do so, that is a significant margin of safety. One of the best things about CellarTracker is that it is free. LeVine asks for a voluntary contribution on a yearly basis, which I went to after using the site for awhile. It runs \$36 for regular membership, more for levels with added features. At the basic level you get to see some professional rating numbers, Stephen Tanzer and others, which I find is enough for me. But it's a no hassle situation if you want to keep on using CellarTracker without contribution; the only requirement is that you must create an account with username and password for access to your data. Additionally, there is an iPhone/iPad app for easy access to the website, the app is named Cor.kz. Even though you can log in to CellarTracker with any web browser, the app is faster and is handy for checking on an unknown wine when you are ordering in a restaurant or stumbling bewildered down some wine store aisle. Also free.

The screenshot shows the CellarTracker website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'WINES', 'PEOPLE', 'DISCUSSIONS', and 'ARTICLES'. Below that is a search bar and a 'Wines' dropdown menu. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column, titled 'WELCOME PBARD', contains a table of statistics:

Category	Value	Action
Wine in My Cellar	448	Add Wine to My Cellar
Wine Pending Delivery	6	Accept delivery
Wine Consumed	268	Drink or Remove
Wine Purchased	722	
Total Estimated Value	\$12,652 / Hide	Insure my collection
My Tasting Notes	96	Add a Tasting Note
My Votes	34	
My Comments	0	
My Friends	0	
My Fans	1	
My Wish Lists	0	

Below this table is a 'SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT from Eric LeVine' dated December 29, 2010, with a small profile picture of Eric LeVine. The right column features 'BROWSE WINES' and 'POPULAR WINES' sections. The 'POPULAR WINES' section includes a review for '2008 Argyle Riesling Minus Five' by BELLISSIMO, with a rating of (NR) and an average of 90.3 points. The review text is: 'Sunday, March 06, 2011 - Served as part of a tasting. Honey, citrus rice acids. Not too sticky. Post a Comment / View Bellissimo's profile Do you find this review helpful? Yes - No / Report Issue'.

CellarTracker's web address is <http://www.cellartracker.com> and above is the home page after sign-in. There is a listing of your inventory, valuation, and the tasting notes you have entered for your wines as well as comments you have made on others. At the top are tabs for the various areas of the site, with a blog and section of articles submitted by members. Thousands of them...

cellar BETA **TRACKER** ptard: My Profile Sign Out

search results Wines Search

Wine Reviews & Cellar Management Tools Quick Links ▾ My Saved Searches ▾ Advanced Search

Search Results - Save This Search Print Share Show Side Panel

Narrow Results 775 Wines Summarize By... ▾ 50 / page ▾ page 1 of 16 ▾

Country: **France** × Region: **Southwest France** × Varietal: **Red Bordeaux Blend** ×

Bulk Edit	Year	Name	Variety	Quantity	Drink Dates	Score
	2002	Joel Agostini Côtes-de-Duras	Domaine du Verdier Red Bordeaux Blend France > Southwest France > Côtes-de-Duras	1 bottle		
	2009	Domaine des Allegrets Côtes-de-Duras	Red Bordeaux Blend France > Southwest France > Côtes-de-Duras	1 bottle		
	2006	Domaine des Allegrets Côtes-de-Duras	Red Bordeaux Blend France > Southwest France > Côtes-de-Duras	0 bottles		
	2001	Domaine des Allegrets Côtes-de-Duras	Red Bordeaux Blend France > Southwest France > Côtes-de-Duras	0 bottles		
	2000	Domaine des Allegrets Côtes-de-Duras	Red Bordeaux Blend France > Southwest France > Côtes-de-Duras	1 bottle		
	2000	Château l'Ancien Bergerac Rouge	Red Bordeaux Blend France > Southwest France > Dordogne > Bergerac Rouge	1 bottle		
	2006	Domaine de l'Ancienne Cure Bergerac Rouge	Red Bordeaux Blend France > Southwest France > Dordogne > Bergerac Rouge	4 bottles	2008-2012	100% like it (1 vote) 86 points
	2005	Domaine de l'Ancienne Cure Bergerac Rouge	Red Bordeaux Blend France > Southwest France > Dordogne > Bergerac Rouge	6 bottles	2008-2009	
	2004	Domaine de l'Ancienne Cure Bergerac Rouge	Red Bordeaux Blend France > Southwest France > Dordogne > Bergerac Rouge	1 bottle		
	2002	Domaine de l'Ancienne Cure Bergerac Rouge	Red Bordeaux Blend France > Southwest France > Dordogne > Bergerac Rouge	0 bottles		WD16.5
	1999	Domaine de l'Ancienne Cure Bergerac Rouge	Red Bordeaux Blend	0 bottles		

From the Wine tab you can access the membership's listings by price, country, etc. showing all of the bottles ever recorded, which number in the millions. If you love to browse this type of stuff you can go on forever, for me I find the personal tracking tools to be the most valuable part of this website.



HOME WINES PEOPLE DISCUSSIONS ARTICLES My Wish List My Testing Notes My Cellar

cellar BETA TRACKER My Cellar

Wine Reviews & Cellar Management Tools Quick Links My Saved Searches Advanced Search

my wines my reports Add Wine Drink or Remove Scan Barcodes Print Export Share Show Side Panel

In My Cellar (454 bottles) Show: Wines | Individual Bottles Customize View

Narrow Results Summarize By... 50 / page page 2 of 3

Bulk Edit	Year	Name	Variety	Quantity	Drink Dates	Score
	2008	Domaine Drouhin Oregon	Pinot Noir	2 (750ml)	2010-2030	100% like it (4 votes) 89.4 points IWC91, JG90
	2007	Domaine Drouhin Oregon	Pinot Noir	4 (750ml)	2010-2030	100% like it (7 votes) 88.5 points IWC89, JG92
	2007	Eola Hills	Chardonnay	2 (750ml)	2008-2009	89 points
	2007	Eola Hills	Chardonnay Reserve LaCreole	6 (750ml)	2009-2012	
	2005	Eola Hills	Chardonnay Reserve Wolf Hill	9 (750ml)		
	2007	Eola Hills	Pinot Noir La Creole Reserve	6 (750ml)	2009-2012	Me: 89 90.2 points
	2008	Evening Land Vineyards	Pinot Noir La Source Seven Springs Vineyard	1 (750ml)	2012-2021	I like it (Me: 95) 100% like it (2 votes) 91 points IWC93, GV94
	2007	Evening Land Vineyards	Pinot Noir La Source Seven Springs Vineyard	2 (750ml)	2010-2014	92.3 points 5)
	2008	Eyrrie Vineyards	Pinot Noir Estate Grown	1 (750ml)	2011-2021	90 points IWC93
	2006	Folin Cellars	Tempranillo	1 (750ml)		

Here is the basic personal list, which shows quick overviews of bottle quantities, suggested drink dates, average price paid and a general sense of what the members gave as ratings. You can sort alphabetically, by year or variety and control how many appear on a given page.

Add Wine to My Cellar

STEP 1: **Lookup Wine** STEP 2: **Select Wine** STEP 3: **Enter Details**

Enter a name, variety, vineyard or UPC/EAN barcode to start Search Tips / Help

Wine Lookup

- Cameron Pinot Noir Clos Electrique
- Cameron Chardonnay Blanc Clos Electrique
- Cameron Nebbiolo Clos Electrique
- Cameron Pinot Noir Tawny's Cuvée Clos Electrique

[Learn more](#)

Wines on the planet, info yourself. [Learn](#)

[close](#)

To enter a new wine you just click Add Wine and type in a bit of the name, CellarTracker looks up any wines that match and displays them pronto for you to select amongst.


Add Wine to My Cellar

STEP 1 **Lookup Wine** STEP 2 **Select Wine** STEP 3 **Enter Details**

Enter a name, variety, vineyard or UPC/EAN barcode to start Search Tips / Help

Group search results by: Wine Name Variety Vineyard Vintage

Important Note on Cameron Hughes: [Read more](#) about this wine's search results and why it might be displayed differently than other wines you'll find on CellarTracker BETA.

Name, Type, Locale	Year
 Cameron Pinot Noir Clos Electrique (View Label Image) Red, USA, Oregon, Willamette Valley	<input type="checkbox"/> 1998 <input type="checkbox"/> 2000 <input type="checkbox"/> 1999 <input type="checkbox"/> 2001
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2002 <input type="checkbox"/> 1996 <input type="checkbox"/> 2003 <input type="checkbox"/> 1993
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1997 <input type="checkbox"/> 2004 <input type="checkbox"/> 2005 <input type="checkbox"/> 2006
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2007 <input type="checkbox"/> 2008
	<small>Only show 8 recent vintages New Vintage / Create a New Wine</small>

At this point you can even look at any label photos that have been uploaded to confirm that you are selecting the right wine.

Once you reach the entry layout there are fields for recording when and where you bought, price and whether or not you received the bottles or are awaiting delivery.

Add Wine to My Cellar

STEP 1 **Lookup Wine** STEP 2 **Select Wine** STEP 3 **Enter Details**

Bulk Wine Edit **Individual Wine Edit** [help](#)

Enter details for all of the wines you are adding to your cellar:

* **Status of all wines** (help) In My Cellar Pending Delivery (Awaiting Shipment)

Wine Details (help)	#	Size	Location	Bin	Cost/Bottle	Calculator: <input type="checkbox"/> Turn on
2008 Cameron Pinot Noir Clos Electrique	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="750ml"/>	<input type="text" value="Cellar"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="37.00"/>	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>

Copy (help) Add a Location

Bottle Note (help):

Store Purchased From (help): Add a Store


Purchase Date (help):

Delivery Date (help):

Purchase Note (help):

 * Indicates required fields

Selected Wines (1)

 2008 Cameron Pinot Noir Clos Electrique

#

Details not completed

After saving, you return to the detail area for that particular vintage.

This is where you would return in the future if you need to record bottles as consumed or otherwise edit any information.

The screenshot shows the CellarTracker website interface. At the top left is the 'cellar TRACKER' logo with 'BETA' underneath. To the right is 'My Cellar' in a script font. Further right are navigation links: 'Wines', a search box, and 'Search'. Below this are 'Quick Links', 'My Saved Searches', and 'Advanced Search'. The main content area features a wine label for 'WillaKenzie Estate Pinot Noir' on the left. To its right is the wine's title and details: '2007 WillaKenzie Estate Pinot Noir Terres Basses', 'PINOT NOIR', 'USA > Oregon > Willamette Valley', 'My Value: (Add My Value)', 'Community Average Value: \$41.14', 'Auction price: Free signup for the Wine Market Journal', and 'Drink between: 2012 - 2020 (Add My Dates)'. Below these are dropdown menus for 'Other Vintages (7)' and 'From This Producer'. On the right side, there's a 'Where to Buy' section, a 'How Many Like It?' section with 'I like it' and 'I don't like it' buttons, and a 'My Cellar' section with a table of bottle counts: All Bottles (9), In My Cellar (7), Pending Delivery (0), Consumed (2), and Purchased (9). Below that are sections for 'Add to My Cellar', 'Tasting Notes' (5 total, 1 My, 4 Community), 'My Wish List' (0), 'My Private Notes' (0), and 'Community Holdings' (68 Inventory, 59). The 'Tasting Notes' section is expanded to show a user's note: 'I WROTE: (Edit) 93 Points', dated Saturday, June 19, 2010, with a detailed review. Below it are 'COMMUNITY TASTING NOTES (4)' with an 'Avg Score: 88 Points' and a 'XUAEINW WROTE: 90 Points' note from Friday, December 03, 2010.

The layout lists reviews from both yourself and any others in the community, and also shows total bottles purchased, held and consumed. There is even access to a feature that allows you to record the specific location in your cellar (in my case: bathroom, bedroom, car trunk), or, egads, print out barcodes. I suppose this makes it quicker for folks who rip through 6 or 8 bottles an evening to update the listings, not to mention avoid the embarrassment of drunken typo's in your data files...

So there you have it. Software for all of us wine crazies. Go get it and update yerself. And post some tasting notes for the rest of us to read and ponder what condition you might have been in when you wrote them, for chrissakes. Just don't try to go for the comment record. That is currently held (as it has been for some time) by one Richard Jennings, a headhunter from the Silicon Valley. His last tasting note was yesterday. And there were 2 the day before that. It was his 2,334th note in the last 6 months.

Grand total for this guy: 20,717

Happy Trails,
Phil Bard
3/6/2011



Grape & Region

GEWÜRZTRAMINER (Guh-vertz-tra-mean-ER)—France/Germany—Alsace

Wine Characteristics: Gewürz means spicy in German. Traminer is the original name of the grape that produces this flamboyantly aromatic, full-bodied, spicy white wine of low-acidity. It is usually made sweet, but is quite good dry. In California, winemakers tend to vinify Gewürztraminer as a lighter-bodied, slightly sweet wine, apparently for fear their customers will object to its strong flavors when made dry. Like Muscat, this wine is strong on flavors including spice, bacon, banana, and floral elements. Gewürztraminer is also described with other exotic, complex aromas, such as roses, lychee fruit, allspice, as well as peaches, and tropical fruit such as grapefruit. Some love it and some hate it. Aging is sometimes troubled by low acidity.

Grape Profile: Gewürztraminer is a pink-skinned, small-clustered grape variety that sets a modest crop and ripens fully in propitious, cool-climate conditions, producing heady, alcoholic, dry table wines, at least in Alsace. It also makes marvelous, late-harvest dessert wines there. Gewürztraminer has had limited commercial success in the U.S., but has more in New Zealand.

Alsace Region of France

Alsace is a wine region in the far northeast of France, which stands out from other French wine-producing areas due to its Franco-Germanic character. This character, the result of the region switching between German and French sovereignty several times in the past few centuries, is clear not only in Alsatian architecture and culture, but also in the wines produced there.

The *Alsace* region lies between the *Vosges* mountain range to the west and the French border with Germany to the east, marked by the *Rhine* River. It covers an area 115 miles long and 25 miles wide. The key viticultural areas here are all located on the lower hillsides of the *Vosges*, on slopes with east and southeasterly aspects. The spine of mountains is at its most dense in the southern half of Alsace, where it peaks at over 4,600ft. The *Vosges'* presence plays a vital role in defining the region's terroir; not only do they provide protection from the prevailing westerly winds but they also cast a rain shadow over the area, contributing to the low rainfall of its continental climate. The glacial formation of the mountains has also led to significant variation within the region's soils. These vary from sandstone, granite and volcanic rock types in the foothills, to clay-rich limestone and marlstone on the alluvial plains below.

Alsace is the only French wine region to grow significant quantities of Riesling and Gewurztraminer, a pointer to the region's history as a territory of Germany. Pinot Gris, a variety marginalized in other French regions as a blending component, is another of the region's emerging specialties. Sylvaner and Muscat are also traditional Alsace grape varieties, as are Chasselas and Auxerrois. The latter pair is most often used in *Edelzwicker* blends, another nod towards Alsace's German heritage.

Alsace's wine is produced under three key appellations - *Alsace* and *Alsace Grand Cru* for still white wines and *Cremant d'Alsace* for sparkling wines. Almost all wine produced in this region fits into one of these three designations.

Ninety percent of *Alsace* wine is white varietal wine, made from the varieties stated above. The key variation in style between these wines is their residual sugar levels, which cover the entire sweetness spectrum from bone dry to sweet. In 1983 the official terms *Vendanges Tardives* and *Selection de Grains Nobles* were introduced to define and categorize sweet Alsace wines. They remained unique to the region for some time, but are now used in other French appellations.

Pinot Noir is also used to make dry red wines in Alsace, lighter and more rustic than those made in Burgundy, 140 miles to the southwest. As a result of climate change, the warmer summers here have led to an emerging style of slightly richer Pinot Noir, often subject to oak ageing for added complexity and structure.

Alsace Grand Cru is the appellation for the finest of the still white wines from the Alsace region in North-Eastern France. There are now fifty-one Grand Cru vineyards in Alsace, dotted along the lower slopes of the *Vosges* Mountains. *Rangen* in the south is separated from *Steinklotz* in the north by an almost unbroken 60-mile belt of vines. It is a source of pride in the villages that have a Grand Cru in their parish, and often a Grand Cru vineyard site will have a large sign mounted on its slopes, proudly stating its name.

The terroir variation between the Grand Cru sites is as clear in the soils as it is in the wines bearing their names. Where the steep slopes of *Rangen* are famous for their volcanic formation and the rich, full-flavored wines they produce, the much gentler slopes of *Steinklotz* are rich in limestone, and produce a more delicate style of wine with higher acidity.

The denomination *Grand Cru* does not hold quite the same value in Alsace as it does in Burgundy. This is not always the result of any perceived inferiority in the terroir (although many have questioned the breadth which the *Grand Cru* title is applied), or the wines themselves. It stems from the fact that Alsace simply has not been developed as a wine-producing center with the same intensity as its southern cousin, and its history has been more disrupted by war and politics.

An Alsace Grand Cru wine is, almost without exception, produced from a single grape variety. This will be stated on the label, as will the name of the vineyard from which the grapes came. The varieties permitted for use under the appellation laws are Riesling, Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris and Muscat.

The **Clos Vineyards of Alsace** are of equal importance in Alsace's wine history as Grand Cru sites. While the majority of prestigious wines of Alsace are sold under the title Alsace Grand Cru (introduced only as recently as 1983) Alsace was producing respected wines for many centuries before that. The region's monks, noblemen and other keen vine-growers over the years, established an intricate knowledge of the finest vineyard sites and each site was given a name to distinguish it from lesser sites. A wall, for security's sake, surrounded some of these sites. The name for an enclosed vineyard in French is **Clos**, a cognate of the modern English words 'close' and 'enclosed'. Thus, the names of the region's most historic vineyards often begin with *Clos*. Not all of Alsace's finest vineyards were *Clos* sites by any means, and (confusingly) not all of those that were called *Clos* actually

had walls around them -the word became associated with vineyards of high quality, rather than those which were specifically enclosed by walls. Those that did have walls retained a mystical reputation throughout the centuries, as though the presence of the wall somehow benefitted the vines within.

Most of these prestigious vineyards were, and still are vineyards in the ownership of a single family for decades. A gifted winemaker-vigneron team can produce good wine from sites not recognized as a 'cru' at any level.

Today, in honor of the history associated with a *Clos* name, some families choose to use only that *Clos* name on bottles, and not the Grand Cru name they may be entitled to. A prime example of this is Domaine Trimbach's Clos Saint-Hune, in the very heart of the Rosacker Grand Cru. The wine from this site, one of Trimbach's finest, is sold under the plain *Alsace* appellation, rather than the *Alsace Grand Cru Rosacker* title to which it has a claim.

Some of Alsace's *Clos* vineyards are within Grand Cru sites. Some are painfully close to them, though. Domaine Weinbach's Clos des Capucins, for example, sits right at the foot of the steep Schlossberg slopes, only a stone's throw from the Grand Cru's lower boundaries. The prestige of the *Clos des Capucins* name (a reference to the Capucin monks who built the *Clos* in 1612) is sufficient to allow wines from this site to sell for as much as, and more, than wines bearing the *Schlossberg Grand Cru* name. Domaine Zind-Humbrecht owns a trio of *Clos* vineyards in a similar situation ([Hauserer](#), [Jebsal](#) and [Windsbuhl](#)), but seems equally unaffected by the absence of a Grand Cru title. Such is the power of the *Clos* Vineyards of Alsace.

Marc d'Alsace (Brandy) is the appellation covering the eau-de-vie from the Alsace wine region of north-eastern France, specifically those produced from grape marc (pomace). The spirits must be made from *marc* produced from grapes grown within the Alsace region as defined in the *Alsace* appellation laws. This area covers about one hundred and twenty communes in the region, from *Thann* in the south to *Marlenheim*, 60 miles away to the north.

AOC status has been granted to these products only in the past couple of years, and uniquely for those produced from Gewurztraminer marc. The appellation is now one of thirty appellations for French Eaux-de-Vie, other examples of which include Marc de Bourgogne and Marc de Champagne.

Marc is grape pomace; the residual skins and seeds left behind after pressing. *Marc d'Alsace* must be distilled only from this dry residue, absent of grape juice (Italian *grappa* is made in a very similar way). Because only dry skins and pips are used to make these spirits, the resulting product has less of a fruity character than an eau-de-vie distilled from wine, and is reliant more on mouth feel than flavor to show its qualities. On the other hand, Gewurztraminer retains more flavors in its marc than most other grapes, which is precisely why the AOC covers only the eaux-de-vie produced from this aromatic variety.



Scientist discovers way to pre-score Bordeaux 2011 vintage



A French scientist has determined a way to evaluate the quality of the next Bordeaux vintage—vintage 2011, that is.

Jacques Meganote, a researcher at INRA in Bordeaux, has collected samples from the tendrils the vines in the region have shot out already this year. Using a complex blend of mass spectrometry, DNA analysis, carbon dating, and weather history, he is able to forecast the quality of the vintage that has yet to be harvested—in fact, the vintage that has yet to grow a grape. The program is called “Bordeaux shoots and scores.”

“We are certain to 99% level that our forecast is accurate,” Meganote said. “We have been collecting it privately for five years now and this is the first time we have released the data.”

After two vintages widely praised, the Bordeaux wine trade will doubtless like his forecast for Bordeaux 2011.

“The concentration in the berries will be superb. This looks like a vintage that possesses both power and elegance. It will be a vintage of the century. Truly, a 99 point vintage.”

The next step in the program will be to pre-score individual wines.

(This notice published 1 April 2011)



West Side Wine Club Leadership Team – 2010

President: **Jon Kahrs** jekahrs@aol.com

- Set agenda for the year
- Establish leadership team
- Assure that objectives for the year are met
- Set up and run meetings

Treasurer: **Bill Spiller** nrac@msn.com

- Collect dues and fees, update membership list with secretary
- Pay bills

Secretary: **Ken and Barb Stinger** kbstinger@frontier.com

- Communicate regularly about club activities and issues
- Monthly newsletter on first Wednesday
- Prepare meeting agenda
- Keep updated list of members, nametags and other data
- Club message board invitations

Chair of Education: **Craig Bush** pnoir1@frontier.com

- Arrange speakers for our meetings

Chair for Tastings: **Craig Bush** pnoir1@frontier.com

- Conduct club tastings
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

Chair of Winery Tours: **Mike Smolak** SmolakM@DimensionResources.com

- Select wineries to visit
- Arrange tours
- Cover logistics (food and money)
- Winery Tour 1
- Winery Tour 2

Web Content Editor: **Rick Kipper** kips@lycos.com

Webmaster: **David Ladd**

Chair of Group Purchases **Sammy Nachimuthu** murugasamy_nachimuthu@yahoo.com

The chairperson makes the arrangements to purchase, collect, and distribute.

- Chandler Reach Vineyard – **Sammy Nachimuthu** murugasamy_nachimuthu@yahoo.com
- Del Rio Vineyard – **Craig Bush** pnoir1@frontier.com
- Supplies – These should be passed to the President for distribution

Chair of Competitions: **Miriam Schnepf** mowtnwmn@mac.com

- Work with Washington County Fair staff
- Encourage club participation in County Fair
- President will be the contact for the Oregon State Fair

Chairs for Social Events: **Barbara Stinger and Sammy Nachimuthu**

- Awards Gala / Holliday party