

West Side Wine Club

November 2015

Monthly Rant



Scheduled Meetings

January 10, 2015

Annual Gala – Archer Winery

January 21, 2015

Crush Talk / Planning

February 18, 2015

Bordeaux Tasting

March 18, 2015

Speaker: Michael Blackard of "Portocork"

April 11, 2015

Tour, Ferraro Cellars

April 22, 2015

Barrel / Carboy Sample Tasting

May 20, 2015

Speaker - Patrick McElligott, Sineann Winery, Chemeketa instructor & wine judge

June 17, 2015

"Open discussion of winemaking issues"

June 27, 2015

Tour, Utopia Vineyards

July 11, 2015

Annual Picnic

August 19, 2015

All Whites Tasting

September 16, 2015

Other Reds Tasting

October 21, 2015

Pinot Noir Tasting

November

No Meeting

December 2, 2015

Planning, Tours, Speakers, Events, Elections

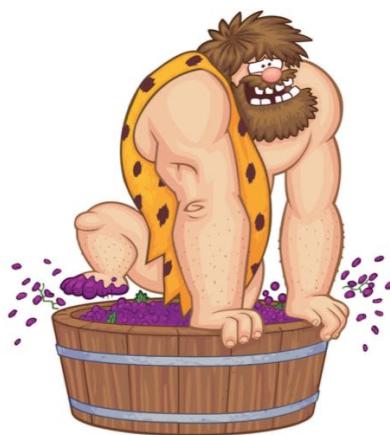
Waiting for Pinot

Whoever said winemaking requires a certain amount of patience, and I'm sure the list of those who did is very long, had it absolutely right. We all know this of course, and for Pinot Noir its especially so. I know we can open a big red just a few months after bottling and find a reasonable wine inside. Immature yes, but it CAN be enjoyed and that applies to just about any vintage. But this week I was doing some topping off and opened a bottle of 2011 Pinot that we had laying around, mostly because we weren't really drinking it very often as it wasn't very friendly on the palate. I was shocked when I tasted it, it had become a finished wine! This is 4 years after the vintage. Admittedly, '11 was a rough year, flavors were underdeveloped and the tannins were harsh and in our case exacerbated by the use of some new French oak. But there was no sign of any of that earlier ruggedness, it drank smooth and soft.

Of course that points out one of the disadvantages to being a home winemaker. Storage for wines you want to wait on can be a big problem. Not that commercial guys have it that much easier, but most of them have more room available. So not only does the process of making it take up your entire garage, or Manhattan apartment, the cellaring requires yet more room and, oh yeah, PATIENCE.

In the upcoming December meeting we need to finalize details on our January Gala. The last 2 meetings have been busy ones, and we neglected to discuss it, so please come with ideas. Do we stick with Archer as the venue or go elsewhere? On top of that it is the elections meeting, so please make plans to attend if at all possible. See you in December.

Phil



Drink Responsibly.
Drive Responsibly.

Information & Trivia

- It was an early harvest for Oregon, as in California. “Most of our wineries are reporting that the size was comparable to last year, which was a record for us with a 39% gain over 2013,” said Michelle Kaufmann, communications manager for the Oregon Wine Board. “However, a few regions had frost damage and are reporting lower yields. Because of that, we are unable to estimate if 2015 will be on par with 2014, higher or lower.” Official tonnage numbers for Washington state won’t be released until January or February, but preliminary estimates suggest this years harvest is indeed smaller than 2014. “Many growers are talking about smaller berry size, and though this will mean lighter tonnage, it also indicates intense, flavorful fruit.
- Winemakers are very excited about the quality of the 2015 vintage.” In the Walla Walla Valley of Washington, Heather Bradshaw of the Walla Walla Wine Alliance reports that tonnage is probably a little down due to an early freeze, but the grapes look good.
- Washington State's rising reputation for Cabernet Sauvignon has been enhanced by a local winery winning one of the most prestigious prizes at the 2014 Decanter World Wine Awards. L'Ecole No 41's ‘Ferguson’ 2011, a blend of 57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 32% Merlot and 11% Cabernet Franc, beat all-comers to carry away the International Trophy for Best Bordeaux Varietals) over \$20. ‘Cabernet is King, even here in Washington,’ said L'Ecole’s Clubb. He also noted rising popularity for Rhone reds.

Note: There is no meeting in November. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 2 at 7:00 PM at Oak Knoll Winery.

Agenda: Planning for 2016 & election of officers. Bring one of your bottles for us to share. How are your 2015 wines doing so far? Now is a good time to renew your club membership and sign a new waiver.

- 1.) **Snacks:** This will be a potluck; bring a small snack to share.
- 2.) If you have not paid your dues or signed a waiver, please do so at this meeting.
- 3.) Bring a wine glass for tasting member wines.
- 4.) The regular 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.

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

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

October Meeting Minutes

22 members present

- Ken Stinger passed out ribbons to members who were winners at the Washington State Fair. A special award went to Mike Smolak for his best of show in the whites division.
- Phil introduced guest Ben Fajen who claims to be just a novice winemaker.
- Mike Smolak visited wineries in the hill country outside Austin, Texas and came away impressed with the quality of their Italian varietals.
- Along that line, Dick Erath is now making wine in Arizona.
- There will be no meeting in November.

Ted Johnson & Dennis Grant poured the wines for the member pinot blind tasting and critique. The results are shown below.

Wine #	Name	Varietal	Gold	Silver	Bronze	None	Total Score	Medal Score	Medal	Rank
1	Sammy Nachimuthu, Momtazi	Pinot Noir '13			15	6	15	0.71	Bronze	5
2	Phil Bard, blend: 777,115, Pommard, Wadenswil	Pinot Noir '12		15	6		36	1.71	Silver	2
3	Jim Ourada / Paul Rogers Kaiser Ridge, Pommard, oak chips	Pinot Noir '13		5	15	1	25	1.19	Bronze	4
4	Kahrs / Robinson Pommard, 115, Wadenswil	Pinot Noir '12		17	3	1	37	1.76	Silver	1
5	Damon & Bridget Lopez, Dambridge Cellars, San Diego, CA	Pinot Noir '11			8	13	8	0.38	None	7
6	Bob Hatt	Pinot Noir '13	2	9	10		13	0.62	Bronze	6
7	Jim Ourada / Paul Rogers Kaiser Ridge	Pinot Noir '14		11	9	1	31	1.48	Bronze	3
8	Damon & Bridget Lopez, Dambridge Cellars, San Diego, CA	Pinot Noir '12			4	17	4	0.19	None	8

Editor: The use of Fermaid O in place of Fermaid K was discussed at the last meeting. Here is a brief statement from Scott Labs about Fermaid O:

FERMAID® O

YEAST NUTRIENT

Fermaid O is a yeast nutrient developed by Lallemand's winemaking nutrient research team headed by Dr. Anne Ortiz-Julien. Fermaid O is a blend of inactivated yeast fractions rich in organic nitrogen. Fermaid O does not contain added ammonia salts (DAP) or added micronutrients.

The importance of organic nitrogen from yeasts is well known as a highly efficient nutrient source for wine yeasts, especially when compared to inorganic nitrogen from DAP. In addition, Fermaid O consistently produces lower levels of negative sulfur compounds, compared with DAP. With its high content of organic nitrogen, Fermaid O can help winemakers achieve steady fermentations, while limiting temperature peaks. When inorganic nitrogen (DAP) additions are NOT desired, the use of Go-Ferm® or NATSTEP™ and Fermaid O is recommended. With this combination, Go-Ferm or NATSTEP provides needed micronutrients during yeast rehydration, and Fermaid O supplies critical nutrients and survival factors to help the yeast avoid stressed conditions. Note: In low nutrient situations, yeast available nitrogen (YAN) may be insufficient to avoid fermentation problems.

RECOMMENDED DOSAGE

400 ppm, 1.5 grams per gallon

DIRECTIONS FOR USE

Fermaid O should be suspended with water and added to the fermenter. If prepared in advance, re-suspend the product prior to its addition to the fermenter.

Add half at the end of the lag phase and the other half between 1/4 to 1/3 sugar depletion.



Aging Domestic Pinot Noir: Better or Just Different?

"The truth of wine aging is that it is unknown, unstudied, poorly understood, and poorly predicted."

Winemaker Zelma Long

(Editor: Thanks to Jon Kahrs for sending along this article.)

One of the wine enthusiasts I know is prone to say about wine, "It's not ready to drink. It's a baby, a Lolita." Sometimes I wonder if he ever enjoys a bottle of wine, since he drinks with guilt, always thinking the wine might be even better with more age.

Judgments about when a wine will reach its peak are very speculative. No one can predict a wine's apogee with accuracy. UC Davis chemist Sue Ebeler (*Wines & Vines*, August 2008) pointed out that one can forecast how long a wine will live, but it is impossible to tell what it will taste and smell like. For me, I don't want to be encumbered with worrisome thoughts about how long to cellar a wine. I just pop the cork when I feel like drinking a wine.

The golden rule of cellaring wine is never to let wine slip past its prime. When a wine is over the hill, it will never come back to life. When you discover a wine at its peak, pull the cork on every bottle you own and party.

Most American Pinot Noir is ready to drink upon release, and although the wines can improve after a few years in bottle, they are usually not made for long-term aging. Noted wine writer and teacher, Kevin Zraly, wrote in the latest (2014) edition of *Windows on the World Complete Wine Course*, "It's a common misconception that all wines improve with age. In fact, more than 90% of all top wines made in the world should be consumed within a year, and less than 1% of the world's wines should be aged for more than 5 years."

The French Wine Explorers *Wine e-Newsletter* article by sommelier Lauriann Greene-Solin addressed "The 20% Rule": "Only 20% of wines have aging potential past one or two years. Why? Because they were not created with aging in mind. The winemaking techniques used for these wines favor fruitiness and freshness, not extraction of the dry matter and tannins needed for a wine to age well. They may also lack the quality to stand up to aging. Only quality wines evolve into something more interesting than they were in their youth." When I looked at what several noted wine writers had to say about aging wine (and limited comments on Pinot Noir specifically), including Tim Patterson (*Wines & Vines*), Kevin Zraly (*Windows on the World Complete Wine Course*), Jamie Goode (*The Science of Wine*), and Emile Peynaud (*The Taste of Wine*), and sommelier Lauriann Greene-Solin, the consensus indicated the following factors were most critical for wine longevity.

1. Polyphenols, including various tannins and anthocyanins (pigments), act as a natural preservative giving wine the potential for a long life and account for the transformation of wine over time. These chemical components neutralize oxygen and keep oxygen from causing the degradation of everything else in wine. As the tannins evolve and diminish over time, the oxidative process eventually causes browning of color, and tertiary aromas and flavors such as dried fruit, vegetal and nutty characters. The longer a wine is in contact with the skins before, during and after fermentation, the more tannin there will be in the finished wine. Aging in oak barrels also contributes more preservative tannins. Pinot Noir has less tannin and usually will not age as well as say Cabernet Sauvignon, which has more tannin.

2. Acidity (low pH and high acidity) is more crucial for white wines than red wines because whites lack red wines' polyphenols.

3. Balance. This is also a crucial factor in longevity. Balance represents a subjective perception of harmony between all of a wine's components that produce aromas, flavors and textural characteristics of taste, including acid, sugar, alcohol, tannin, fruit extract and oak, with no one element dominant.

4. Whole Cluster fermentation contributes tannins. Ted Lemon points out that adding some percentage of whole cluster adds aromatic freshness to older Pinot Noirs. "A Pinot Noir that is ten years old and has a percentage of whole cluster will be more aromatically complex than the same wine 100% de-stemmed."

5. Quality. "A wine cellar is not a wine hospital - bad wines don't get magically better with age, they just get older." (Dr. Vinny, *Wine Spectator*, 1/31-2/28, 2015) Not all quality wines are meant to be aged.

6. Appellation or Typicity of Wine. Some appellations have more aging potential than others. Red Burgundies, for example, can be aged a long time.

7. Cellar Conditions. None of the criteria mentioned above have any relevance if the wine is not cellared under ideal conditions. Most desirable is a constant temperature (50 to 59°F), absence of vibration and light, and high humidity. Heat for any prolonged period should be avoided as it accelerates premature aging of wine. A study at the American Chemical Society's 2014 National Meeting in San Francisco found that Sangiovese wine stored in conditions mimicking those of an Italian apartment without air conditioning (68° to 80°F had aged four times as fast as the same wine stored at 59° to 62°F. Other research shows that gradual variations in temperature are not as important as the total number of heat units that accumulate over time.

8. Persistence. Sommelier Lauriann Greene-Solin claims that if you count the number of seconds a wine's aromas last on your palate once you spit or swallow the wine can reveal the longevity of the wine. "If it lasts more than 6 seconds, the aging potential is good. More than 8 seconds, and the wine will likely last a long number of years in your cellar.

9. High Alcohol. High alcohol may not impair aging if it is in balance with other components of wine since it acts as an additional preservative. Sugar is also a preservative but this discussion centers on dry wines only.

10. Size of Bottle. Wine matures more slowly in magnums (1.5 liter bottles) and lasts longer.

11. Vintage. Some vintages provide better fruit, acid and tannin balance making the wines more age worthy.

The crux of the aging issue and specifically the aging of American Pinot Noir is that cellaring the wines only makes sense if you like the effects of aging on Pinot Noir. Pinot Noirs that have been cellared are definitely different, but whether they are better depends on the opinion of the drinker. Older Pinot Noir is often an acquired taste that comes from experience. The winery marketing machine often encourages buyers to cellar wines, but few consumers do, so they don't know what great aged Pinot Noir really tastes like, and whether it will turn out to suit their taste.

Over time, Pinot Noir tends to have softer tannins and tertiary characters develop. The fruit is less fresh and more dried in character, vegetal aromas (mushroom) often develop, and floral, earthy and undergrowth characters may dominate. Poorly balanced Pinot Noirs may show exaggeration of elements that were not harmonious on release such as oak and alcohol as the fruit fades. Flaws in wine may be exaggerated over time. My personal preference is for young wines that benefit from a year in bottle since this is often the time needed for the wine to recover its personality that was present in barrel.

My experience has been that the overwhelming number of American Pinot Noirs will hold their freshness and age nicely over 2 to 5 years, often with subtle improvement, but beyond this time, although a wine may hold on, it is rare to find one that continues to benefit from further aging. To confirm my impression, I decided to thin out my cellar by pulling out 178 American Pinot Noir wines that were from vintage 2008 or older (a few 2009 wines were reviewed also). I chose 2008 because wines produced in this vintage were usually bottled in 2009 or early 2010 and have now aged in bottle at least 5 years. This exercise proved to be informative and gave me an excuse to diminish the number of "cellar queens" in my wine locker. My overall impressions are summarized after the wine reviews.

All wines were cellared under pristine conditions. The wines were sent to my wine locker direct from the wineries in most

cases and stored at 55°F with ideal humidity and little or no movement over the time of storage. All wines were closed with cork unless otherwise indicated. I did not taste any wines out of magnum, but that would make for an interesting, but unlikely study in the future.

I have divided the wines into the following groups: (1) Highly enjoyable: drink now or mid (3-5 years) to long (5+ years) term, (2) Enjoyable now: drink now or short term (1-2 years), (3) Drinkable, even somewhat enjoyable, but seen better days: drink up, and (4) Decrepitude of old age or flawed: undrinkable. Because of the large number of wines, I have kept the reviews succinct. Remember, a number of these wines were not exceptional when young, and would not be expected to improve simply by cellaring them.

Editor's Note: The author continues from this point and reviews each of the 178 wines chosen. I decided to not to include those individual reviews because of length. If you want a copy of the full, un-edited article send me an e-mail and I will send a copy to you. Thanks ... Ken Stinger Secretary

Impressions:

- (1) About 25% of the wines aged 5 or more years were still drinking exceptionally well and should age through the mid to long term.
- (2) About 35% of the wines aged 5 or more years were still enjoyable but should be drunk in the short term.
- (3) About 30% of the wines aged 5 or more years were drinkable or even enjoyable but should be drunk up.
- (4) About 10% of the wines suffered decrepitude or were flawed. Surprisingly, only 1 wine out of 175 was clearly corked, although other issues with some wines were undoubtedly cork related.
- (5) There more far more disappointments than epiphanies in aged American Pinot Noir. Aged Pinot Noir can be exhilarating but the rewards are far and few between. You have to work hard for your money to find them. Some producers are known for producing age worthy Pinot Noir: Littorai, Rochioli, Hanzell, Calera and Mount Eden Vineyard but this will vary with vintage and bottling.
- (6) Some aged Pinot Noirs can startle when first opened, but they fade over time and do not provide a special drinking experience over the course of a meal.
- (7) If a Pinot Noir is heavy on tannin, oak or alcohol, they often don't fare well over time as these components become exaggerated as the fruit fades. Alcohol in particular tends to peek out more as wine ages and the fruit and tannins fade.
- (8) Oak creep is evident in a number of Pinot Noir wines over time: it tends to become more apparent in many wines.
- (9) There can be more nuances and interesting tertiary characters to be found in aged Pinot Noir, many of which can challenge the taster to use proper descriptors.
- (10) Vintage differences tend to show up more over time and it is helpful to know the vintage to understand the wine.
- (11) If a Pinot Noir is opened on day one, and re-tasted on day two or three, and shows improvement or more expression as well as lasting power, this can be a valuable clue that the wine has someplace to go and will age well.
- (12) 2007 in California and 2008 in Oregon seem to be very age worthy vintages.
- (13) Most of the preferred aged Pinot Noirs tasted were from vintages 2006, 2007 and 2008 (had aged 5-7 years in bottle).

Conclusion:

Most domestic Pinot Noirs that are aged five or more years are frequently drinkable, even enjoyable, but not as tantalizing as those wines that are less than five years of age. That said, it is the taster's palate that will confirm or dispute this generalization, as some domestic Pinot Noir drinkers will undoubtedly prefer the nuances and characters that accompany well-aged Pinot Noir. Personally, with very few exceptions, I would not buy domestic Pinot Noir that I did not expect to consume within five to seven years at the most.

Far better to drink a Pinot Noir "too soon" than too late.



Using malolactic fermentation (MLF) to modulate wine style

The aim of this Fact Sheet is to provide practical information on a range of approaches that may be considered to modulate aroma and flavor of wine using MLF. The information is based on winemaking trials and review of the scientific literature. Please note that consideration of wine quality and how to ensure an efficient MLF are beyond the scope of this Fact Sheet.

Malolactic fermentation

Malolactic fermentation (MLF) is a critical process in wine production, impacting on operation efficiency, product quality and safety. It is conducted in virtually all red wines, numerous white wines and in sparkling wine bases. The role of bacterial driven MLF is three-fold: reducing wine acidity; stabilizing wine through removal of a potential energy source; and shaping aroma and flavor.

Oenococcus oeni, a member of the lactic acid bacteria (LAB) family, is the main bacterium responsible for conducting MLF, due to its ability to survive the harsh conditions of wine (high alcohol, low pH and low nutrients) and its production of desirable wine sensory attributes.

MLF can ensue from the natural bacterial flora or can be induced via the inoculation of a selected bacterial strain. Timing of MLF inoculation can be at any time during alcoholic fermentation (AF), often performed with yeast (co-inoculation), mid-AF, at pressing, or most commonly, post-AF (sequential inoculation).

In addition to the important conversion of L-malic acid to L-lactic acid, MLF is associated with a broad range of other metabolic processes that impact on a wine's sensory profile.

What sensory outcomes can MLF modulate?

Wine flavor is affected by volatile compounds, while non-volatile compounds influence the palate or mouth-feel of wine. Sensory impressions such as buttery, vanilla-like, nutty, spicy, fruity, vegetative, toasty, fuller and rounded are used to describe MLF influences.

MLF and winemaking variables which can be used to modulate sensory attributes:

- Choice of bacterial strain
- Timing of MLF inoculation
 - Sequential (i.e. after alcoholic fermentation)
 - Simultaneous with yeast (co-inoculation)

Sensory attributes which can be modulated via MLF and bacterial metabolism:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| • Buttery character | • Mouth-feel |
| • Fruity characteristics | • Oak character |

Diacetyl – buttery aroma

One of the major compounds produced by *O. oeni* during MLF is diacetyl which contributes to the buttery or butterscotch aroma and flavor of wine. Diacetyl is formed through the metabolism of citric acid and is produced at concentrations which are often above sensory threshold (white wine 0.2 g/L; red 0.9-2.8 mg/L).

The sensory perception of diacetyl is dependent not only on concentration (high concentrations will be overtly buttery and considered undesirable) but also on the presence of other wine compounds – butteriness can be masked by strong oak or very fruity characters.

The formation of diacetyl during winemaking is well understood and can be relatively easily managed with various winemaking techniques. These are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. MLF winemaking techniques that can be used to enhance or diminish diacetyl concentration in wine.

Wine Factor	Effect on Diacetyl in wine
Choice of <i>O. oeni</i> strain	Variable; some strains able to produce high concentrations
Inoculation rate	High <i>O. oeni</i> numbers – Lower concentration Low <i>O. oeni</i> numbers – Higher concentration
MLF duration	Longer MLF – Higher concentration
Temperature	64 degrees F – Higher concentration 77 degrees F – Lower concentration
Oxygen	Anaerobic – Lower concentration
pH	Lower pH supports formation
Yeast lees contact	Long contact – Lower concentration

Fruity character

The berry fruit aroma characteristics of red wine vary according to grape variety and winemaking style. Descriptors that arise from MLF include red berry (e.g. raspberry, strawberry, red cherry) and dark berry (e.g. mulberry, blackberry, plum). Red wine berry fruit aroma is a complex interaction between fruity esters, norisoprenoids, dimethyl sulfide, ethanol and other components. Strains of *O. oeni* have been shown to vary in their ability to generate or release these compounds. Certain *O. oeni* strains consistently enhance the fruity-berry characters in red wine. Recent trials have demonstrated that wine matrix composition, especially pH, can influence *O. oeni* metabolism during MLF, resulting in the production of different concentrations of these crucial esters in wine.

Timing of MLF inoculation – effects on fruity and buttery properties

Trials in Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon have established that timing of MLF inoculation can influence the fruity characters of the wine. Red wines produced using co-inoculation of MLF with AF were rated as more fruity by a sensory panel. This was consistent with higher concentrations of the esters which contribute to red wine fruity characters. Recent research in other red and white varieties (Malbec, Chardonnay and Riesling) has also shown that co-inoculated MLF resulted in wines with a fruitier character than in wines produced with sequential MLF.

Co-inoculated MLF would be expected to produce wines with lower buttery character, as yeast are able to metabolize diacetyl to acetoin and 2,3-butandiol, which have high sensory thresholds. In addition, a faster MLF tends to result in lower diacetyl concentrations.

Choice of *Oenococcus oeni* strain

Even though wine-associated LAB species are able to convert L-malic acid to L-lactic acid, *O. oeni* is the preferred LAB species for conducting MLF through production of desirable sensory characters; whereas other wine LAB tend to be associated with wine spoilage. However, recent trials in Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec have shown that strains of *Lactobacillus plantarum* are able to conduct an efficient MLF and also produce desirable sensory attributes in red wines.

Table 2. *Oenococcus oeni* strain characteristics that impact on wine aroma and flavor.

Strain descriptor	Wine sensory impact
Neutral	Minimal influence on flavor impact compounds
Buttery	Production of diacetyl
Fruity	Enhanced ester and norisoprenoid production
Mouth-feel	Impact on components affecting wine “body” and astringency
Glycosidase	High activity can result in liberation of fruity, floral notes, and enhance oak character (when oak is used)

Summary / considerations

Through ongoing research, there is a better understanding of how to use MLF to influence wine style. Choice of *O. oeni* strain, as well as timing of bacterial inoculation can be used to modulate MLF character in wines, including buttery or fruity-berry aromas of wine, and mouth-feel attributes. According to information provided by suppliers of malolactic bacterial strains, a summary of the ability of these strains to influence aroma and flavor characteristics during MLF is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of sensory characteristics of malolactic (ML) bacteria strains[#].

ML product	Buttery	Fruity	Palate	Other
ANPROLAC MLF	No information			
Biostart Bianco SK3	No	Enhanced	Neutral	
Biostart Forte SK2		Enhances		
Biostart Oenos SK1				Formation of typical MLF aromas
Biostart Vitale SK11	Some	Yes		
Enoferm Alpha MBR® (1-Step ALPHA)	Low	3 ★/4	4 ★/4 mouthfeel	
Enoferm Beta MBR® (1-Step BETA)	Moderate-high	4 ★/4		
Estremo IT06	Low			Varietal expression
Estremo IT14			Increase in body length	
Estremo X03				No information
Inoflore BL		Fruitier	Increase mouthfeel	
Inoflore R IOVB				Aromatically neutral
IOC Inobacter CIVIC, Epermay				No information
Lactoenos 350 PreAc				Aromatically neutral
Lactoenos 450 PreAc	Low			Aromatically neutral
Lactoenos SB3	Low			Aromatically neutral
Lalvin 31 MBR®	Low-moderate	Fruity		
Lalvin ICV Elios 1 MBR®	Moderate	Moderate		
Lalvin ICV Elios Blanc MBR®	Moderate	Moderate		
Lalvin MT01	Low			
Lalvin VP41 MBR® (1-Step VP41)	Low	3 ★/4, Red berry fruit aroma	4 ★/4 mouthfeel	
LittoMalique Blanc	None			
Malolac				No information
Maxiflore		Fruitier	Increased volume	
Microenos B16				No information
Natuflora Oenos				No information
Natuflora 44-40				No information
PN4 MBR® (1-Step PN4)	Moderate	1 ★/4	2 ★/4 mouthfeel,	spicy in Pinot Noir
Viniflora CH-11	Yes			
Viniflora CH-16				No information
Viniflora CH-35	Yes			
Viniflora CiNe	None			
Viniflora oenos				Neutral varietal expression
*V22 MBR®	High		Good mouthfeel	

How to love vermouth

W. Blake Gray July 20, 2015

Vermouth is the most underappreciated wine in the U.S.

Most people don't realize that vermouth IS wine: that's the beginning of the problem. Imagine how much you would like Pinot Noir if you only drank it after it had been open for two months at room temperature.

Recently I reviewed a new book about vermouth. The book is lousy, and that's a shame, because vermouth can use an advocate. Some readers asked me for recommendations both on which vermouths to buy and how to drink them: in other words, How to Love Vermouth.

Well, here you go.



1) Store vermouth in the fridge, and drink it cold.

It is possible to drink vermouth straight, but I prefer it on the rocks, just as is, no gin required. The exception is ultra-dry vermouths that are made specifically for martinis; those are the most boring, and it won't surprise the reader to learn they are the most popular in the U.S.

2) Vermouth adds interest to most cocktails, dinner, and your life itself.

Vermouth is made from fortified wine with added botanicals (herbs, roots, flowers, etc.) that differ tremendously by brand. The best ones are delicious and very complex by design. I love sweet vermouth in a Manhattan. Try adding a dash of dry (but not extra dry) vermouth to a gin and tonic. In fact, try adding a little fresh vermouth (see below) to just about anything. Julia Child preferred cooking with it to cooking with un-aromatized wine, because it adds more flavor. She also liked a reverse martini: 5 parts vermouth to 1 part gin. Try it.



3) In the fridge, an open bottle of vermouth lasts about as long as tawny Port.

You might get a month out of it, but drinking it after that will explain why there are so many one-liners about it, as when Winston Churchill said the best way to make a martini was with ice-cold gin and a bow in the direction of France. All of Churchill's vermouth at the time was old because France was in Nazi hands. Don't let the Nazis stop you from enjoying vermouth.

4) Go throw out that open bottle of vermouth in your liquor cabinet.

Seriously. Put the phone down and go pour that shit down the drain. I'll wait.

5) Go out and buy a new bottle.

This isn't a comprehensive list; there are other good vermouths in the world. But these are personal favorites, and the point of this article is not how to know all the world's vermouths. I encourage you to treat your vermouth purchase as you would any wine: buy something interesting, and don't be a cheapskate.

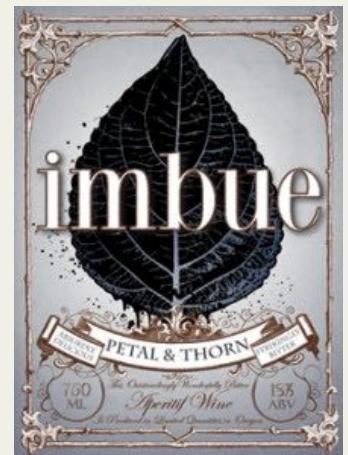
Carpano Antica Formula: A bartender favorite for Manhattans, this Italian sweet vermouth

is full-bodied and full-flavored with strong notes of dried cherries, cinnamon, cola, raisins, oranges and vanilla. Also good straight up cold or on the rocks. I list this one first because it's a great vermouth to start with: it can drink like a red wine, only more complex.

Imbue Petal and Thorn: My favorite U.S.-made vermouth. Made in Oregon from Pinot Gris grapes with brandy from Clear Creek, and colored by beets. It's so delightful straight or on the rocks that I can't bear to mix with it: bitter from botanicals like chamomile, but also fruity from ingredients like orange peel.

Noilly Prat Original Dry: The single best value in the wine world. It's made in south France from a 202-year-old formula that requires letting the wine (Picpoul and Clairette) age in ancient barrels outside in the hot sun, near the sea. Winemaking doesn't get more traditional than this. Plus it's delicious, with botanicals like clove, chamomile, nutmeg and bitter orange. Try it on the rocks with a slice of lemon peel; it's great with oysters. Don't settle for the Extra Dry, a less flavorful version made only for the U.S. because most Americans want less flavor in their martinis.

Massican: Dan Petroski makes some of the most interesting white wines in Napa Valley under the Massican label, and his vermouth is no exception. Petroski is new to vermouth making and thus I've noticed significant vintage variation to his vermouths. But hey, vermouth is wine, right? Try this one on the rocks.





Perucchi: Italy is the best-known country for sweet vermouths, and France is best-known for the dry style. But they drink more vermouth in Spain than in either of those places. Spanish bars often have vermouth on tap, and there's a huge range, very few of which are exported to the U.S. Perucchi is one of the easiest to find here. With most companies I have a clear favorite between white and red, but I like both of these: the white is spicy and refreshing; the red is rich, woody and complex. I like the white straight, the red on the rocks.

Vya sweet: Quady winery in the hot part of California has been making dessert wines for 40 years. In 1999 they got ahead of the curve by making the first of the new artisanal domestic vermouths from a blend of Tinta Roriz and Orange Muscat. This is a strong flavored vermouth, with cola and molasses notes, and goes well with rye whiskey in a Manhattan.

Walla Walla home to 2,836 vineyard acres

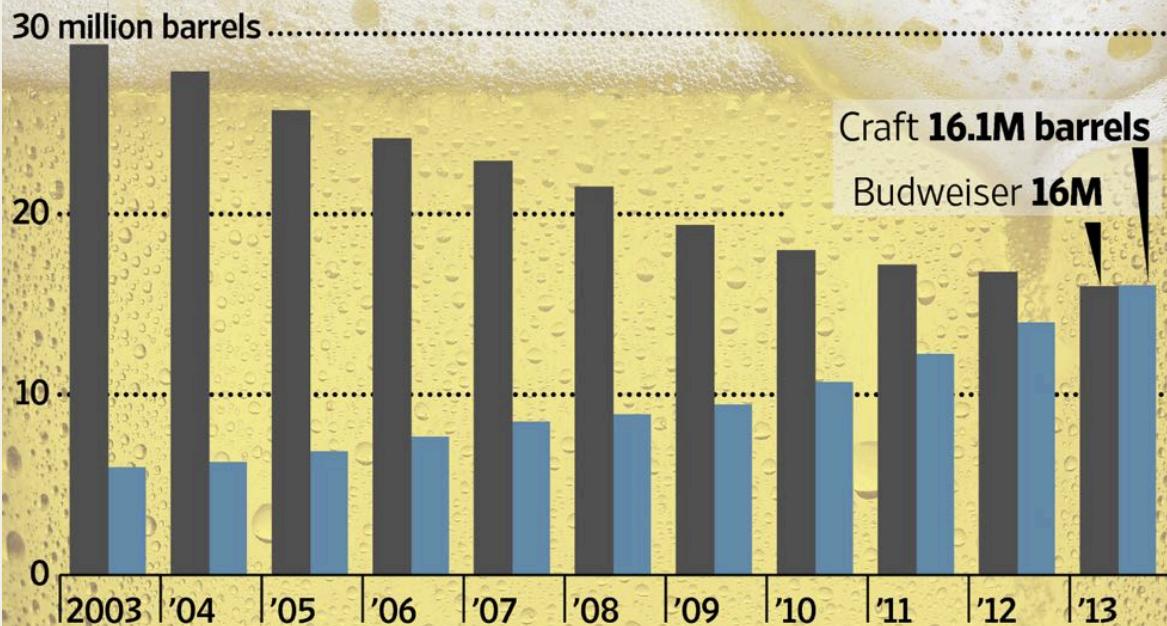
An assessment of the Walla Walla Valley AVA in Washington and Oregon found the appellation is home to 2,836 acres of planted vineyards, of which 36.6% is Cabernet Sauvignon. The report, organized by the Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance and the website everyvine.com, also found 57% of all planted acreage is on the Oregon side of the appellation. After Cabernet Sauvignon, the other top varieties and percentage of total vineyard acreage were: Syrah, 17.3%; Merlot, 17.1%; Cabernet Franc, 5.7%, and Malbec 4.4%.

For the beer lovers:

The ONE Incredible Chart That Shows How Craft Beer Forced Budweiser To Buy Miller

Battle of the Brew

Craft beer's growth pushes it past Budweiser in total barrels shipped.



Source: Beer Marketer's Insights; iStock (photo)

The Wall Street Journal

West Side Wine Club

Leadership Team – 2015

- 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 Bob Hatt & Jim Ourada helpers.

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@gmail.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@gmail.net Barbara Stinger & Mindy Bush – Helpers

- Awards Gala / Holliday parties

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

Webmaster: **David Ladd**