



#### Scheduled Meetings

**January 12th?, 2019**

Annual Gala – At Dennis & Marlene Grants new tasting room at Parrett Mountain Cellars.

**January 17, 2018** Crush Talk / Planning

**February 21, 2018**  
Bordeaux Tasting

**March 21, 2018**  
Best practices; member demonstrations of tips & tricks.

**April 18, 2018**  
Barrel / Carboy Sample Tasting

**April, 2018**  
Tour:

**May 16, 2018**  
Speaker: Blair & Arabella Trathan, shea winemaker & Trathen Hall wines.

**June, 20, 2018**  
Speaker:

**July, 14 2018**  
Annual Picnic at the home of Craig & Mindy Bush.

**August 15, 2018**  
All Whites Tasting

**September 19, 2018**  
Other Reds Tasting

**October 17, 2018**  
Pinot Noir Tasting

**November 2018**  
No Meeting

**December 5, 2018**  
Planning, Tours, Speakers, Events, Elections



I recently acquired a new 30 gallon French Oak barrel, and as is pretty common for barrels that have been stored since they were coopered, it leaked after I filled it. However, I was expecting it, and the leak only showed up as I was making my initial fill with water to rehydrate the wood. So, I thought it was worth a comment to those who are relatively new to the use of barrels for aging, or for anyone who has stored a barrel dry between fills and isn't sure about the process of rehydration. First of all and obviously, wood shrinks when it dries out and swells when wet. Just because a piece of wood looks dry it probably has some moisture inside. Woodworkers pay a lot of attention to moisture content in the lumber they purchase, the content has to be just right so shrinkage or swelling doesn't occur causing cracks or seams in their finished pieces. Same with a barrel, when it is ready to leave the cooperage the moisture content is at an ideal level and the barrel is tested for leaks at that time. But even if you get it soon thereafter you should rehydrate to insure against leakage. Here is how I do it.

First I usually pour a few gallons inside the barrel and roll it to start hydrating the interior. Next stand the barrel on one end and pour warm water on the upside head until it flows over the end hoop. This will start swelling the head and the end grain of the staves will absorb water to help seal the croze. I also hose off the entire exterior to wet the staves, and repeat this a few times over the whole process. After 20 min or so, invert the barrel and do the other head. Now fill the barrel and let it sit until the exterior dries off so you can see if its leaking. If you are using tap water that has chlorine add a teaspoon or two of sulfite to guard against TCA formation. If you bung the barrel while you are waiting make sure you pull it from time to time as negative pressure inside can develop and hide a leak. If it dries off and is leak free you are ready to use it, but I usually keep water inside for a few hours as added insurance. If you have leaks don't fret, just let it sit with the water inside until it swells enough to seal, sometimes this can take overnight or even a couple days if the barrel is really dry. Keep wetting down the exterior and this will help. I've never had a barrel that failed to seal using this process. One more thing, if you add wine that is just out of malo or is cold, use a fermentation lock instead of a bung for a couple weeks until it warms up and gasses off a bit. Otherwise you can force a leak due to the pressure that will build inside. Good luck!

Phil

## Misc. Information

### • Wine Excise Taxes Cut as House and Senate Pass Tax Reform Legislation

The U.S. Senate joined the House of Representatives in passing sweeping legislation to rewrite the tax code in December, which includes a significant reduction in the excise taxes wineries pay based on every gallon they produce. The Craft Beverage Modernization and Tax Reform Act provides a \$1 credit per gallon for the first 30,000 gallons produced; \$0.90 for the next 100,000 gallons; and then \$0.53.5 for up to 750,000 gallons. Additionally, the legislation allows wines with up to 16 percent alcohol to be taxed at the lower rate that previously applied to wines with less than 14 percent alcohol. Wineries producing wine that's 14.5 percent alcohol are going to pay \$1.07 per gallon instead of \$1.57. Wineries will receive a maximum tax credit of \$451,700 annually under the bill. "This ranks right up there with all the work done over the years on direct-to-consumer shipping. "Wineries are going to be very, very happy..."

• **Oregon has the second most wineries in the nation**, with 774, an 8.5 percent increase over a year ago. Washington state counted 772 wineries, about 3.3 percent more than a year ago.

• **Cabernet Sauvignon** is still #2 behind Chardonnay in U.S. wine sales, but it is gaining rapidly. According to Allied Grape Growers, 37.4% of the young vines sold by California nurseries in 2017 were Cabernet Sauvignon, followed by 19.5% Pinot Noir and 16.7% Chardonnay.

• **Bill Stoller**, the founder and owner of Stoller Family Estate, announced he has taken full ownership of Chehalem Winery, a 20,000 case brand that's one of Oregon's most iconic and innovative wineries..

**Note: The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, February 21st at 7:00 PM at Oak knoll Winery. February agenda: Blind tasting & judging of member produced Bordeaux varietals & Bordeaux blends.**

**Bordeaux varietals are Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Malbec, Carmenere or any blend thereof. If you haven't already, be sure to renew your club membership and sign a new waiver.**

**The regular meeting will be a potluck, bring a small snack to share.**

**Also bring a wine glass for tasting.**

**The club meeting will begin at 7 pm and end by 9 pm. If you can, get there a little early to help set up. Please help put away chairs and tables at the end of the meeting.**

**Website: <http://portlandwinemakersclub.com/>**

### January meeting minutes (Present: 25)

- Phil & Barb Thomson talked about our successful Gala. We had 37 attendees. Thanks to the committee and everyone who helped put it together.
- We have one visitor, Tom Molsan.
- Alice would like any interesting wine related photos for inclusion on the web page. Her e-mail is [alice@alicedesigns.org](mailto:alice@alicedesigns.org)
- Paul Boyechko will deliver competition wines to Steinbarts for the up coming Newport Seafood & Wine Festival (see winners below).
- We discussed other competitions members have entered in the past; Oregon & Washington State Fairs, American Wine Society, etc.
- Mike Smolak suggested [onlinelabels.com](http://onlinelabels.com) for a wide range of label materials for printing with ink jet and laser printers.
  - Damon Lopez will look into buying some engraved corkscrews as gifts to speakers and tour guides etc. Barb Thomson will look into custom apparel, T-shirts etc.
  - After some discussion the membership decided we need to adjust our dues system. The fee will remain at \$15 up through October. New members after that will also pay \$15 but it will carry them through the next year.
- It was decided that our March flex meeting will be "Best Practices". Member demonstrations of tips and tricks.
- Speaker ideas: Phil will try to arrange to have the winemaker for Shea Vineyards, Blair Trathen. Barb Stinger is trying to contact Peter Rosback to describe early club activities & his early wine making ventures. Also Larry Stone, owner- winemaker for new start up Linqua Franka Winery.
- Possible tours are Ruby Vineyards (Bill Beran's old place). Need fresh ideas.
- The picnic will be held on Saturday July 14<sup>th</sup> at the home of Craig & Mindy Bush in Aloha.
- Next years Gala will be held at Dennis & Marlene Grants new tasting room at their new Parrett Mountain Cellars.
- Bob Hatt is again in charge of our grape purchase program and will be contacting you for April commitments.
- Bridget Lopez will look into starting a Facebook page for the club.
- 2018 is the Portland Winemakers Clubs 50th year of continuous operation.



**PWC members brought home 9 medals from the Newport Seafood & Wine Festival this year. Congratulations on a wine well done! The winners are:**

Kenneth Stinger	2016 Pinot Noir - Pommard	Gold
Robert Hatt	Malbec	Gold
Marilyn Brown	Pinot Noir	Silver
Robert Hatt	Pinot Noir	Silver
Barbara Stinger	2016 Zinfandel	Bronze
Bill Brown	Pinot Noir - Pommard	Bronze
Douglas Schenk	Pinot Noir	Bronze
Robert Hatt	Sangiovese	Bronze
Paul Boyechko	Pinot Noir	Bronze

Total Entries - 58 Gold - 12 Silver- 14 Bronze - 15 No medal - 17

# 2018 Gala Photographs





# Winemaker Trials

## High Crop Load Pinot Noir: Madness or Money?

When a Willamette Valley winemaker realized that the 2015 perfect bloom combined with perfect weather and produced double the crop load of his Pinot Noir, he wondered if it would be worth harvesting the entire crop instead of conventionally dropping half to ensure quality.

Michael S. Lasky

Winery: Provincial Vineyards

Winemaker: Neil Frederickson

**Trial Objective:** To determine if 3 tons per acre and 5 tons per acre crop loads can produce equally acceptable wines. To determine if favorable complexity in a wine can be increased by blending from different crop loads, thus enabling higher vineyard yields.

**Summary:** The Willamette Valley 2014 and 2015 growing seasons combined record degree-day units with a 2015 perfect bloom, providing an excellent opportunity to experiment with the local rule-of-thumb of 2 tons per acre for premium Pinot Noir wine. Hoping to add the caveat “weather-dependent” to the rule, this rare opportunity was seized. Fruit was dropped to form two crop loads of 3 tons per acre and 5 tons per acre from alternating rows in the same clonal blocks in the same vineyard. Harvest occurred at the same pH, Brix and TA ripeness parameters for each crop load. Winemaking protocols were kept the same from crush to bottling.

Two barrels of wine were made from each crop load. All four barrels were of the same history and were neutral or near-neutral (fourth fill). Cross-flow filtration was used. Bottling was performed on Feb. 17, 2017. Phenolics progression was tracked by ETS Laboratories: Rapid Phenolics testing at crush, post-fermentation, 12-month maturation and post-filtering. The two lots were blended 50/50 at bottling to produce a crop-load blend. A small amount was retained as pure 3 tons per acre and pure 5 tons per acre for demonstration purposes. Five cases of small-crop 2015 Estate Pinot Noir, five cases of large-crop 2015 Estate Pinot Noir, and 85 cases of Cuvée Duo 2015 Estate Pinot Noir were produced.

ANALYSIS NAME	LOT 1	LOT 2	UNITS
phenolic profile (HPLC) : resveratrol (cis+trans) (HPLC)	0.3	0.5	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : monomeric anthocyanins	70	99	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : total anthocyanins	79	105	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : polymeric anthocyanins	9	6	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : malvidin glucoside	59	85	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : quercetin	3	2	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : quercetin glycosides	7	3	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : caffeic acid	3	3	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : caftaric acid	19	18	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : tannin	249	203	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : epicatechin	19	33	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : catechin	30	50	mg/L
phenolic profile (HPLC) : gallic acid	12	19	mg/L

**Conclusion:** Different crop loads of the same clonal mix and ripeness parameters produce a different wine. Although they are brothers, in a subjective evaluation they are not the same and would rank differently in a wine competition. At this point in the experiment, it is felt that the 3 tons per acre lot would subjectively rank as a better wine. This result is to-date and may change as the wine ages. Blending different crop load lots adds favorable complexity to a wine and could be used to increase vineyard yield/revenue. Harvest date determination cannot be determined by pH, Brix and TA alone.

### Winemaker's Postmortem

#### What led to this trial?

Three events in a row led to creating this trial. In 2015, we had 7 tons hanging on the vines, and I was looking at dropping that down to the usual 2.5 to 3 tons per acre. That was extremely unusual. I've been doing this for 14 years. That's the first year we've had a heavy crop load like that.

The second thing that happened was I was selling 3 tons of my grapes to another winery. In their contract, they wanted a 2- or 2.5-ton crop load. They wanted fruit dropped to that level. Given what we had, I said to them, “You know, I can ripen a heck of a lot more than two-and-a-half tons per acre. I could do 5 tons per acre.” He said, “Oh, no, no. Heavens, no. I want it

per our contract. No more than 3 tons per acre.” I tried to talk him out of that, but he insisted on it and he’s the customer, so that’s fine. Around the same time, I attended a seminar at which a speaker from ETS Laboratories talked about phenolics. He said, “I can’t recommend doing 5 tons per acre. That’s out-of-bounds. The rule of thumb here in this part of Oregon, if you’re doing a premium Pinot Noir, you want maybe 2 to 3 tons per acre at most to make a premium Pinot Noir.”

I still was curious at the possibility of bringing in the larger load. To satisfy my customer and to also see what a larger crop load could do, my goal was to produce two wines. I dropped the fruit per my customer’s specifications but then dropped fruit for my trial’s mission.

### **How was the trial conducted?**

My goal was to produce two wines, one of 3 tons per acre and one of 5 tons per acre, and have all the parameters the same. All the winemaking protocols were the same, the barrels the same, the numbers—Brix, pH and TA—that they’re picked at the same. Come harvest time, of course, the 3-ton crop load ripened to those particular numbers first. I harvested those. I crushed them and started putting them through the winemaking protocol. The 5-ton crop load didn’t ripen to those numbers until 10 days later.

When they did get to those numbers, I harvested them and then put them through crush and into the winemaking protocol. The winemaking protocol was kept identical. The wine barrels were the same, down to the same cooperage and same year of purchase. They were in their fourth fill. They should have been pretty neutral or pretty close to neutral. Then, at different points during the maturation period, right after primary fermentation and the bottling and a couple points in between, I took measurements through ETS Labs on the phenolics, the pH and TA and so on.

### **From the results of the trial, what did you learn and how will that affect your future wine blending?**

I learned you cannot judge optimum ripeness by Brix, pH and TA alone. When I started this experiment, I thought I could even though I’d heard noise that you can’t. You know, you’ve got to look at the tannins and all that.

The second thing I learned was that the two crop loads made two different wines. You could call them brothers, but they were different, both in aroma, flavor and color. Everybody thought that but me. I took my two barrels of each crop load, and I blended them together, except for a few cases of the 3-ton and a few cases of the 5-ton that I bottled separately. I wanted them for demonstration purposes, but the commercial product I was going to sell would be the blended version called Cuvée Duo 2015 Estate Pinot Noir.

At bottling time, I did a tannin analysis, as well as phenolics. This produces a radar plot. Then it’s sort of like peeling off another cover of what’s going on with the wine. I found out two things: One is the catechin was different between the two, with the catechin being higher on the 5-ton. The quercetin, which is a flavonoid, was higher in the 3-ton.

The quercetin comes from a compound synthesized for protecting the grape from ultraviolet radiation, sort of like the sunscreen, to keep it from sun burning. The more light exposure it gets, the more quercetin you get in the skin. That’s a super cool factor for pigmentation. But catechin also gives your wine bitterness. They’re primarily seed tannins. What keeps those in control is get a coating on the seed over time while it’s ripening. That’s what people refer to as seed ripening. It’s that coating on it. That kind of locks in the catechin.

The 5-ton lot was indeed too thin, just as I was told it might be. And it had a touch of extra bitterness and lower color on its own and when compared to the smaller load lot. I learned that you need sunlight on the grape clusters— more sunlight— more quercetin, in other words.

We had huge clusters on the 5-ton lot, and I dropped very little fruit. There’s a lot of cluster-on-cluster shading. That would explain the quercetin levels being lower on the 5-ton lot than the 3-ton lot. Heat is also required to coat the seed. At 5 tons per acre, you have more of the same thing. You have cluster - on- cluster shading, which makes the clusters cooler and could lead to no seed coating.

### **Knowing all this, how will you move forward with next year’s crop?**

Here are the rules for dropping fruit that I’ve used in the past: dropped fruit, the laggards that look like they’re going to be ripening too late, may color up, but they may not have the riper compounds in them. You keep dropping the wings and the ones that are severely lagging. You also drop fruit to break up multiple clusters of fruit because you want air and spray to get through into all the grapes. These were the two guidelines we were using for dropping grapes.

This coming year I’m doing it completely different. I’m dropping for sunshine. When I drop, it’s to get maximum sunshine on the clusters. I’m also removing the cluster-on-cluster shading, which causes lower heat in the cluster. I’m going to have all these clusters spread out so that each one of them gets at least partially exposed to direct sunlight.



# 2018 WineMaker International Amateur WINE COMPETITION

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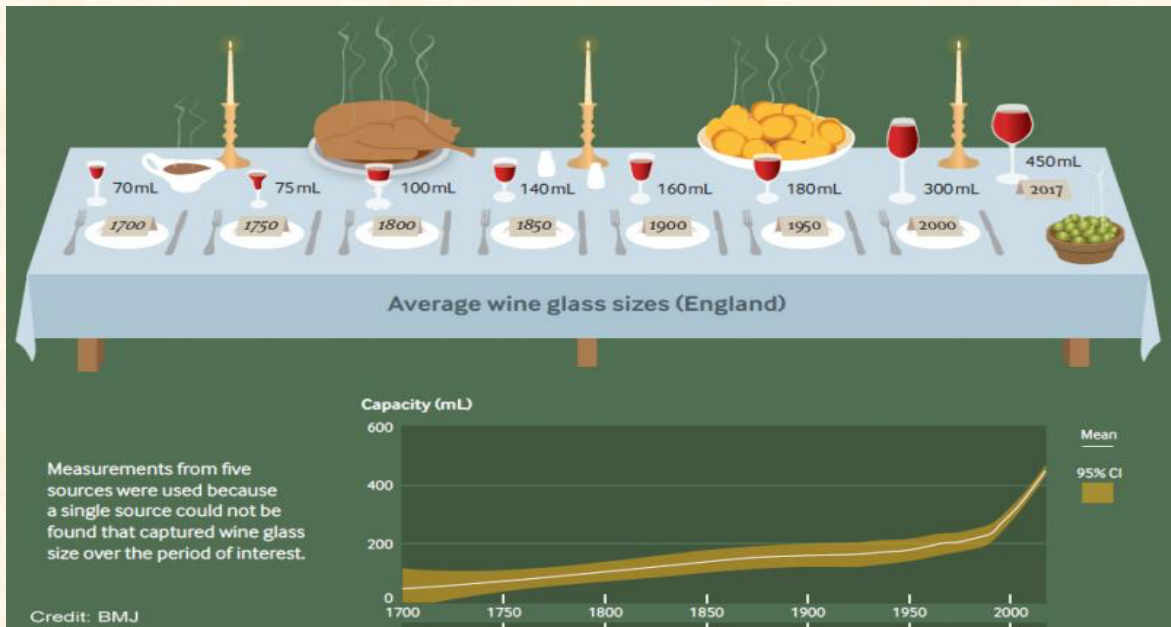


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Our Georgian and Victorian ancestors probably celebrated with more modest wine consumption than we do today – if the sizes of their wine glasses are anything to go by. Researchers at the University of Cambridge have found that the capacity of wine glasses has increased seven-fold over the past 300 years, and most steeply in the last two decades as wine consumption rose.



# Winemakers Turn to MIT to Save Pinot Noir in Warming Climate

Posted Jan. 23, 2018

(Submitted by Jan Betz & Mike Smolak)

By Elin McCoy

- **Winemaker enlists biochemical engineer to aid in making pinot noir**
- **If global temperatures rise, Oregon could get too hot to grow certain varieties**

In a basement teaching laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, biochemical engineer Jean-Francois Hamel has dug deep into the science of wine to help untangle the mystery of terroir for future-focused Oregon winery Chapter 24 Vineyards LLC.

What's under his microscope isn't dirt but yeast, the crucial fermentation element in the winemaking process. Yeast is also part of the collection of bugs, fungi, and other microorganisms in a vineyard or winery that researchers call a wine's microbiome, a term certain to become the new vino buzzword, much as it has with human health. Hamel, a Frenchman who first came to teach at MIT in the 1980s, often puts the lab to work on research projects to improve the quality of human life, as with an effort that produced biofuels and was sponsored partly by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado.

Three years ago, Chapter 24's founder, Hollywood film producer Mark Tarlov, and its famed Burgundian winemaker, Louis Michel Liger-Belair, enlisted Hamel to help figure out whether wild yeasts in their vineyards could help them make lighter, more elegant, and complex wines—even in the face of warming temperatures.

Vintners know all too well that famously finicky, temperature-sensitive pinot grapes can change with the subtlest shifts in soil, weather, and climate. Too hot, and you get wines with higher alcohol, jammy flavors, and too little acidity. Too cold, and grapes don't get ripe. Pinot needs average growing-season temperatures ranging from 57 to 61 degrees Fahrenheit, a very narrow range. If, as predicted, global temperatures shoot up two degrees in a couple of decades, some regions, including Oregon, could get too hot for cool-weather-loving pinot.

Since Chapter 24's overarching goal is to produce oh-so-seductive pinot noirs with unique personalities, this is a pretty key concern. But since the wine's microbiome also has a huge effect on how a wine tastes, it could be used to safeguard against the effects of potential climate change.

The result of Hamel's research is now in the bottle/ in the winery's first single-vineyard pinots, which can be ordered starting Feb. 1. Brilliant, complex, and succulent, they're among the best, most arresting Oregon pinot noirs in the past few years. Even at \$120 and up a bottle, they're worth the price.

## How Wine Microbiome Works

It all starts with soil—and undervalued yeast.

When you're savoring the aromas and flavors in a wine, you inevitably focus on grape variety. Pinot, for example, doesn't taste like cabernet sauvignon. Its appeal is bright, spicy fruit-and-earth flavors, as well as sexy, silky texture.

The soil on which vines are planted—the limestone in Burgundy, for example—also affects quality and flavors. Ditto altitude and microclimate, the tiny differences in temperature and rainfall.

But there's much more to it.

"A large percentage of the aroma and flavor compounds in wine come from the yeasts converting sugar to alcohol," Hamel explained.

Most wine lovers know that yeast is the change agent that gobbles up sugar in ripe grapes during fermentation, converts it to alcohol, and voila, wine. Without these tiny, single-celled fungi you'd be stuck, sadly, with mere grape juice.

Equally as important is their contribution to the biosynthesis of the chemicals that make up flavor and aroma.

## Power of Natural Yeasts

Luckily, there are a lot of yeasts out there. Grapes come into the winery with thousands of ambient wild yeast particles clinging to their skins (plus bacteria and other microbes), which interact with one another. Many wineries, however, inoculate the grapes in the tank with powerful commercial yeasts, which kill off the wild yeasts, and then standardize fermentation.

Roughly put, the more varied yeast strains you foster during fermentation, the more complex aromas and flavors end up in the wine. Some boost floral notes; others, mineral ones.

Which is why more and more high-end producers such as Chapter 24, which want the characteristics of their native yeast species reflected in their wine, farm vineyards organically and eschew irrigation to allow more strains to flourish.

In 2015, Hamel started by taking a yeast census of 29 of Chapter 24's vineyard sites. Just before harvest, they picked ripe



grapes from each one and sent one-pound bags of each to a wine lab in Napa, Calif. Technicians there did mini-fermentations in plastic bioreactors, tracking the groups of yeast and how they interacted.

Each vineyard site turned out to have its own mix of wild yeasts (with some overlap), bringing a new and deeper meaning to the idea of terroir—that elusive sense of place that a fine wine can present in the glass.

## Yeast Mix

The primary type of yeast for winemaking is *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, which normally produces high levels of alcohol but grows more slowly when oxygen is increased during fermentation and when mixed with non-*Saccharomyces cerevisiae* yeasts, according to Hamel.

Weaker non-*Saccharomyces* types also add hundreds of different flavors and aromas and produce less alcohol, but need oxygen to thrive.

The idea to change the fermentation environment and get those non-*Saccharomyces* yeasts to live longer in order to reduce alcohol (and add flavor diversity), is driven by climate change, Hamel said. Weather that's too hot changes the character of the grapes and boosts their sugar content, which translates after fermentation into higher alcohol and lower acidity—making wine taste dull and flat, which threatens the spicy, silky pinot style wine lovers prize.

Using hand-sprayed aerobic pump-overs (a traditional method of pumping red wine from the bottom of the tank and splashing it over grapes) at the beginning of fermentation whooshes in additional oxygen, allowing subtler yeasts to survive longer. When you stop aerating, the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* take over. For the 2016 vintage, Chapter 24 tried making very vigorous pump overs.

The result in 2016 was pinots that had the same alcohol as those from the previous vintage, even though the weather during the 2016 growing season was much hotter.

## Climate Connection

Temperatures are rising, even in cool, green Oregon. Embracing a wider variety of yeasts and adapting fermentation methods, as Chapter 24 Vineyards did, is a way to naturally keep a wine's alcohol lower—without resorting to chemical ways of removing it—while keeping the pinot style.

Now Chapter 24's winemaking is about to get even more fine-tuned: Hamel is interested in looking into exactly how much oxygen is ideal during fermentation and how to make adding it more precise so as to have more control over the wine's eventual alcohol level. That's not all. Understanding a wine's microbiome will mean tracking more closely the bacteria and other microbes in the soil of each vineyard. The quality of the soil has a huge impact on the yeasts in the vineyard, as well as the quality of the grapes.

Tarlov and Liger-Belair, who now own more than 100 acres of vines with mostly volcanic soils, are already homing in on the top spots that make highly complex pinots, with the help of famous soil scientist Pedro Parra and electromagnetic mapping. For Tarlov, all this is like making a movie: Taking geology/ climate change, yeast and other microbes, putting it all together, making final cuts, and waiting for the reviews to come in.



# The Taste of Bordeaux Wine its Characteristics and Styles



Bordeaux remains the world's most popular wine for many reasons, starting with the unique taste, character and style found in Bordeaux wine. There are many reasons why Bordeaux remains popular, but it all starts with the taste of Bordeaux wine.

What does Bordeaux wine taste like?

Keep in mind, close to 7,500 different producers make almost 10,000 different Bordeaux wines, so there is no simple explanation as to the taste of Bordeaux wine. However, the taste of Bordeaux wine can be broken

down to young Bordeaux wine, older Bordeaux wine, Bordeaux blends dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon, Bordeaux blends dominated by Merlot, dry white Bordeaux wine and sweet, Bordeaux wine.

The Bordeaux region is massive with more than 120,000 hectares of vines divided into 60 different appellations. For the purpose of this article on the taste of Bordeaux wine, we are going to look at red Bordeaux wine from The Left Bank, where Cabernet Sauvignon is the key grape, red Bordeaux wine from The Right Bank, where Merlot is the most important component, Pessac Leognon, which is the home of the best dry white Bordeaux wines as well as several of the best red wines in the world and Sauternes, which produces what many connoisseurs claim is the best sweet, white wines in the world.

Red Bordeaux wine from the Medoc is probably what most people think of, when talking about the taste of Bordeaux wine. All Bordeaux wine from the Medoc and Pessac Leognan are blends. Most of those blends utilize Cabernet Sauvignon for the majority of the blend, followed by Merlot, Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc and Malbec. On occasion, you occasionally find very small amounts of Carmenerie in the blend as well. In their youth, Bordeaux wines are often deep in color, ranging from dark ruby to almost black. The taste of Bordeaux wine from the Left Bank delivers fruit scents and flavors of cassis, blackberry, dark cherry, vanilla, black cherry, coffee bean, spice and licorice. The wines are often concentrated, powerful, firm and tannic. Depending on the specific wine, it can appear to be austere in character in its youth.

An easy way to look at wine is, the components consist of fruit, acids, tannins and sugar. When you think of a balanced wine, the term balance refers to the balance between those three elements, acid fruit, sweetness and tannins. Today, the trend is to pick riper fruit in Bordeaux because the chateaux are looking to create wines that feel soft, silky and elegant, when possible.

You often read about wines being tannic. Tannin is present in all wines. For some consumers not used to the taste of young Bordeaux wine, the tannins can feel dry in the mouth or cause a puckering sensation. The comments you often hear are, that the wines are too tannic. That is not necessarily correct. It is not only the amount of tannin present in the wine that count, it is the degree of ripeness found in the tannins that effect the tasting experience. Ripe tannins will not feel dry, tough or hard. They will feel silky and elegant on your palate. Tannins are complex polymers that join with other molecules.

Tannins or tannic acid add structure and backbone to the wine. This allows the wines to age and develop additional layers of complexity. Tannins enter into the wine from the seeds, skins and if used, the stems of the grapes. The tannins from the seeds, stems and skins are each different. Tannins from skin are the softest, followed, by the seeds and stems, which are the harshest. The reason growers search for phenolically ripe fruit is in the hope they can derive ripe tannins from the skins, seeds and from time to time the stems. Ripe tannins are smoother, silkier and do not necessarily the feeling of dryness or mouth puckering. The dry sensation is caused when the tannins latch on to the proteins found in your saliva, reducing the amount of lubrication normally present in your mouth. Wine also derives tannin from the oak barrels the wine is aged in. If you want to experience unripe tannins to help you understand how they impact your palate, make a cup of strong, black tea and allow it to steep for an extremely long time. The tannins will feel unpleasant and dry. On the other hand, ripe, tannins will feel elegant, smooth and silky, perhaps coupled with only a minor drying sensation.

Tannin management is paramount in wine making today. If the vintage allows for phenolic maturity, you have a very happy wine maker. As that is usually not the case, the wine maker has various tool at their disposal during the extraction process to determine the level and style of tannins in the wine. The length of time during the cold maceration process, the temperature of the fermentation process, the choice of punch downs or pump overs, microoxygenation, the process of injecting oxygen into the wine for its softening effect, the type of aging vessel and length of aging time and of course, sorting and selection.

The taste of Bordeaux wine also takes acidity into consideration. Acidity is more noticeable in the taste of Bordeaux wine dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon. This is due to the levels of ripeness found in the fruit. Cabernet Sauvignon is naturally more acidic, lower in pH and has less sugar than Merlot. Acidity in a wine is paramount. Acidity makes the wine feel fresh, refreshing and alive on your palate. Too much acidity and the wine will feel sharp, tangy and will often taste more of tart red fruits, than darker berries.

Without alcohol, you are drinking fruit juice. Alcohol is created during the fermentation process when the grape sugars and yeast are fermenting. The level of alcohol is determined by the degree of sugar present that needs to be fermented, until the wine is dry, meaning the fermentation process is completed. However, there is always going to be some sugar remaining. The degree of sugar retained is determined by the wine maker and the natural fermentation process. For red wines, on average, they contain between 1 gram per liter and 2 grams per liter of residual sugar.

In Bordeaux, alcohol levels vary depending on the vintage and grape variety. Cool years will produce wines with lower alcohol levels. Hot vintages will create wines with higher degrees of alcohol. Cabernet Sauvignon dominated wines from the Left Bank will be lower in alcohol than the Merlot dominated wines of Pomerol and St. Emilion.

The taste of Bordeaux from the Left Bank changes as the wine matures in the bottle. With time, the initial primary fruit driven scents and flavors fade and are replaced by secondary or tertiary flavors and aromas. These secondary aromas, also known as the bouquet offer intriguing notes of tobacco leaf, truffle, cigar box, smoke, tar, leather, spices, wet earth, forest floor or leafy aromas. With more time, the darker fruits you initially sensed morph into dark cherry flavors. The texture of the wine as it ages changes as well. The initial tannic, or stern character softens. Mature Bordeaux wine becomes more elegant, silky and at its best, can feel like velvet on your palate.

Even though Bordeaux wines are produced to be enjoyed earlier in life these days, all the top Left Bank wines are better as they age. The amount of time required to age each wine varies from estate to estate and from vintage to vintage. In a lighter, early drinking year, the wines can be enjoyed on release or with only a few years in the bottle. However, the top wines of the Left Bank in the best vintages are often much better with 10 to 20 years in the bottle. Or in the case of the First Growths, depending on the character of the vintage, perhaps it could take 30 or more years of bottle age for the wines to reach maturity. This is not to say that you need to age all Bordeaux wines for that long. You might even prefer the taste of Bordeaux when the wines are in their youth. Many people do. But with time and experience in tasting older wines, a lot of consumers develop an appreciation for the taste of mature Bordeaux wine after the secondary characteristics are truly developed.

The taste of Bordeaux wine from Pomerol and Saint Emilion changes with time, as does the texture. With maturity, the wines evolve in a positive fashion with additional levels of complexity coming into the tasting experience. The wines develop enhanced aromas of truffle, spice and flowers, along with fresh herbs. Some wines develop hints of tobacco, mint and earthy, forest characteristics. The textures, even though they were soft in their youth, develop silky, velvety textures in your mouth. The wines from Pomerol and Saint Emilion are among the world's most hedonistic wines because of their sensuous textures and mouth feeling.

Aging Bordeaux wine is a matter of personal taste. Due to the fleshy, softer tasting Merlot grape, most Right Bank Bordeaux wines are enjoyable in its youth. However, the best Right Bank wines are clearly more complex with bottle age.

How much time each wine needs to age depends on the producer, the vintage and the taster. Keep in mind, there is more to Right Bank Bordeaux wine than Pomerol and Saint Emilion. One of the great things about Bordeaux is the numerous, smaller, satellite appellations located throughout the region. The smaller satellite appellations located adjacent to St. Emilion and Pomerol are also dominated by Merlot in their blends and the vast majority of those smaller wines provide pleasure in their youth.

The taste of dry white Bordeaux wine delivers a cornucopia of flavors and characteristics that include fresh lemon, citrus rind, flowers, spice, honey, orange, lime, grapefruit, butter and vanilla. You can also find elements of herbs, lemon wax and fresh cut grass. White Bordeaux wines at their best are rich, deep, concentrated and powerful. They can be fresh, display minerality and are often quite refreshing. When white Bordeaux wines age, they develop more complicated scents of honey, flowers, citrus, spice and stone characteristics. While dry white Bordeaux wine is produced in several appellations, the top dry, white Bordeaux wine comes from Pessac Leognan. The grapes most often used for the production of white Bordeaux wine are Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon and Sauvignon Gris.

The taste of sweet, white Bordeaux is pure nectar to fans of this style of wine. Produced from grapes attacked by Noble Rot also known as Botrytis, these fascinating wines begin life with a potpourri of flavors and smells dominated by ripe and over ripe tropical fruits, pineapple, peach, nectarine, apricot, lemon and oranges drenched in honey. Accompanying those initial fruit sensations, you find grilled nuts, vanilla, spice and scents of fresh cut flowers. At their best, Sauternes and Barsac wines are rich, sensuous, sweet and braced by acidity. The acidity allows the wines to feel fresh, honeyed and intense. The texture of sweet, Bordeaux wine is plush, round and opulent. At their best, they are rich, deep, full bodied, sweet, intense and



complex.

Out of all the wines of Bordeaux, Sauternes enjoys the widest drinking window. The wines are delicious when young with their intoxicating blend of sweet tropical fruits, honey and refreshing acidity in their profile. As they age, sweet Bordeaux wine becomes darker in hue, turning from golden yellow to orange, copper and even caramel in color. In their youth, the wines are more focused on ripe yellow fruits, apricots and honey. With time in the bottle, the wines shed their initial tropical fruit flavors and begin to add scents of caramel, butterscotch, honey, spice and nut characteristics and even chocolate. The textures are often lush and viscous. In the best vintages of Chateau d'Yquem, which is unanimously recognized by wine lovers all the world as the best wine from Sauternes, with time, notes of chocolate covered oranges, cocoa and crème brulee emerge. Depending on the chateaux and the vintage, Sauternes can age for decades. In the case of Chateau d'Yquem, the top vintages can evolve for more than 100 years! Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon and Muscadelle are the grapes used in the production of sweet, Bordeaux wine.



Meanwhile, at today's meeting on  
feline healthcare...



**I'm so  
thankful I  
had a  
childhood  
before  
technology  
took over.**

# Portland Winemakers Club

## Leadership Team - 2018

President: **Phil Bard** [phil@philbard.com](mailto:phil@philbard.com)

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

Treasurer: **Barb Thomson** [bt.grapevine@frontier.com](mailto:bt.grapevine@frontier.com)

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

Secretary: **Ken Stinger** [kbstinger@frontier.com](mailto:kbstinger@frontier.com)

- Communicate regularly about club activities and issues
- Monthly newsletter
- Keep updated list of members, name tags and other data

Chair of Education: **Barb Stinger** [kbstinger@frontier.com](mailto:kbstinger@frontier.com)

- Arrange speakers for our meetings

Chair for Tastings: **Bill Brown & Barb Stinger** [bbgoldieguy@gmail.com](mailto:bbgoldieguy@gmail.com)

- Conduct club tastings [kbstinger@frontier.com](mailto:kbstinger@frontier.com)
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

Chair of Winery/Vineyard Tours: **Damon Lopez** [dlopez5011@yahoo.com](mailto:dlopez5011@yahoo.com)

- Select wineries, vineyards etc. to visit
- Arrange tours
- Cover logistics (food and money)

Chair of Group Purchases: **Bob Hatt** [bobhatt2000@yahoo.com](mailto:bobhatt2000@yahoo.com)

- Makes the arrangements to purchase, collect, and distribute
- Grape purchases
- Supplies – These should be passed to the President for distribution

Chair of Competitions: **Paul Boyechko** [labmanpaul@hotmail.com](mailto:labmanpaul@hotmail.com)

- Encourage club participation in all amateur competitions available. Make information known through Newsletter, e-mail and Facebook.

Chairs for Social Events : **Marilyn Brown & Alice Bonham** [brown.marilynjean@gmail.com](mailto:brown.marilynjean@gmail.com)

- Gala / Picnic / parties [alice@alicedesigns.org](mailto:alice@alicedesigns.org)

Web Design Editor: **Alice Bonham** [alice@alicedesigns.org](mailto:alice@alicedesigns.org)