

West Side Wine Club

March 2014

Monthly Rant



Scheduled Meetings

January 11, 2014

Annual Gala – Archer Winery

January 15, 2014

Crush Talk / Planning

February 19, 2014

Bordeaux Tasting

March 19, 2014

Speaker: Andrew Beckham; amphora winemaking

April 16, 2014

2013 Barrel / Carboy Sample Tasting

May 14, 2014

Tour

May 21, 2014

Speaker: Rob Landsness; the sommelier's prospective

June 18, 2014

"Best Practices of Amateur Winemakers"

July 12 or 13, 2014

Annual Picnic

July 19 or 20, 2014

Tour

August 20, 2014

All Whites Tasting

September 17, 2014

Other Reds Tasting

October 15, 2014

Pinot Noir Tasting

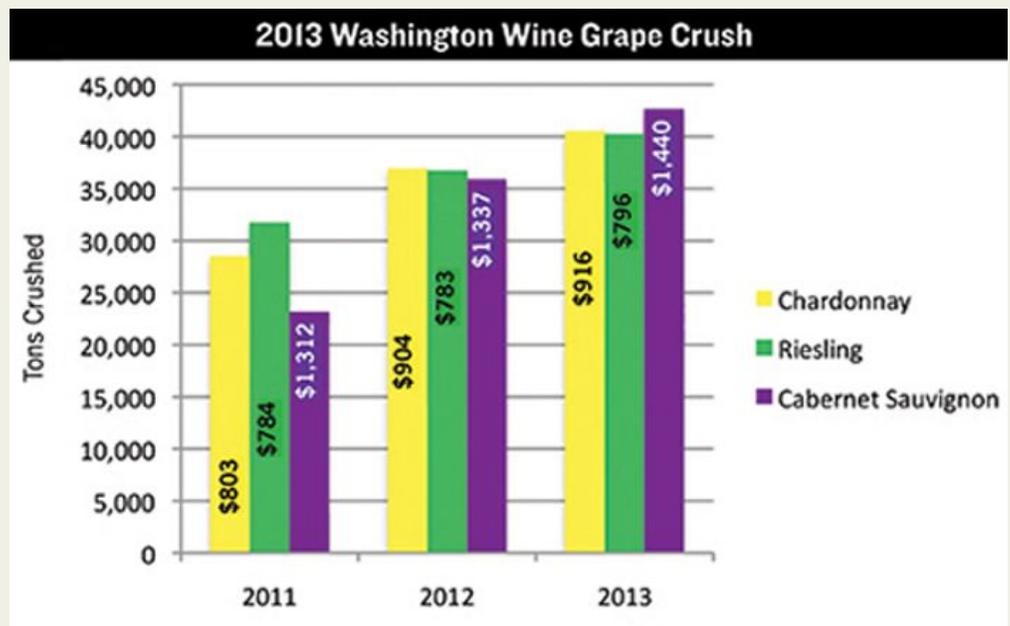
November

No Meeting

December 3, 2014

Planning, Tours, Speakers, Events, Elections

The numbers are in on last year's harvest in Washington state and it was once again a record haul. Interestingly, Cabernet Sauvignon surpassed both Chardonnay and Riesling for the first time to become Washington's most widely harvested varietal. The 2013 Cab tonnage was up almost 19%, with an increase of 6700 tons. Taken together with Syrah and Merlot, these 5 grapes accounted for 83% of the state's harvest. Seems as though California is not the only place in the west where Cab is king. And it will only go higher as recent large purchases of land in the Walla Walla area will have significant acreage assigned to Cabernet.



We are finally getting some needed rain here in Oregon, much, I'm sure, to the envy of our grape growing neighbors in California. The weather is increasingly THE news these days, With extremes popping up all over the US as well as the world. An El Nino is forecast for later this year, it should bring some temporary relief to a drought stricken west, but what will happen when that is over? I recently read that one agricultural organization is calling on Oregon state legislators to begin serious consideration for construction of a pipeline from the lower Columbia River to California, located east of the Cascades for relative ease of building. Although we have our own water shortages to contend with, we do rely on California for a majority of our produce and prices will only go higher in a continuing drought, if produce is available to us at all. Part of the reasoning is also the fact that the majority of the Columbia River water flows unfettered into the Pacific. Obviously, though, this is a complex problem with no easy solution. Whatever happens, if water becomes the next oil, we will have a front row seat. Interesting times... Phil

Information & Trivia

• In September, Champagne Dom Perignon unveiled their new collaboration with artist Jeff Koons: a bottle of 2003 DP Rosé enclosed in a pink plastic "Balloon Venus." According to a press release, the unusual packaging (which looks more like a balloon poodle) was "inspired by the Venus of Willendorf, a tiny Paleolithic figure . . . dated to around 23,000 BC," and represents "a modern-day goddess of love who embraces her beholder in reflective curves." And the asking pricing for this limited-edition erotic bauble? Around \$20,000. Now what was it P.T. Barnum said?

• "I don't want to make wheelbarrows full of rhinestones anymore. I just want to make a handful of gems." — Richard Arrowood, owner and winemaker at Amapola Creek, Sonoma Calif., who made wines for 47 harvests for very large wineries, now 2,500 cases a year at Amapola Creek.

• SATAN, SATAN! It's the main mega-furnace! She's losin' power and the temperature is dropping fast! I'm not sure if I can hold her! - Scotty in Hell

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 19 at 7:00 p.m. at Oak Knoll Winery. Our speaker will be Andrew Beckham introduced by member Rob Landsness. See the Forbes article on page 3 about Andrew & his wife Annedria and their winemaking and amphorae endeavor. Rob will be seeking out several examples of amphora wines from around the world for this tasting.

- 1.) Snacks: This will be another potluck; bring a small snack to share.
- 2.) Waivers will be present at the meeting. If you have not previously signed a waiver please do so at the meeting. You may also pay your 2014 dues if you have not already done so.
 - Bring a glass for tasting member wines.
- 3.) The meeting will begin at 7pm and end by 9pm. If you can get there a little early to help set up, please help to put away chairs and tables at the end.

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

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

February Meeting Minutes

Members Present = 19

- Thanks go out to Paul and Irina Boyechko for opening their house to us for our February meeting. A good time was had by all.
- Phil Bard re-introduced new member Rob Landsness who is a Sommelier and will be our speaker for the May meeting. Rob briefly explained what the meeting might be about.
- Treasurer Barb Thomson sent an e-mail saying we has about \$1700 in checking.
- Bill Brown discussed possible tours for April &/or May.
- Mike Smolak discussed possible speakers for the May meeting. He will contact Bob Switzer of Seven Bridges Winery.

Ted Johnson & Phil Bard conducted a blind tasting of member Bordeaux blends and Bordeaux grape wines.

The results are listed below in the order tasted.

Wine #	Name	Varietal	Gold	Silver	Bronze	None	Total Score	Medal Score	Medal	Rank	Total people voting	
1	Paul Boyechko	Cab. Franc 2012	4	12	1		37	2.18	Silver	4	17	
2	Matt Krill	Malbec 2011	1	7	9		26	1.53	Silver	7		POINT SCORING
3	Robert Lunifeld	Merlot/Cab./Cab. Franc 2007			9	8	9	0.53	Bronze	10		Each Gold vote=3 pts
4	Hooson/Hoffard	Malbec/Merlot/Cab. 2010		11	6		28	1.65	Silver	5	Each Silver vote=2 pts	
5	Ted Brunner	Merlot/Cab. 2010			8	9	8	0.47	None	11	Each Bronze vote=1 pt	
6	Matt Krill	Bordeaux Blend (all) 2011		6	10	1	22	1.29	Bronze	9		
7	Hooson/Hoffard	Cab./Merlot/Malbec 2011	1	5	11		24	1.41	Bronze	8	MEDAL SCORING	
8	Scott Nelson	Cab./Merlot/Malbec 2011	10	3	3	1	39	2.29	Silver	3	2.5 or greater gets Gold	
9	Phil Bard	Cab./Merlot/Cab. Franc 2012	12	5			46	2.71	Gold	1	1.5 to 2.49 gets Silver	
10	Ken Stinger	Cab./Merlot/Malbec 2012		11	6		28	1.65	Silver	5	0.5 to 1.49 gets Bronze	
11	Scott Nelson	Cab. Sauvignon 2009	10	4	3		41	2.41	Silver	2	Less than 0.5 gets None	

Coming Soon To A Wine Near You: Ancient Amphorae

Terra cotta amphorae, hand-crafted into shapes and styles known since antiquity, are the latest innovation in experimental winemaking. And they're coming soon to a wine near you.

Andrew Beckham is the unlikely yet ideally-suited leader of the movement in the US. He is a high school ceramics teacher who first bought land in Oregon's Chehalem Mountains AVA for its timber and suitability as an art studio.

"This has been a really magical journey for us," Beckham said from the tasting room at Beckham Estate Vineyard in Sherwood. "Everything has happened by circumstance. I hated high school; never in a million years would I have thought I'd be a teacher. We bought the property to build a pottery studio; never in a million years would I have thought we'd plant vines. It's all been incredibly fortuitous."

Beckham was inspired by a small number of craftspeople around the world who make wine using the terra cotta medium, such as Elisabetta Foradori at her biodynamic winery near Trentino, Italy and the long tradition of winemaking in beeswax-lined amphorae in the Republic of Georgia. An established fine artist of ceramics in his own right, Beckham expanded his repertoire to include 75-gallon amphorae, which he makes in six-inch lifts using a technique called coil and throw. Each amphora takes two weeks to construct and three months to dry.

But how do wines fermented in terra cotta amphorae taste any different than wines fermented in stainless steel or oak barrels? And is the labor-intensive process worth the effort? The wines seem to come together much sooner in the process than they do in steel or oak. There is also noticeably more earthiness and minerality. Which makes sense, given the nature of the material: the wine is actually being put into an earthen vessel for fermentation.

The original intent for the amphorae was to sell them at retail, and Beckham had lined up about 40 tentative orders from wineries in Oregon, Washington and California, several of whom wanted multiple containers priced at \$2500 to \$3000 each. But the more he thought about it, the more he realized he really wanted to own the project right now. "They're my containers, I'm making them," he said. "I want to be the one using them."

I want to make sure someone doesn't make a really terrible wine with my name on the vessel. For the immediate term, we want to explore what the amphorae have to offer."

The problem was that there was no business plan, Beckham admitted, and "no real endgame. I was just passionate about it. It's my wife Annedria who's been the driving force. She's the one who appropriates funds and keeps reality lingering.

"The Beckhams' business is growing as a result of experimentation and quick adjustments. Chad Stock of Minimum Wines, a nearby colleague, is experimenting with different varietals using Beckham's amphorae that have been fired at different temperatures. Companion fermentations are also underway, where the same wine is made in concrete and terra cotta containers in order to compare the differences. Beckham plans to bury some amphora in the ground, following a strategy practiced in Italy: the idea is to keep the ground wet so that the wine doesn't follow its tendency to weep through the vessel. It's an ongoing process of trial and error.

That sense of experimentation characterizes the Beckhams' winemaking journey as well. When they started, they thought they'd just sell the fruit they grew on their property. It seemed like a good prospect, Beckham said, but then they saw that they were essentially working for free: "We put in hundreds of hours and it was a wash at the end of the year." In 2007 they delivered their fruit to Don and Wendy Lange at the Lange Estate Winery, and got "bit by the bug" of winemaking when Beckham worked with winemaker Jesse Lange.

"We were naïve about that too," Beckham said. "We didn't have a good grasp for what the true expense was. That's when Annedria took the reins and came to be the Executive Director at the Chehalem AVA, in order to learn the business.

"They've doubled production each year since they started, all on a shoestring budget. Beckham is taking a hiatus from actively showcasing his art work in galleries, and instead is channeling his energy toward growing grapes, making wine, creating amphorae, and his additional work as a full-time high school ceramics teacher, one of the few in the state of Oregon.

His is a state of perpetual curiosity that's led the Beckhams from one phase in the entrepreneurial process to the next. With each step they're learning something new. The goal is to tip the revenue scale so that their family can be sustained on the winemaking and amphorae endeavor.

"If we're patient and we persevere," Beckham said, "eventually we'll be able to have this be our full-time gig."



Editor: I have found a series of interesting articles on the history of wine. Below is part 1 to be followed by parts 2 through 4 and possibly others in subsequent Newsletters.

Ancient Wines: The Cult of the Wine God

Stephen Franzoi

Note: Why do you enjoy wine the way you do? To answer this question you must first realize that your experience of wine is something that you have learned from your culture, infused by what sensory experiences are culturally valued. This issue is the first in a four-part series devoted to the history of wine making, with an issue appearing once every month through November. Hopefully, this series will help you better understand your own personal beliefs about wine and winemaking, and how those beliefs have been shaped by historical and cultural circumstances.

Previous editions of The Vintner's Press identified that the world's oldest known living grapevine is almost 250 years old and the likely origins of human winemaking dates back about 8,000 years. Yet how long ago did the first grapevine make its appearance on planet earth? Fossil seeds of grapes have been found in 50 million-year-old rocks, but some scientists speculate that grapes' ancestors may have been growing on the supercontinent of Pangaea before the continents drifted apart, some 300 to 500 million years ago!

Knowing what we now know about the process of transforming grape juice into wine, there is no doubt that the first wine was produced spontaneously by wild yeasts, long before our human ancestors first made their appearance on this planet. So, for millions of years other living creatures consumed these alcoholic dewdrops and puddles of wine near ancient grapevines.



Yet now, let us fast-forward in time to our modern human ancestors who, during the Neolithic period (8500–4000 B.C.E), enjoyed this same seasonal gift from nature. Using such food processing techniques as soaking, heating, spicing, and fermenting, Neolithic people in the “Fertile Crescent” of the Near East began producing bread, beer, and wine. Horticulture of grapevines began toward the end of the fourth millennium B.C.E. These Eurasian wild subspecies were subsequently cloned throughout the world and today account for almost all the wine consumed on this planet.

Wine as The God's Gift to Humans

Unlike ancient beer, which required humans to boil grains to obtain fermentable sugars, grape juice could be turned into wine by wild yeasts that were already comingled amongst the grapes. In addition to its apparent magical transformation, Neolithic people quickly recognized wine's antiseptic, antimicrobial, and anti-oxidant properties; it doubled as an ancient medicine. Add to that wine's mind-altering effects, and it is not surprising that most ancient winemaking cultures considered it a gift from the gods.

It would be thousands of years before science revealed many of the mysteries of wine fermentation, and thus, ancient people considered the creation of wine as a magical transformation involving heat, bubbles, and an invisible vapor that could cause those nearby to faint and swoon.



ULYSSES GOES WINE TO POLYPHEMOS

When Homer wrote the Greek classic *Odyssey* 2,800 years ago, he described Ulysses visiting the island of the Cyclops and discovering that Dionysus, the most powerful of all gods, lived within grapes and that wine was created spontaneously without human intervention. In this story, Homer was describing ancient people's belief that juice was somehow magically transformed into wine due to godly intervention within the grape itself. Once this magical transformation was complete, those who drank the resulting godly nectar were often transported to an altered state of consciousness that lifted their spirits. As one ancient Greek author described it, “The gods made wine as the best thing for mortal man to scatter cares.” Similarly, an inscription on an Egyptian tomb stated, “Give me eighteen cups of wine, for I want to drink until drunkenness, my inside is like straw.”

The Typical Taste of Ancient Wine?

What did ancient wine taste like? We've all seen Hollywood movies of ancient Greeks drinking wine by the boatload; it looks pretty enticing, doesn't it? Yet, as the saying goes, looks can be deceiving, and in the case of wine, historians assure us that this was often all too true.

Although freshly made wine may have tasted fruity and not unlike contemporary wines, this pleasant taste would have been a short-lived experience, if it happened at all. Archeological evidence of wine residue found in Middle Eastern clay vessels indicates that ancient wines were often heavily infused with boiled tree resin to help preserve it. If you have ever tasted contemporary Greek Retsina wine, you have some understanding of how a resin-infused wine tastes, but this is not even close to how ancient wine tasted. Such wines were not well sealed from air exposure, so they quickly became severely oxidized.

To get some idea how many ancient wines tasted, try the following exercise: (1) buy some cheap Retsina, (2) uncork it and leave it unattended in your hot garage over the summer, and then (3) pour yourself a glass. If it tastes like Uncle Ano's wine that everyone poured down the sink at Thanksgiving, you may be a bit closer to understanding ancient wine's sensory dynamics. Now, for a more complete effect, add a couple ounces of salt water to the same bottle of wine glop and pour a second glass, because our ancestors often added seawater to their wine to make it more palatable. If you follow my suggestions, I bet that you will quickly remember Uncle Ano's wine much more fondly. Other additives often used to mask or improve the taste of ancient wine included marble dust, gypsum, lead, lime, and lye ash.

Of course not all wine tasted this badly, and there was some ancient wines that you might actually have enjoyed drinking when freshly produced. One technique in ancient winemaking to improve taste was to twist the stems of ripe grape bunches while they still hung on the vine so that sap flow to the grapes ceased and the grapes' sugar content became concentrated, or raisined. As early as 800 B.C.E., such sun-dried grape wine was produced on the Greek island of Cyprus, and this technique is still employed today by various winemakers throughout the world.

The Religious Meaning of Wine

Given the questionable quality of many ancient wines, it isn't surprising that wine and wine consumption was valued more for its power than for its taste, especially because this power was endowed with a religious meaning. Becoming intoxicated was viewed as a means by which mortals could spiritually commune with the gods, which explains why intoxication rituals were a regular part of many religious ceremonies in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Babylon, Samaria, Crete, Assyria, and Rome.

By the 4th century BCE, wine had become an integral part of Greek life and this city-state's power resulted in the grapevine being planted throughout its many conquered lands (think Italy, France, and Germany). The Romans furthered the cultivation of the grapevine in England, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, North Africa, Turkey, and along the coastline of the Black Sea. Because many of the most powerful ancient Greeks and Romans were city dwellers, and thus, removed from pastoral life, wine also represented for them the opportunity to spiritually commune with the power of nature.

The Greek god of wine was Dionysus, while the Roman wine god was Bacchus. These gods were not thought of as simply "gods of wine," they were "gods in wine." As such, their spirit was evident in the act of fermentation and it was also beyond human understanding and control. To drink wine was to take in the god and to share in his power, which was simultaneously wild and mild, mindless and insightful, hateful and loving, violent and peaceful. Representing the conflicting powers of nature, the wine god was a paradox, capable of giving both life and death. He did not represent the cultivated nature of the vintner, but rather, the untamed nature of the grapevine.



Dionysus



Bacchus

In both Greece and Rome, organizations or clubs were formed to pay homage to their respective wine god. During ceremonial dances in which considerable wine was consumed, singing, cheering, or applauding was not allowed, and members would be fined if they became disorderly and they would be expelled if they fought with other members. Perhaps unsurprisingly, not all clubs were so orderly. In fact, raunchy behavior became so problematic in some organizations that in 186 B.C.E. the Roman Senate banned festivals honoring the wine god in many areas of Italy, but the ban had limited impact in curbing either the festivals or the unwanted behavior. Whether members of the WSWC can benefit from this ancient lesson, however they choose to interpret it, may well be determined at their next annual Gala.

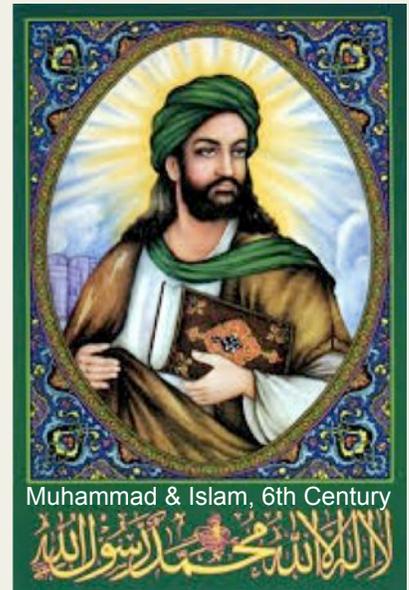




The ancient conception of wine being spiritual in nature, of a god living in the wine, was a widely held belief for roughly 6,000 years, up to the fall of the Roman Empire. Wine also held a special place in both the religions of early Judaism and Christianity; after the great flood, Noah planted a vineyard to make wine, and one of the first miracles performed by Jesus was to turn water into wine. However, as Christianity became more influential, people began to distinguish spiritual wine from secular wine. In Christianity, holy wine came to be thought of as the blood of Christ, literally “God in wine,” but everyday drinking wine was no longer believed to have such spiritual qualities. The parallels between the earlier Greek and Roman beliefs of “God in wine” and this new Christian belief of “Christ in wine” highlight the enduring symbolism that wine has in the Human psyche.

Around the same time that Christians began making clear distinctions between sacred and secular wines, people in the Islamic world not only held on to the belief that all wine was sacred and God’s gift, they also decided to ban it. During the 6th century, their main Prophet Muhammad preached that wine was too dangerous for humans to consume while living because they were too weak to resist the urge to drink it to excess. Instead, wine consumption was meant for the righteous in the afterlife. In the paradise of the hereafter, the righteous were promised they would enjoy “rivers of wine” that would bring them only joy, and would “neither dull their senses or befuddle them.” To this day, wine remains a banned drink throughout the

Islamic world, while retaining its status as God’s gift. These Muhammad & Islam, 6th Century contrasting beliefs about wine held by early Christians and Muslims persist today, and is just one example of some of the cultural divisions that still separate these two religions in the 21st century. As you can see from this brief overview of ancient conceptions of wine, this beverage has long held an exalted place in human societies. Indeed, an argument could be made that the ancient reverence for wine and winemaking was significantly due to the fact that our ancestors did not understand its chemical and biological nature. Given that winemaking is very much a cultural process of invention and re-invention.



Muhammad & Islam, 6th Century

In next month’s Newsletter - part 2 - “Winemaking During the Middle Ages And the Renaissance” - How cultural forces and historical events shaped the history of winemaking.



Cooper unveils new barrel with specific tannin levels

Esprit de Dryades, which was founded by Jean Charles Vicard, is bringing what it claims to be the most consistent barrel from vintage to vintage in the North American market. The new Generation 7 barrels are designed to give winemakers more precision in their oak programs. Georges Milcan, general manager of the G7 program, said he regularly hears from winemakers who want a barrel that has the same sensory effect on their wines every vintage. He said the cooperage has already taken steps to standardize its stave bending and toasting processes, and the G7 represents the next step. “We are pushing the technology a little bit further with stave scanning,” he said. “We have a lot of opportunity to fine-tune what they’re looking for.”

The company scans individual staves to determine their level of ellagitannin and then sorts them by low, medium or high tannin. Barrels can be assembled with staves of uniform type or a blend of staves.



Esprit de Dryades, which makes the G7, is not the first company to employ such technology, and Milcan acknowledged that scanning is not a revolutionary step. What sets the new G7 apart, however, is that barrels are toasted and formed in an automated and precise manner that eliminates variability at those stages, according to Milcan. "The tannin selection by itself is great, but then you still have some variation when you toast the traditional way: You have the human factor," he said. "What we believe makes us a little special is we have those two systems."

Toasting temperature is also matched to the tannin level, but barrels are all toasted for 80 minutes with a gradual-toasting method. The barrels are made with 24-month seasoned wood.

Vicard founded Esprit de Dryades in 2010 as a research and development company. The new G-7 barrels are only available directly through Esprit de Dryades.



"The Use of Oak Chips during the Ageing of a Red Wine in Stainless Steel Tanks or Used Barrels: Effect of the Contact Time and Size of the Oak Chips on Aroma Compounds"

Reviewed by Bibiana Guerra, U.C. Davis Department of Viticulture and Enology

These authors found that wood chips provided faster extraction of some oak compounds, such as vanillin, compared to the slow and sustained extraction evidenced in both used and new barrels. The authors believe that chips are a good option for short-term ageing, but that overall wine quality is better with new barrels.

- Ageing wine in barrels increases wine aroma complexity due to the compounds extracted from the wood, though wine internal reactions and evaporation of volatile compounds also play a role. These extracted compounds include: lactones, which are higher in American oak than in French oak; guaiacol, formed during oak toasting; vanillin, which is present in green wood but which normally increases with seasoning; and furfuryl compounds, which also form during toasting. Unfortunately, wood can also contribute a negative class of compounds, the ethylphenols, which are formed by the decarboxylation of phenolic acids in the wood by *Brettanomyces*.
- In 2006 the European Union countries approved the use of oak chips in winemaking, and established how to designate the wines that had received this treatment. In this article, the Spanish authors recount their research project focusing on the influence of adding oak chips to a wine being aged in either stainless steel tanks or used barrels, and they compare the results with the same wine aged in new barrels.
- The wine was a 2004 Monastrell, or Mourvedre. The barrels were made from American white oak, with a medium toast level. "Used" barrels had been previously used 7 times to age Monastrell wine, and were sanitized by burning sulfur. To determine the influence of chip size, researchers compared the use of American oak powder, shavings, or cubes (10x6x4 mm). To determine the influence of contact time, they matured the wine for 3, 6, or 9 months. All experiments were carried out in triplicate. Commercially, wood ageing is normally followed by some anaerobic ageing in bottles. So the researchers measured the main oak compounds present in the wine immediately after completion of the treatment, and additionally, after 6 months of bottle ageing.
- Rather than look at the effect of treatment on each oak compound, the results have been rearranged to highlight the main effects of type of container, size of oak fragment and contact time, on the different oak compounds.
- **Effect of type of container:** Tanks without chips (control) did not show significant concentrations of lactones or methylfurfural, which are usually thought to be oak-derived. However, over time, they did show significant concentrations of furfural, vanillin and ethylphenol; proof that these compounds can form in the wine from sources other than wood. Used barrels + chips tended to have higher levels of most of these compounds than tanks + chips. Finally, new barrels showed consistently high concentrations of all of the compounds tested.
- **Effect of chip size:** In general, wines made with cubes had slightly higher levels of the oak-derived compounds than did shavings or powder. More specifically, chip size did not have an effect on furfural levels, but cubes and shavings produced higher levels of lactones than powder. Finally, cubes also produced the highest levels of vanillin. This is because, normally, finer pieces tend to produce more vanillin, but if the size is too small (shavings and powder), losses take place due to evaporation.
- **Effect of contact time:** Time affected oak compounds in two opposing directions: it affected each compound's extraction, and in some instances, it affected the conversion of the extracted compounds into related compounds. For instance, furfural levels in tank and used barrels were highest after 3 months of contact time with chips, but levels decreased after 6 and 9 months of contact. This is because, for longer extractions, conversion of furanic aldehydes into the corresponding alcohols exceeds extraction, therefore furfural levels went down with time when using chips. The same was true for vanillin in the

presence of chips. Vanillin is modified over time by yeast activity into non-aromatic compounds, and after 6 and 9 months of contact, conversion will have exceeded extraction and concentrations will decrease. In contrast, with new barrels, both vanillin and lactones continued to be extracted for longer periods. This was one of the main conclusions of the study; the chips provided a much faster rate of extraction of the oak-derived compounds, compared with the slow and sustained extraction provided by used and new barrels.

In summary, the type of wood used in the maturation of wines led to important differences in their aromatic composition. The aromatic compounds in chips were released very rapidly, while the wines in new barrels kept extracting the same compounds for longer periods. The wines in used barrels with chips added evidenced a behavior in between the two. In the authors' opinion, oak chips are a good choice for short-term ageing and can add certain characters to used barrels, but overall quality is better with new barrels.



Why Concrete Eggs for Riesling?

The “Walla Faces” Winery 2010 Riesling is “Concrete Egg Vinted”. The futuristic appearance may be snazzy, but the real benefit is its myriad of effects on the wine.

Like oak, concrete is porous. Thus, the wine is able to breathe, facilitating richness and complexity without leaving an oaky flavor behind. Like barrel aging, the porous nature of the concrete allows the wine to slowly aerate, providing layers and softness. Concrete-fermented wines also typically maintain a lot of fruitiness.

Additionally, the tank imparts a minerality that lingers on the palate. Because “Walla Faces” used both concrete and stainless steel for our 2010 Riesling, it took on the characteristics of both stainless steel and concrete vinted wines. Like stainless steel vinted wines, this vintage has a crisp, refreshing effect, without sacrificing its rich complexity.



The “Walla Faces” Concrete Egg Fermenter, nestled in some barrels!

Concrete has been used in winemaking since the early 19th century, when some wines were fermented in huge, rectangular concrete vats. Although the material is a classic, the egg shape is an innovation! The first concrete egg fermenter was commissioned in 2001 by *Maison M. Chapoutier*, a winery in the Rhone region of France. French manufacturer Nomblot, who has been producing concrete tanks since they opened in 1922.

Nomblot's tanks are produced using washed sand from the French river Loire, gravel, non-chlorinated spring water and cement. They are treated with tartaric acid before use. Because the tanks are unlined, they are able to provide an effervescent mineral flavor to the wines they contain.

The egg shape provides an important function: it facilitates circulation. Because there is a one degree temperature difference between the top and the bottom of the egg, the wine slowly circulates through the tank. Since there are no corners, the wine won't get stuck in every nook and cranny. The result? The wine stays more uniform throughout the fermentation process. As a result, the finished product will be more structured. No one wants a flabby Riesling!



Total U.S. Wineries Hits 7,762

Bonded winery growth smallest in years; California and Oregon see most growth.

The total number of wineries in the U.S. has now reached 7,762 (Table 1) . This is a 3.5 percent increase over last year's total of 7,498 or a net increase of 264 wineries, more than double the previous year's increase of 102 wineries, including grape and non-grape wineries.

The number of bonded U.S. wineries totals 6,565, a net increase of 126 wineries from February 2013 to February 2014, a 2 percent increase (Table 2) . This is a slight decline from the last year's increase of 138 newly bonded wineries, which represented 2.2 percent growth over the year before.

New bonded winery growth has been positive every year, with growth peaking in 2011 with the addition of 432 wineries (compared with this year's 126) and has slowed since then.

Mark Chandler, executive director for WineAmerica, likes to focus on the cumulative growth in wineries over the years. "When you're talking about adding wineries, you're talking about vertical integration," he said, noting that wineries engage in many different areas of production, such as growing the grapes, erecting the buildings, buying production equipment and hiring employees, all to make the wine. Added to this is developing a tasting room, as well as offering a variety of experiences to continually entice visitors.

"So increases like 2 percent in winery growth may seem small year-to-year," he said, "but a lot is happening out there, albeit more slowly at times." Chandler noted, too, that even small increases, like this year's 2 percent in bonded wineries, are responsible for creating a lot of good paying jobs.

The total number of U.S. wineries (7,762) includes 6,565 bonded wineries and 1,197 virtual wineries (all data reflect net totals, accounting for winery closures, as well as new winery openings. See Methodology). Within the total number of wineries, there are 7,573 grape-only wineries and 189 non-grape (other fruit, mead) wineries.

TABLE 1: Number of Bonded, Non-bonded/Virtual and Total U.S. Wineries (2014 data by "total")

STATE	BONDED	VIRTUAL	TOTAL	STATE	BONDED	VIRTUAL	TOTAL	STATE	BONDED	VIRTUAL	TOTAL
California	2,789	887	3,676	Maryland	58	2	60	West Virginia	23	0	23
Washington	660	29	689	Arizona	45	11	56	South Dakota	20	0	20
Oregon	402	164	566	Oklahoma	50	3	53	Alabama	15	0	15
New York	307	13	320	New Jersey	49	2	51	Arkansas	14	0	14
Virginia	213	11	224	New Mexico	48	0	48	Montana	14	1	15
Texas	204	6	210	Idaho	45	2	47	South Carolina	13	1	14
Pennsylvania	170	4	174	Florida	46	0	46	North Dakota	9	0	9
Ohio	143	1	144	Minnesota	46	0	46	Rhode Island	9	0	9
Michigan	125	11	136	Tennessee	42	3	45	Louisiana	8	0	8
North Carolina	116	14	130	Massachusetts	39	2	41	Alaska	7	0	7
Missouri	118	4	122	Georgia	36	3	39	Utah	8	0	8
Colorado	102	3	105	Connecticut	37	0	37	Hawaii	5	0	5
Illinois	93	7	100	Kansas	27	0	27	Delaware	2	2	4
Iowa	93	2	95	Maine	27	0	27	Nevada	3	1	4
Wisconsin	75	5	80	Nebraska	27	0	27	Wyoming	4	0	4
Indiana	65	1	66	New Hampshire	27	0	27	Mississippi	1	0	1
Kentucky	58	2	60	Vermont	28	0	28	Total	6,565	1,197	7,762

U.S. Wineries

California leads in the overall number of bonded wineries with 2,789 (Table 2). It also has the largest net increase in bonded wineries this year—62 (compared to 40 the previous year). California's bonded wineries make up 47 percent of all bonded wineries in the U.S. (compared to 42 percent the previous year).

Two states had double-digit increases in bonded wineries: California (62) and Oregon (12). Overall, 27 states saw increases, 15 showed no change and eight saw small decreases, with Oklahoma showing a net decrease of five bonded wineries.

Second to California in the number of new bonded wineries this year is Oregon, which gained 12 additional wineries, compared to five the year before and 16 the year prior to this. Washington had an increase of eight bonded wineries, compared to three the previous year. Following Washington, Pennsylvania showed an increase of seven, Colorado six and New York five. While California and the West Coast show the most growth, new wineries are being established all over the country. "Pennsylvania, Idaho, Ohio and Virginia all come to mind for advancements in winery numbers, wine quality and recognition," Chandler said. "More and more nontraditional markets are generating nice in-state revenue and tourism."

Washington

Washington state has the second highest number of total wineries, after California, with 689. The Washington Wine Commission's president, Steve Warner, is excited by Washington's growth and that it continues to set new records with harvests. "We've gone from 142,000 tons to 189,000 tons to more than 200,000 tons this year, all driven by a greater demand for Washington state wines," he said.

Warner said the growth stems from the state's quality wine, as well as the buzz from consumers, the national media and the trade. "Our great fruit is possible because we're in a sweet spot when it comes to soil, sunny days, rainfall and water supply," he said. "This sweet spot has also captured the attention and investment of well-known California brands, such as E&J Gallo, Cakebread and Duckhorn looking to expand into Washington state."

Warner looks toward the next 30 years with optimism. The state has a total of 50,000 acres planted currently, with plenty of room to grow. “As we grow and we continue to zero in on matching site with varietal, the quality of our fruit will be even better,” he said. “Additionally, our winemakers will continue to elevate their skills vintage to vintage and will be able to leverage terroir-specific research coming out of the new Wine Science Center.” The Wine Center is located at Washington State University Tri-Cities, which broke ground in September 2013 and will be completed in 2014.

Oregon

Oregon has the most total wineries (566) after Washington (689) and California (3,676). Of all Oregon wineries, about 75 percent produce fewer than 5,000 annual cases. This smaller, artisan culture, which is mainly family-driven, is what Charles Humble, marketing and communications director for the Oregon Wine Board, says makes Oregon such a desirable destination for people just starting out in the business. “Oregon is attractive to winery entrepreneurs for many reasons: the infrastructure is beneficial, people are drawn to the smaller industry here, there’s a lot of opportunity, land is less expensive than in California and Washington, and there’s a great sense of community among winemakers and growers; people really help one another out,” said Humble. He added that a lot of young people are getting into winemaking, a fact that may be contributing to the relatively high number of virtual wineries in Oregon (164).

Humble is seeing very healthy growth, noting, “The Oregon wine industry is really on a roll—wine has never been more relevant in Oregon.” The state continues to gain visibility with consumers and government agencies, as well as non-Oregon winemakers, including Jackson Family Wines, which purchased a winery in the Willamette Valley region this summer in response to customers asking for Pinot Noirs from the state, said Humble. “Oregon has really carved out a unique niche with Pinot.” The Willamette Valley remains Oregon’s wine growth engine, with Pinot driving production: About 85 percent of Oregon’s wine is grown in the Willamette Valley, and about 50 percent of all Oregon wine production is Pinot. Humble noted that Southern Oregon is also creating a new buzz. “Southern Oregon is starting to hang onto more of their Pinot and is really finding their style and making excellent wine,” he said.

Virtual Wineries

As for virtual wineries, there are now 1,197 in the U.S., 138 more than the previous year. Virtual wineries make up 15 percent of all U.S. wineries. A virtual winery is a winery that has a physical location (which may be shared with another winery), produces at least one brand and has its own management and winemaker. Since virtual wineries are not bonded, they use the services of a bonded host facility (winery or custom crush facility) to produce and bottle their wine. Bonded wineries often start out as virtual wineries since there is less start-up capital required for land and equipment.

TABLE 2: U.S. Bonded Winery Totals (2009 to 2014)

STATE	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
California	2,340	2,411	2,571	2,687	2,727	2,789
Washington	544	559	630	649	652	660
Oregon	336	349	369	385	390	402
New York	241	242	269	282	302	307
Virginia	156	174	198	205	212	213
Texas	153	163	185	203	200	204
Pennsylvania	136	143	145	153	163	170
Ohio	114	126	125	134	142	143
Michigan	113	112	115	122	125	125
Missouri	87	99	114	120	120	118
North Carolina	93	99	111	114	120	116
Colorado	83	89	86	90	96	102
Illinois	81	86	93	98	96	93
Iowa	69	76	85	89	93	93
Wisconsin	54	55	58	73	74	75
Indiana	43	49	57	61	65	65
Kentucky	40	46	50	56	58	58
Maryland	37	39	46	47	54	58
Oklahoma	47	53	55	56	55	50
New Jersey	40	44	45	47	48	49
New Mexico	37	40	42	46	46	48
Florida	40	43	46	46	45	46
Minnesota	36	38	42	44	47	46
Arizona	35	38	42	44	46	45

Idaho	35	37	40	41	43	45
Tennessee	34	37	37	39	40	42
Massachusetts	32	31	32	32	35	39
Connecticut	33	34	33	36	35	37
Georgia	24	29	31	32	35	36
Vermont	18	20	25	28	28	28
Kansas	17	19	22	24	24	27
Maine	16	18	24	26	25	27
Nebraska	23	23	25	26	24	27
New Hampshire	19	23	27	25	27	27
West Virginia	20	21	20	22	21	23
South Dakota	15	15	17	18	18	20
Alabama	10	11	11	13	15	15
Arkansas	9	11	11	12	14	14
Montana	11	12	12	11	14	14
South Carolina	10	12	10	13	13	13
North Dakota	7	7	8	8	7	9
Rhode Island	7	8	8	7	7	9
Louisiana	5	6	7	8	8	8
Utah	3	3	3	4	6	8
Alaska	7	7	7	7	7	7
Hawaii	5	7	7	7	6	5
Wyoming	2	1	1	4	4	4
Nevada	3	3	3	3	3	3
Delaware	2	2	2	2	2	2
Mississippi	2	2	2	2	2	1
Total	5,324	5,572	6,004	6,301	6,439	6,565

West Side Wine Club Leadership Team - 2014

- President: **Phil Bard** 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

- 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
- Keep updated list of members, name tags and other data

Chair of Education: **Mike Smolak** Mike@NWRetire.com

- Arrange speakers for our meetings

Chair for Tastings: **Ted Johnson**, tedj52@msn.com

- Conduct club tastings
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

Chair of Winery/Vineyard Tours: **Bill Brown** bbgoldieguy@gmail.com

- Select wineries to visit
- Arrange tours
- Cover logistics (food and money)

Chair of Group Purchases: **Jonathan Brown** jonabrown@gmail.com & Jim Ourada
jim.m.ourada@intel.com

Makes the arrangements to purchase, collect, and distribute

- Grape purchases
- Supplies – These should be passed to the President for distribution.

Chair of Competitions: **Don Robinson** don_robinson_pdx@yahoo.com

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

Chairs for Social Events: **Marlene Grant** denmargrant@earthlink.net Barbara Stinger & Mindy Bush – Helpers

- Awards Gala / Holliday parties

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

Webmaster: **David Ladd**