

Portland
Winemakers
Club



Portland Winemakers Club

November 2017

Monthly Rant

Scheduled Meetings

January 14, 2017

Annual Gala – Archer
Winery; 4-9 PM

January 18, 2017

Crush Talk / Planning

February 15, 2017

Bordeaux Tasting

March 15, 2017

PWC women winemakers
pouring their own
creations.

April 19, 2017

Barrel / Carboy Sample
Tasting

April, 2017

Tour:

May 17, 2017

Speaker: Rich Decenzo;
ETS Labs.

June, 21, 2017

Speaker: Don Hagge
owner of Vidon vineyards

July, 15 2017

Annual Picnic at Oak Knoll
Winery (no regular
meeting in July)

August 16, 2017

All Whites Tasting

September 20, 2017

Other Reds Tasting

October 18, 2017

Pinot Noir Tasting

November 2017

No Meeting

December 6, 2017

Planning, Tours,
Speakers, Events,
Elections



As everyone is aware, fires posed a huge problem last month for the California wine industry. Especially since they arrived during the busiest time of the year, crush. Fires ended up burning a total of 199,000 acres in the area, about 5.3% of Napa, Sonoma and Mendocino counties, though most of it unfortunately was in residential areas. More than 10 wineries sustained damage, but only 3 were ultimately destroyed, which is amazing considering the ferocity of the blazes and their proximity to the vineyards. Apparently the reason more damage wasn't sustained was that vineyards themselves are natural firebreaks. This held the spread of flames in check, but smoke was another problem and some wineries ended up losing crop to damage from that. Others were able to harvest, or already had, but there were still problems in that production people had trouble getting to work at a time when the wines needed daily tending.

In the aftermath, there is now concern about the economic impact, beyond the loss of the actual product. Tasting room visitation is normally huge during harvest, and it has fallen severely at most locations. Not only does this mean a loss of revenue at the wineries, but it also hurts the hospitality industry, hotels and restaurants. Many rely on the fall to make up for slower times during winter and all are suffering to some extent. So if you're contemplating a trip down there its time to pack up and visit, apparently there are many deals being offered and crowds are light. We can be relieved that no such calamity has affected our NW grape growing regions, but as they say "There but for the grace of God..."

Drink Responsibly.
Drive Responsibly.

Misc. Information

• **Proposed AVA would be second smallest in Oregon**
Brad Ford of Illahe Vineyards has petitioned the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) to establish the Mount Pissgah appellation in Oregon's Polk County. The proposed AVA would include 10 vineyards and two wineries and, at 530 acres, be the second-smallest appellation in the state.

• California farmers report labor shortages

A survey conducted by the California Farm Bureau Federation found more than half of farmers in the state experienced labor shortages during the past year. Farmers who use seasonal labor reported even higher numbers, with 69% experiencing labor shortages, according to the voluntary survey of 750 farmers and ranchers. Farmers experiencing shortages reported available staffing was as low as 50% of what was needed.

• REX HILL Wins Robert Parker Wine Advocate Extraordinary Winery Award.

"We are truly proud to be one of just eight wineries recognized from the entire Americas region in the first class of Wine Advocate honorees."

• **The physicist Niels Bohr** is said to have remarked that predictions are hard, especially about the future.

• **In February 2015, Trevor David Jones went to rival Kellermeister Wines** in the Barossa Valley and opened valves to drain 27,000 liters of shiraz & chardonnay worth almost \$300,000 from four of the company's tanks following a family breakdown. Destroyed was 27,000 liters of wine. Jones received a suspended jail sentence.

Note: The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, December 6th at 7:00 PM at Oak knoll Winery. December agenda: Elections; future tours; future speakers; events etc. Come with a bottle of wine to share and your ideas for what we should be doing in 2018.

This 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/>

October Meeting Minutes

(Present: 25)

- Everyone is reminded that there is no meeting in November.
- Marilyn Brown passed around a sign up sheet for the major protein dishes for our annual Gala. The cost will be reimbursed. The Gala will be held on January 13th. A location is yet to be determined. There will be a fee of \$15 per person at the door.
- New people in attendance tonight are: Bruce & Linda Becking and Al Weiss. All have made some wine in the past.
- Bob Hatt said he has some natural corks for sale. His e-mail is. bhatt@synopsys.com
- Paul Boyechko said Crush2Cellars also has corks available in 100 & 200 count bags.

Paul Rogers and Barb Stinger conducted the Pinot Noir tasting. The tasting results are listed below in order tasted.

Wine #	Name	Varietal	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total Score	Medal Score	Medal	Rank
1	K. Stinger	Pinot Noir 2016	6	16	3	53	2.12	Silver	3
2	Alex Knotts	Pinot Noir 2016			24	24	0.96	Bronze	9
3	Bob Hatt	Pinot Noir 2015	1	9	15	36	1.44	Bronze	5
4	Hoffard/Hoosen	Pinot Noir 2015		1	20	22	0.88	Bronze	10
6	Jon Kahrs	Pinot Noir 2015	9	14	1	56	2.24	Silver	1
7	Phil Bard	Pinot Noir 2014		11	14	36	1.44	Bronze	5
8	Bill Brown	Pinot Noir 2014	7	15	3	54	2.16	Silver	2
9	Hoffard/Hoosen	Pinot Noir 2014	2	14	9	43	1.72	Silver	4
10	S. Nachimuthu	Pinot Noir 2014		9	16	34	1.36	Bronze	7
11	Bill Brown	Pinot Noir 2014		9	16	34	1.36	Bronze	7



Newport Seafood & Wine Fest



This is an early reminder that the Newport Seafood & Wine competition is coming up in January. Each entry must have a completed registration form. All entries must be received by the Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce no later than January 26, 2018 or to a drop site (F.H. Steinbart) no later than January 19, 2018. Details at: <http://seafoodandwine.com/>

Winemaking: The Secrets of Fermentation

Uncovering The Mysteries That Take Place When Sugar is Converted into Alcohol

What actually happens during the fermentation process and how can this affect the flavors in our favorite beverage? Wine writer Caroline Gilby MW explains.

Life - or at least much of the food and drink that gives us pleasure - would be so much duller without microbes. We are surrounded by these microscopic life forms, some of which play a key role in transforming simple raw ingredients into something with complex flavor. **Bread, beer, cheese, cider, coffee, tea, chocolate, yoghurt, soy sauce, olives, vinegar and, of course, wine are just some of the fermented foods people enjoy so much.**

In the wine world we talk a lot about the winemakers, the terroir and the grape variety, but without the array of microbes that transform simple grape juice into the delicious liquid we know as wine, none of the rest of the wine story would be possible.

The magic of microbes

I would like to introduce you to, taking center stage, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, literally translated as 'Sugar Fungus'. It was Louis Pasteur who first connected yeast to fermentation back in 1876 and today we know that the most important species in winemaking is *S. cerevisiae*. It metabolizes (or feeds on) simple sugars like glucose and fructose found in grape juice (and sucrose added to enrich alcohol levels) and produces ethanol and carbon dioxide (CO₂ for short) along with a whole host of other by-products that add flavor and aroma to wine. For still wines, it is the alcohol that is important (and actually getting rid of the CO₂ safely to avoid its suffocating effects is a challenge in the winery), while for makers of sparkling wine, trapping the CO₂ bubbles inside the bottle is a vital part of the process.



'So what is special about *S. cerevisiae*?'

Alcohol is toxic to all living cells but this yeast can actually survive at much higher alcohol levels than other species of yeast, particular the variants that ferment wine. This is essential where wines like Amarone (for instance Allegrini Corte Giara Amarone) or weighty Australian numbers (such as Rockford Basket Press Shiraz) can reach 15% alcohol and more quite easily. It also survives a good dose of the universal wine 'disinfectant': Sulphur dioxide (SO₂). This is widely used by winemakers early on to kill off or inhibit more sensitive rogue microbes that could cause spoilage and help leave the way clear for a good strong fermentation by the right yeast.

Often people believe that yeasts come into the winery on the skin of ripe grapes - hidden in the waxy 'bloom' that coats the fruit surface. However, research suggests that *S. cerevisiae* is pretty rare in the vineyards, if it can be found at all (for instance it is even rarer in wet years), but there are a whole bunch of other yeasts (with nice easy-to-spell names like *Pichia*, *Kluyveromyces*, *Candida*, *Kloeckera*, *Hanseniaspora*, *Rhodotorula*) that do appear on grape skins and almost certainly start the fermentation (unless they have been killed off).

These other yeasts tend to die off at around 3-4% alcohol at which point *S. cerevisiae* takes over and if all goes well, it finishes the fermentation off fully to end up with a dry wine. But there's still the question of how this yeast appears and it seems it is almost certainly from winery equipment, which is impossible to sterilize, and the ubiquitous 'fruit flies' found in wineries around harvest are great at carrying microbes around the winery.

Selective strains

That's how wine might ferment naturally, but needless to say there is a huge commercial industry based on selecting strains of *S. cerevisiae* that have useful winemaking characteristics, originally selected from wineries. These are for sale as bags of active dried yeast, which can be added to a vat early on to ensure a good strong fermentation gets under way quickly. Most winemakers use selected yeast nowadays as they like to sleep at night without worrying about 'stuck' ferments where yeast struggles to finish its job. Winemakers can select strains that are good at releasing flavor from sauvignon blanc for instance, or can tolerate particularly high alcohol levels. There are strains that can help reduce the level of sharp malic acid, or contain 'killer' factors to help outcompete other microorganisms that happen to get into the vat. Sparkling winemakers can choose yeast that flocculate (clump together) well to help them remove the sludge of dead yeast from the bottle more easily, and so on.

The call of the wild

However, there are increasing numbers of winemakers who are returning to tradition and insisting on 'natural', 'wild', or 'spontaneous' fermentations using so-called indigenous yeast. This often (but not always) goes hand-in-hand with organic or biodynamic winemaking. Domaine Guillemot-Michel in Burgundy is one example, 'We limit our interventions in the cellar to those that are strictly necessary. Our musts (grape juice) are left to settle in the cold overnight to separate the clear juice. The alcoholic fermentation then happens naturally thanks to our indigenous yeast.'

Paul Draper at Ridge in California is another who believes in natural fermentations. He has been quoted (in an article for *Enology*) as saying, 'Originally, we did it because philosophically, it allows us to step out of the way and guide the development of the wine instead of thinking of ourselves as creators. You are allowing the wine in a sense, to make itself.' He also admits though, 'There is no guarantee that you're going to make a better wine - it may be lousy. On the other hand, you may get a really lovely wine from someone who has used an inoculated fermentation, has watched his wines and maybe even sterile-filtered the wine.'

Kevin Judd of Greywacke in New Zealand is a keen proponent of wild yeast fermentation. His Greywacke Wild Sauvignon, chardonnay and pinot noir are made exclusively using indigenous yeasts while all other aromatic whites are made using 50% wild yeasts. While he loves the extra element that he believes wild yeasts bring to a wine, due to their unpredictable nature he says that sometimes the outcome can be a bit disappointing if the wine is not 'funky' enough! This is recognition that so called wild ferments can be very risky - especially for wines from warmer regions with high alcohol and higher pH (or low acid levels). Typically, the number of yeast cells at the beginning is low, so the fermentation takes longer to get going. This can be good for complexity but is risky too as there is plenty of opportunity for rogue microbes to get going, with production of acetic acid (vinegar), ethyl acetate (unwanted nail polish smell) and other dirty flavors. In addition, a winemaker doesn't know what yeast strain is going to ferment the wine and whether it is actually any good for winemaking. Some yeasts get 'stuck' and die off too early leaving wine with unfermented sugar while others can give bad flavors like hydrogen sulfide (bad egg gas).

Even believers in 'wild ferments' will resort to bags of yeast on occasion. A recent innovation is to try and mimic the complexity of such wild fermentations by using a commercial non-*Saccharomyces* yeast to start things off (*Torulasporea delbruecki* is one showing promise) then following up with *S. cerevisiae*.

Whichever route winemakers choose, we have a lot to thank those microscopic workers for in making our favorite drink.



Wine maker's nightmare: Re-fermentation and unstable sweet wines, and how to avoid.

Drew Horton, Enology Specialist
Matt Clark, Assistant Professor
12/8/2016

No doubt about it, one of the worst things that can happen with a wine is re-fermentation in the bottle. Instead of a beautifully-colored wine with brilliant clarity, you discover a once-perfect wine has become cloudy and bubbly, or even worse, numerous "bottle bombs" are exploding in the cellar or on winery or retail shelves, or at the least, corks are pushing out of the bottle. This is a disaster.

Whenever there is any amount of unfermented sugar in a bottle of wine, the wine risks re-fermenting. This article is really about sweet white or rosé wines, but also applies to any non-dry red wine as well.

There are a variety of methods, techniques and additions that can help eliminate or reduce this risk.

Firstly, overall winery sanitation is the most important. Each and every surface; tank, pump, hose, valve, bottle-filler, or corker that comes into contact with wine must be clean and sanitized. There are many ways to sanitize, but none of them will work unless the surface is first cleaned. Cleaning is the removal of dirt or other residue from a surface, sanitizing is the killing of all microbes on a surface. A wine maker needs to do both when handling any sweet wine.

When preparing a wine for bottling, the first step after blending (if any blending is to be done) is to treat the wine with bentonite, which removes excess protein and keeps the wine heat stable. A complete and exhaustive article on the use of bentonite is available on the internet, posted by Purdue University
Extension: <https://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/fs/fs-53-w.pdf>

After the bentonite treatment, some method of achieving cold-stability must also be done. Traditional cold-contact treatments are the norm, but they do require the wine be super-chilled. This means bringing the wine close to, or just at,

freezing for a period of 5 to 15 days, depending on the amount of excess tartaric acid in the wine, among other variables. It should be noted that there are new preparations of mannoproteins and cellulose that can provide almost instant cold-stability, but they lack the often-beneficial side effect of traditional cold-contact stabilization which can reduce the overall total acidity in a wine by precipitating excess tartaric acid in the form of crystals. See this link to the Laffort website for alternate cold-stabilization methods and products: <http://laffort.com/en/products/stabilisation>

Electrical conductivity tests can be done by a laboratory to confirm that cold-stability has been achieved.

The addition of a sweetener (sugar, sweet reserve juice, or concentrate) should happen late in the wine preparation process, usually between a nominal rough and polish filtration step is best. Any extra time a wine is in storage with any sugar it risks re-starting fermentation. During the aging and storage period for a wine with existing natural residual sugar, you are advised to pre-filter the wine and keep the wine at a cold-enough temperature (45 degrees F or less) and with sufficient free sulfur (based on wine pH) in order to inhibit re-fermentation.

So, with this now blended, heat and cold stabilized wine, you are ready to start final filtration and any final sweetening. Keep in mind when discussing filtration that there are both "nominal" and "absolute" filtration equipment and techniques.

Nominal filtrations are achieved by the use of sheet or pad filtration, sometimes used with DE (diatomaceous earth), in a plate and frame type of filter. Cross-flow filtration, though it does not require DE or filter sheets, is also to be considered a nominal filtration and not "absolute".

Nominal filtration (sometimes called depth filtration) will remove 99.9% of bacteria and yeast cells. Only absolute (aka sterile membrane) filtration will keep the wine 100% free of bacteria and yeast cells. Sterile membrane filter cartridges and housings are not inexpensive, and they must be integrity tested both before and after use. If a wine is not pre-filtered well, membranes will plug quickly.

In lieu of the use of absolute sterile membrane filtration, and the use of strict chemical or heat sterilization of all bottling/capping/corking equipment, you can consider the use of a yeast fermentation *inhibitor* such as Sorbic acid, usually used in the form of powdered Potassium Sorbate. The big issue with sorbate is that it does not guarantee stabilization, and it must be used properly and in conjunction with proper levels of free sulfur. Also, if used in large amounts, or in a wine that may undergo spontaneous malolactic fermentation, there is a risk of "geranium-smell taint." Also, above a certain level, some consumers will notice the smell and taste of sorbate. Here is a link to an article on the nature and proper use of sorbate : <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/wine/sites/www.extension.iastate.edu/files/wine/SorbicAcid1.pdf>

If you are able to produce a sweet wine with alcohol at or above 13% and a pH below 3.5, then sorbate may be an option to help stabilize the wine without the use of absolute sterile membrane filtration, and without the risk of geranium taint. A low alcohol wine (say 11% or below) with high pH (above 3.6) and any amount of residual sugar is virtually impossible to stabilize and guarantee stability without the use of a high-speed bottling line utilizing integrity-tested absolute sterile membrane filter equipment.

Keep in mind, though, that an absolute sterile membrane is only a doorway, with dirty on one side and sterile on the other. Any downstream equipment (i.e., post-membrane), such as valves, hoses and bottle-filler that are not also completely sterile, can allow even a few bacteria or yeast cells to enter the bottle, and can lead to re-fermentation. If you have ever spent a few hours, or days, "de-corking" and attempting to re-treat and re-bottle a wine that has become unstable or is re-fermenting, you will take the preceding to heart.



YOUR OWN WINE

by Wayne Stitzer

There is something to be said for those who seek knowledge; they will often search far and wide only to discover it was right in front of them all the time. It's no different for people who make wine. Most winemakers, whether at home or in a winery, are constantly looking to improve their products. They search the Internet, read books, take classes, ask friends, and some even travel the world. However, what many of them don't do is look at what they have made before.

Few home winemakers and, surprisingly, even fewer professional winemakers keep a wine library or even good records of what they have already made. A wine library is just what it sounds like -- a collection of wines you have made, saved by vintage year, variety and style. These wines are kept in a place conducive for long-term storage to improve in the bottle, as would any commercial wines you might buy. This, in combination with detailed notes of the production of your wines, will eventually tell a story you cannot find on the Internet, in books, from your friends or by traveling the world. It is your personal history of growth and progress.

Only by going back and tasting past vintages can you know if you are making better wine. Memory fades, but it all comes back with just a little sip. I hear different reasons why some people don't age their wines; home winemakers say it's because

their friends drink it all up and commercial winemakers say they need to sell every last bottle to maintain profitability, not realizing what they no longer have is priceless.

I can understand hobbyists not keeping records. After all, it's for fun and when we are having fun who wants to take notes? But when I find that a winery has little or no cellar notes I have to wonder, because it's usually required by law. Notes and records should go beyond the usual Brix, acidity and pH. Personal comments or observations can also be of great value later. Yes, the numbers say something, but your thoughts at the time will tell a lot more.

An example would be trying a new yeast strain. Just noting its name or number may be all you think you need, but what about the reason for trying it and the result of its use with regard to your expectations. After all, why make a change if you are not going to monitor it?

Many times while tasting client wines I may ask a question like, "Why does Tank A taste different than Tank B?" The answer may be that they used a different yeast. But when I ask why they usually don't remember. Records may show the date and type but not the why. Trying new things is good but only if you have reason and a "before and after" to know if it worked. When you finally cellar wine from tanks A and B you will have something better than notes.

When I work with winemakers who have both notes and past vintages it makes all the difference in trying to help with a problem or just give pointers for improvement. By having a history to look back on I can make more informed recommendations.

As you move from vintage to vintage you should bring with you everything from the year before and the year before that. This accumulation of information could prove to be invaluable in the future.

The anxiety and rush of harvest makes for a hectic environment. Taking notes, making records and thinking about putting wine in the bottle are far from your mind, however, it should be as instinctive as checking Brix. I find that people who start early in the process of keeping records will have a wine library as well.

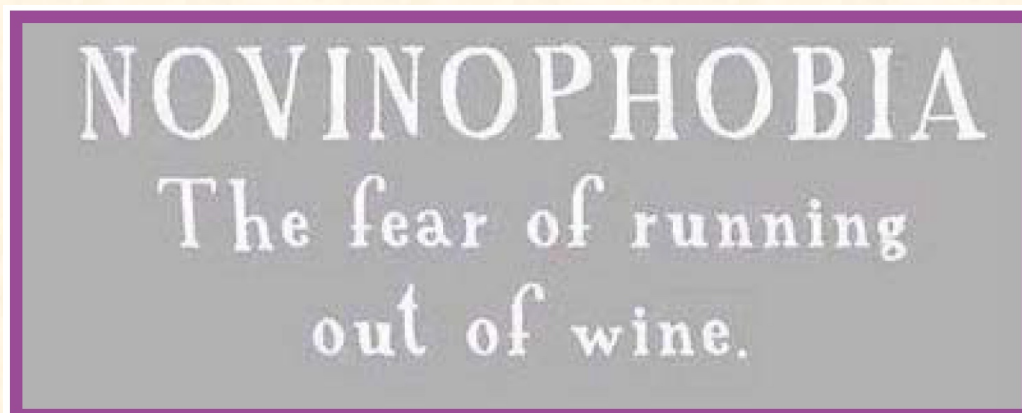
What can a past vintage reveal? As a wine enthusiast, I expect you have been to tasting events where flights of different vintages were offered for tasting, without even thinking that you could do the same with your wines. When most people think of comparing vintage years they think of the growing season and influence of the weather. You should also compare tasting style and technique and reflect on all the factors that went into the making of that wine.

When you start making a wine, there is usually a vision (or at least should be) about what you want as an end product; this vision guides you through the process until the end. You should also be thinking ahead of that, way ahead of that, to years from now when someone somewhere is tasting your wine. Is it still what you envisioned when you started to make it? There is only one way to know for sure; go to your wine library. What you will find is more than just bottles of red and white wine. It's also memories of the stories that went with each label, how it suddenly began to rain just as you started picking the grapes, or how a fuse blew just as the crusher was plugged in or who stayed late with you that night until the last squeeze of the press. Those are the things that can only be found in your library.

When you taste someone else's wine all you get is aroma and flavor, but when you taste your wine you get a story that can't be found anywhere but there.

Remember, all vintage years tell a story. Somehow, we have been trained only to focus on the good years, but the off years can be instructive as well. Seldom can a winery forgo an entire vintage; they are challenged but make something. Those challenges are a valuable learning tool. It takes more work, skill and knowledge to make good wine in a bad year than it does in a good year, making that wine more valuable to the winemaker.

Hopefully by now you have a better understanding of the need for a wine library and all the benefits it can bring in the years to come. Knowing your wine is the best education you can give yourself.



Smoke Taint Misconceptions

San Rafael, Calif.—Winemakers in Northern California wine regions struck by wildfires have a legitimate worry about how widespread smoke may affect the quality of wines made from grapes harvested after the inferno began.

Here are six misconceptions about smoke taint to be aware of:

Misconception 1) Smoke is less of a risk late in the growing season: An Australian study found that taint was the most elevated when smoke exposure occurred in the period from seven days after *véraison* to the harvest date. California wildfires clearly erupted in that time period. Eric Herve of ETS Laboratories adds: “Grapes will keep passively adsorbing smoke volatile organic compounds as long as smoke is present.”

Misconception 2) Washing the grapes can manage smoke taint: The compounds that cause smoke taint are already inside the grapes. A bulletin from the UC Davis Department of Viticulture and Enology states that “smoke-derived volatile phenols can be absorbed both directly via the berry cuticle and via the leaves and translocated to the fruit.”

Misconception 3) Smoke can affect next year’s crop, too: Numerous sources and studies confirm that smoke taint does not linger in the plant in a way that could affect the quality of future harvests.

Misconception 4) Reverse osmosis permanently removes smoke taint: Reverse osmosis can remove smoke-derived compounds, but the taint returns over time, the UC Davis bulletin states. Basically, the smoke effects are temporarily bound up in the chemistry of the wine but can be released as the wine ages. Bob Kreisher of Mavrik North America disputes this, saying, “Membrane methods have come a long way.”

Misconception 5) Fining is an effective solution for smoke-tainted wine: Fining can effectively “clean” the smoke taint out of a wine, but fining is not a very selective process, so it will also remove many favorable attributes from a wine along with the smoke-derived compounds, the bulletin states. Fining could be counterproductive to use on potentially high-quality wines.

Misconception 6) Smoke taint in a wine diminishes as the wine ages: On the contrary, smoke taint is likely to increase with time. Industry supplier Scott Laboratories recommends on its website numerous treatments to mitigate smoke taint but adds, “Smoke-related characteristics can evolve over time, so early consumption is recommended whenever possible.”



Is Barrel Aging Even Ethical?

By: Angus Paul 1 Nov. 2017

Yes, I know that does sounds like clickbait. While it may seem I am writing a promotion piece for Greenpeace, or a stainless steel tank company, this piece is coming a different angle, so to speak. In fact, I cannot even name a steel tank company off-hand. The title question may send tingles of annoyance, or smirks of dismissal, but it begs the question: is barrel aging in new oak a flavor enhancer? Well, yes, factually this is true. Is it cheating, in so far as creating a product not created from grapes, and thus...fraud? Yes, but no one cares – and that’s frankly over dramatic and hyperbolic. However, lets explore... Not too long ago, a scandal took place, involving flavor additives/concentrates being added to Sauvignon blanc. The concentrate was wholly organic – pressed straight from a fruit, or blended or whatever. The details differ, the source material (the fruit) remains the same. The process and product was harmless. The offense lay in the perversion of industrial honesty, whatever that is.

Bureaucracy is a theatre stage, the paperwork props and curtains can often distort right from wrong; presentation and delivery often create their own morality. Our friends above were none too subtle, had they used pepper stems or something a little more creative, I’m sure their careers may be more intact.

In my opinion – and I think this is indisputable, when scrutinized – barrel extraction and pouring green pepper concentrate into wine are identical process, when we speak in terms of intentions. They are both literal flavor additions, the latter technique just lacks refinement. Yes, barrels have a multitude of other benefits, most notably, micro-oxidation, but the toasted oak extraction is often the most desired benefit – else, why spend such money on new oak? As a point of consideration, micro-oxidation might also seem like a flavor additive, but now you can see the rabbit hole digging itself. We shall remain more direct in our examples.

Moving to something less direct, but far more profound, we can consider Sulphur. The effect Sulphur dioxide has on wine is without parallel, hence its ubiquity. It’s an antioxidant, antiseptic and a color stabilizer. A wine with a good Sulphur wick six months down the line, tastes *very* different from one without. The common mantra is that a bit of Sulphur keeps the wine’s

integrity. From here, we start to enter the realms of metaphysics: Sulphur is a preservative, it cuckolds oxygen and bullies microbes, as such, it keeps the flavor mutators at bay and therefore, whatever flavors that were there already, in place. So are we preserving grapes or are we creating wine? Wine is not grape juice, it has been transformed. We strive so hard to preserve these grape flavors with careful oenology, and yet try equally hard to ensure our wine is as wine-like as possible. Something of a paradox.

Setting the riddle of Sulphur aside, its pure effects are powerful. Furthermore, Sulphur itself is a nasty chemical to boot, and yet we allow it. While I have got sidetracked on the issues above, the takeaway message is one of hypocrisy. Some products are permitted for manipulation of wine and some are not, for seemingly inconsistent reasoning. Some have more direct flavor effects than others, though direct or indirect it doesn't matter, the only reason something would be added to wine would be to influence the organoleptic properties of the wine, as that is the ultimate purpose of the stuff. Wood has heritage, Sulphur is too important to skip. Adding green pepper juice is perhaps just a push too obvious, too direct, too in slavery to marketing: an offense to the art. There seems to be a line here, that divides wrong from right, but it is very skew.



OREGON PINOT – THOUGHTS FROM A FRENCH WINEMAKER

February 8, 2017 by Nicolas Quille

I have always had a soft spot for Burgundy. Growing up in Lyon, we always drank Burgundies on special occasions. My first winery job as a teen was in Burgundy. It is this summer job, in the village of Mercury in the heart of the Cote Chalonnaise, that gave me the desire to work in the wine industry. Consequently I went to school for winemaking in Dijon for two years during which I have spent countless “training days” in the cozy cellars of other blissful Burgundian schoolmates. When I close my eyes and think about what I would do if I could be whatever I want in the wine industry, making wine in Burgundy always comes at the top of the list (okay, I'll admit Champagne is a close second). It is not only the memories or the nostalgia of younger years that attracts me to Burgundy – it is the wines themselves. Burgundies are elegant and restrained, they are not attempting to please but only trying to be who they are. There is something beautiful about Burgundians ability to allow the land to be the focus and their brand or name second. Burgundians are shy and are perfectly happy to settle as discrete styles of wines that speak softly. Burgundies are little like me, not effusive, not showy, introverted and yet aspiring to greatness.

It should then come to no surprise that I am thoroughly excited about making Pinot Noir in Oregon. First, because Oregon is the next best place to make Pinot Noir after Burgundy; and second, making Pinot Noir anywhere is better than not making it at all. Oregon has the “it” factor in the New World as far as suitability to Pinot Noir. The Willamette Valley in particular is able to produce what I think is the closest ersatz to Burgundy (I also would concede easily that New Zealand also has “it”). The Pinot Noirs from Oregon have the delicate fruit born from its cool climate origin and the character and typicity of a great Pinot Noir. Oregon Pinot has nothing in common with their California neighbors – Oregonians are speaking with subtlety and delicacy which is unfortunately not as marketable as the power, intensity and concentration of its southern neighbor. For the Pinot Noir lover, Oregon offers a lovely bridge between the New World and Burgundy. Not to mention Oregon offers an incredible value to the Burgundy lover.

In Oregon, for some unexplained reason, Pinot Gris has taken second place ahead of Chardonnay. I guess Pinot Gris makes a lot of sense in Oregon (Chardonnay does also by the way), because its pink skin demands cooler climates and careful handling similar to Pinot Noir in order to avoid too much phenolic extraction. Note that Pinot Gris and Pinot Grigio are the same grape and Pinot Grigio (together referred to “PG” forward). Pinot Grigio is the Italian version and since the vast majority of PG wines made in Italy are rounder, rather neutral wines (this is a broad generality of course – there are many excellent and expressive PG in Italy), most consumers attach the name Pinot Grigio to easy sipping, refreshing PG. This is why many producers of PG (even in the USA) use the Pinot Grigio name to communicate they are selling a quaffable PG. I actually remember a winery that saw their sales quadruple after changing their labels from Pinot Gris to Pinot Grigio – a strong incentive if any! Pinot Gris is mostly used by Alsations and Oregonians though they have two widely different styles since Alsatian Pinot Gris are often off dry and extremely aromatic while Oregonian Pinot Gris show restraint and are quasi bone dry. Confused yet? Perhaps all you have to know is that Oregon is carving itself a niche as a top producer of Pinot Gris in the new world with a dry steely style.



NAKED WINES: NUDE GRAPE PICKERS BRAVE HARVEST IN THE BUFF

31st October, 2017 by Lauren Eads

A group of naturists braved the inclement French weather to pick grapes completely nude, with only a plastic poncho to protect themselves from the elements.

Seven men and one woman took to a small parcel of vineyard in the commune of Crest in Puy-de-Dôme, in central France, earlier this month to pick grapes as nature intended, completely naked, as reported by *connexionfrance.com*.

A local by-law allows the naturists to harvest for a set amount of time, and in a clearly-defined area of the vineyard, with the remote location meaning they were unlikely to be seen by a member of the public.

Wearing only a plastic poncho and shoes to protect against the muddied ground, the group told *France 3* that the practice of picking grape in the nude allowed them to feel closer to nature, adding that they intended to return next year.

“We have wanted to harvest this way for a long time,” said one member of the group, Thierry Guillot. “We chose a vineyard that we know and like. Naturism is a mindset. We are very close to nature, and being able to move without fabric; without a polluting barrier, is such a pleasure” adding: “Naturism is about tolerance. We never judge each other; it’s one big family. When you have tasted [what naturism is like], you cannot go back to fabric.”



Responses:

- Not to be confused with natural wine
- I would have thought if you were in the buff a poncho was a bit unnecessary
- Hope they were careful with those secateurs (google it)



Portland Winemakers Club

Leadership Team - 2017

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 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: **Marilyn Brown** brown.marilynjean@gmail.com

- Arrange speakers for our meetings

Chair for Tastings: **Paul Rogers & Barb Stinger** paulgrogers@fastmail.fm
kbstinger@frontier.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: **Bob Hatt** 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: **Don Robinson** don.robinson.pdx@gmail.com

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

Chairs for Social Events : **Marilyn Brown & Alice Bonham** bbgoldieguy@gmail.com
alice@alicedesigns.org

- Awards Gala / Holliday parties

Web Content Editor: **Alice Bonham** alice@alicedesigns.org Web Host: **Phil Bard**