

# Portland Winemakers Club

August 2021

## “Bill’s Meanderings”



### Monthly Events

January 2021

Annual Gala **CANCELLED**

January 20th, 2021

Speaker, Mike Smolak, Port  
**ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

February 17th, 2021

Speaker, Syncline, James  
Mantone, Rhone varietals  
**ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

March 17th

Speaker: Tyson Crowley from  
Crowley Winery, Pinot &  
Chardonnay  
**ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

April 21st, 2021

Speaker: Bobby Rowett  
winemaker for Mellen Meyer  
Sparkling Winery  
**ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

May 19th, 2021

To be determined  
**ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

June 16th, 2021

To be determined  
**ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

July 24th, 2021

Outdoor, contact meeting at  
Paul Natale’s home; 2:00 to 5:00  
pm.

August 21st, 2021, Annual

Picnic, At the home of Craig &  
Mindy Bush.

August, no meeting

September 15th, 2021

To be determined

October 20th, 2021

To be determined

November 17th, 2021

Crush Talk

December 15th, 2021

Elections, Planning for Next Year,  
More Crush Talk



Greetings from hot, dry, and dusty Newberg.

It has certainly been hot and dry but we are looking forward to a cool down this weekend with a possibility of some rain. With all the sun and warmth, the fruit on the vines seem to be on the same schedule as last year, at least in my neighborhood, and we recently started seeing color in the fruit. Recent notes from Jim Jamison on his Eastern Washington fruit indicate he is about a week earlier than last year. Whenever the harvest will be it looks like a plentiful crop.

We had our first in person meeting last month and it was a great success. Thanks to Paul and Jolain Natale we had a shaded spot under a big oak tree next to their vineyard. While someone may have been a little rusty on running a tasting meeting the white wine blind tasting went off well with around 12 wines to sample. Needless to say, the meeting ran a little long and, besides someone’s chair leg tumbling down a gopher

Hole, no other mishaps were recorded. Thanks again to Paul and Jolain for hosting the club. Next month there will be no club meeting but there will be a club picnic on Saturday Aug 21st. Details will be outlined further in this newsletter.

Cheers! Bill Brown



## Portland Winemakers Club PICNIC

Saturday August 21, 2021

2pm to 6pm. Cost: \$10 per person

Craig and Mindy Bush's house

1660 SW 187th

Beaverton, Oregon 97003

Please bring a dish to share, a side, salad, starter, or dessert. The meat and protein dishes are covered except for the beef. Bring your receipt to the picnic for reimbursement. Ideas for beef plate - roast, brisket or ribs.

Bring your handcrafted wines, bubbles and cider, a glass and chair. The plates and utensils will be provided.

This is a wonderful event for the club. Thank you, Bush family for hosting! It is great to be able to get back to it and hope to see you there!

Marilyn Brown and Mindy Bush  
Events



## Upcoming events/ Save the date

**No meeting scheduled for August..** The next event will be our annual picnic to be held at the home of Craig & Mindy Bush on August 21<sup>st</sup> starting at 2:00 Pm. Address & other instructions. On page #1.

If you haven't already, be sure to renew your club membership and sign a new waiver.

[Website: http://portlandwinemakersclub.com/](http://portlandwinemakersclub.com/)

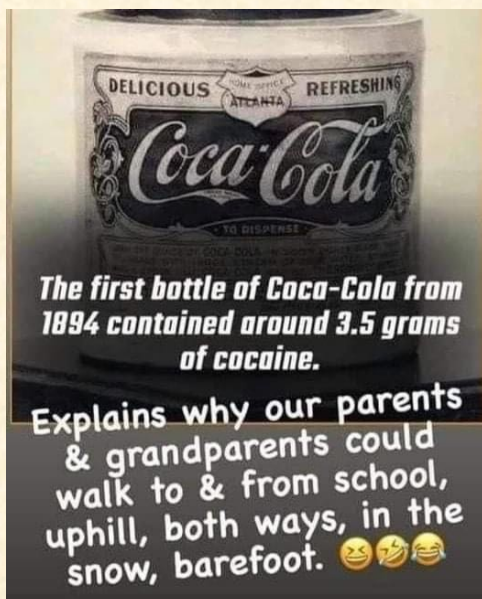
## Minutes from the July Meeting

**Attendance: 29 at Natale home vineyard**

- There will not be an August meeting.
- Paul Natale's vineyard contains most clones of Pinot Noir except for Wädenswil also Chardonnay. They will be available for member purchase this Fall.
- The annual picnic will be held on August 21<sup>st</sup> at the home of Craig & Mindy Bush.

**Barb Stinger & Brian Bowels conducted the blind tasting of member's white wine.  
The results are shown on the table below**

<u>Wine #</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Varietal</u>	<u>Gold</u>	<u>Silver</u>	<u>Bronze</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>Total Score</u>	<u>Medal Score</u>	<u>Medal</u>
1	Brian & Jolie Bowels	2020 Albariño	15	11	3	0	70	2.41	Silver
2	Rob & Debbie Marr	2020 Chardonnay	3	3	23	0	38	1.31	Bronze
3	Barb Thomson	2020 Viognier	8	16	5	0	61	2.10	Silver
4	Bob Hatt	2020 Albariño	5	15	9	0	54	1.86	Silver
5	Bob Hatt	2020 Viognier	12	13	4	0	66	2.28	Silver
6	Rob & Debbie Marr	2020 Rose' (pinot noir)	0	6	23	0	35	1.21	Bronze
7	Hank Armstrong	2020 Rose' (pinot noir)	0	2	21	6	25	0.86	Bronze
8	Andy Mocny	2020 Rose' (grenache)	7	18	3	1	60	2.07	Silver
9	Jon Kahrs	2020 Viognier Port	7	19	3	0	62	2.14	Silver
10	Jon Kahrs	2020 Viognier	1	6	21	1	36	1.24	Bronze
11	Tony Hertel	2019 Rose'	0	20	8	1	48	1.66	Silver
12	Mike Smolak	2020 Plum Wine	10	13	6	0	62	2.14	Silver
13	Paul Rogers/Jim Ourada	2020 Riesling	1	2	21	5	28	0.97	Bronze
14	Jeremiah Deines	Apple Cider	12	14	3	0	67	2.31	Silver





# Pét Projects

Written by Phil Plummer

If you've spent any time hanging around wine bars or bottle shops over the past few years, you may have noticed what — taken at face value — appears troubling: Commercially-produced bottles of hazy wine, sediment and all, sealed with . . . crown caps. While your first instinct might be to speculate on what the winemaker was thinking or where the bottling line hygiene failed so catastrophically, what you've happened upon is actually one of the fastest-growing trends in the sparkling wine world: Pétillant-naturel (pét-nat for short). With its unpolished look and wild flavor diversity, pét-nat has gained a cult following among consumers ranging from adventurous winery visitors to sour beer aficionados and is an overwhelming favorite of the wine world's ever-increasing population of hipsters. But pét-nat isn't anything new; in fact, it's the oldest, simplest-to-make style of sparkling wine.



*Pét-nat wines are carbonated by bottling prior to the completion of fermentation. Unlike fermenting in a traditional vessel where carbon dioxide is released, the closed bottle forces the CO<sub>2</sub> into solution.*

## Méthode to the Madness

The term pétillant-naturel couldn't be much simpler or fitting a name — it's French for "naturally sparkling."

Every winemaker understands that one of the by-products of fermentation is carbon dioxide. When crafting still wine, the racking and agitation that occur prior to packaging all but ensure the finished product will be bubble-free. But, if you ferment in a sealed vessel and don't allow the gas to escape, the wine gains delightful effervescence. This is the essential step in the production of naturally-sparkling wines: Allowing fermentation to occur without an opportunity to vent carbon dioxide, thereby forcing the gas into solution.

So, is pét-nat just an unfinished analog of Champagne-style sparkling? Not exactly. Champagne is produced via a meticulous process called méthode traditionnelle, in which base wine is fermented dry, clarified, stabilized, then sweetened and re-inoculated just prior to bottling. The bottles are left to sit en tirage (on the yeast) for a year or more, prior to a complicated settling and sediment removal process that requires loads of effort.

By contrast, pét-nat is made through a very simple process called méthode ancestrale, in which wine is bottled prior to the end of alcoholic fermentation and is ready to enjoy as soon as it reaches completion. No riddling, no disgorging. Just ferment, bottle, wait, and enjoy. Really, it's that easy.

## Is the Home Winery Pét Friendly?

So, if pét-nat is so easy to make, does that simplicity translate to home wineries? Absolutely. Given the relative lack of effort and equipment required for successful production, pét-nat is a perfect fit for home winemakers who are looking to give sparkling a try.

One of the most attractive aspects of pét-nat production in the home winery is the comparatively small amount of work and time that are required. While méthode traditionnelle wines require enough extra steps and aging time to intimidate even the most seasoned winemakers, méthode ancestrale wines simply cut out the middlemen between winemaking's most critical steps: Fermentation and packaging. In general, pét-nat wines are ready to drink within a month or two of bottling, which allows the winemaker to evaluate their success or failure without an extended tirage period.

At the simplest level of pét-nat production, most of the required tools are items already present in most home wineries. While there are always upgrades that can be made to winemaking equipment, the basics are as follows:



Fermentation vessel, bottling vessel, racking/bottling hoses, hydrometer, Champagne bottles, crown caps, and a crown capper.

With some careful decision-making and attention to detail, the home winemaker can make sparkling wines that rival, or even surpass, their commercial counterparts.

## Taming the Naturel World

Though unpredictability may appear to be the ethos of méthode ancestrale wines, there are plenty of considerations that can be made in order to increase the chances of success. There are several metrics and protocols that may be leveraged to maximize the quality of pét-nat; the most important are juice chemistry, fermentation management, and bottling protocol.

### Grape Variety Selection

Before discussing the ideal chemical parameters for pét-nat production, it makes sense to talk about some grape varieties that are particularly well suited to this unique style. While pét-nat may be made from anything bottled before completing fermentation, varieties that showcase bright acidity, less phenolics, and lower alcohol tend to make the most compelling wines. *Vinifera* varieties like Riesling, Albariño, and Pinot Noir are fantastic when produced in this style, but this is an avenue where hybrid and native cultivars really shine. Some of my favorite pét-nats have been made from grapes like Catawba, Diamond, and Marquette.

### Juice Chemistry

In any sort of winemaking, the most important predictor of the finished product's quality is the quality of the juice or must from which it started. Understanding juice chemistry is paramount in sparkling wine production.

In general, the juice characteristics that lead to a high probability of success in sparkling wine production are as follows: High acid, low tannin, adequate YAN (yeast assimilable nitrogen), and low sugar (17–19 °Brix for Champagne-style wines). In pét-nat these ideal parameters hold true, with the exception of starting sugar, which has a lower target range unless the winemaker hopes to leave behind some sweetness. Let's look more closely at each of these parameters.

If bubbles are the heart of any great sparkling wine, acid is the soul. Effervescence and acidity have a synergistic relationship: Carbonation slightly acidifies wine and acid helps to integrate carbonation in a harmonious way. In most commercial sparkling wine production, grapes are selected for their acidity and are often harvested prior to reaching ripeness in an effort to retain this acid. Analyzing the titratable acidity of incoming juice or grapes gives the winemaker a picture of where his or her acid concentration stands prior to fermentation and allows for any necessary adjustments. In my experience, a titratable acidity (TA) value between 8-12 g/L tartaric acid is usually a good starting point for pét-nat.

While acid is a welcome and necessary component in pét-nat, the same cannot be said for tannin. Tannins interact with effervescence and acid to amplify astringency: The dusty, drying sensation associated with dry red wines. Some tannin is unavoidable and can even lend some weight to the mouthfeel of the finished wine, but an excess of tannin will lead to a wine with less than desirable flavor and texture. Tannin extraction can be minimized by limiting the contact time between crushing and pressing, and by separating free run juice from heavier press fractions. Not all home winemakers are equipped to process their own fruit, so these preventive steps may not be available. In that case, an assessment of the juice's tannins is necessary. The clearest way to do this in the home winery is by tasting the juice. If the juice is judged to be overly astringent, excess tannin may be removed via protein fining with agents like egg white, skim milk, or gelatin.

The YAN of juice is the chemical parameter that most impacts fermentation health. Without adequate YAN, fermentation may become sluggish, stuck, or worse: Produce an array of unpleasant aromatic compounds. Too much YAN and your fermentation may run far too quickly for you to manage it appropriately; plus, any nitrogen that isn't exhausted during primary fermentation becomes an attractive buffet for spoilage yeasts. If that isn't daunting enough, YAN requirements vary greatly across yeast strains and fermentation conditions. It's a lot to think about, but for the fermentation protocol that will be detailed in the next section, 100–200 ppm is generally the right neighborhood. YAN is a parameter that is often difficult to quantify in a home winery, but there are affordable, commercially available instruments that allow for this analysis. Alternatively, if you live near a winegrowing region there are probably nearby laboratories that will run a YAN analysis for a modest fee. Winemakers both amateur and professional will benefit

significantly from clearer understanding of this data.

While the *méthode traditionnelle* ideals for acid, tannin, and nitrogen hold true for *pét-nat*, there's definitely some wiggle room on the starting sugar level — that metric can shift based upon the desired effervescence, residual sugar, and alcohol of the finished product. There is a direct relationship between sugar content and the amount of alcohol and carbon dioxide produced by fermentation, both of which are critical to the character of *pét-nat*. In sparkling wines, an excess of alcohol has much the same effect as an excess of tannin — producing a hot, disconnected wine that is unpleasant from both a flavor and textural standpoint. Ideally, sparkling wines will end up somewhere between 9–12.5% alcohol, with traditional *pét-nats* skewing toward the low end of that range. Given that one can expect between 0.5–0.6% alcohol for every degree of Brix fermented, that places the ideal starting sugar range from 15–25 °Brix for sparkling wines.

There is, however, one factor that may affect this range: Residual sugar. If the plan is to leave some sugar to balance the acidity of the finished wine, a quick calculation can be made to adjust the starting sugar accordingly. Pressure may be leveraged in order to arrest fermentation and, in my experience, pressures above 6 atmospheres are effective in accomplishing this. When the internal pressure of the bottle approaches 6 atm, the yeast are inhibited and fermentation stops, leaving any remaining sugar unfermented.

As one atmosphere of CO<sub>2</sub> may be produced from the fermentation of 4 g/L sugar, this generally requires between 2.4–3 °Brix more than the desired residual sugar level at bottling; packaging the wine while the sugar measures greater than 3 °Brix will ensure that some residual sugar will be left behind.

## Fermentation Management

At first glance, the name *pétillant-naturel* might lead a winemaker to believe that the only correct way to produce these wines is a hands-off approach to fermentation, but that couldn't be further from the case. While it is true that excellent *pét-nats* can be made using native yeasts and limiting intervention, an embrace of commercial yeasts, nutrients, and careful monitoring increases the probability that attempts to make these wines will be successful. The most critical aspect of *méthode ancestrale* winemaking is timing and engineering a little bit of predictability into the process goes a long way toward recognizing and acting upon key moments in fermentation.

Though inoculation with commercial yeast may seem antithetical to the spirit of a style with “naturel” in the name, nobody ever made great wine with ideology alone. Uninoculated fermentations can be unbelievably complex and interesting, but they're equally — if not more — likely to be faulty and sluggish. *Pét-nat* is already prone to a host of off-aromas and requires careful timing; faulty and sluggish fermentations ought to be avoided at all costs. Inoculated yeasts, on the other hand, are predictable: Winemakers can source information on optimum temperature ranges, nutrient requirements, and a variety of other parameters that may be adjusted in order to maximize the potential of their wines. In sparkling wine production, the gold standard of commercial yeast strains is Lalvin's EC-1118. A classic *Prise de Mousse* strain, EC-1118 is incredibly hardy; its low nitrogen requirement, competitive factor, steady fermentation speed, compact settling, and cold tolerance are all welcome attributes in *méthode ancestrale* winemaking.

Even when using inoculated yeast, close attention must be paid to overall fermentation health. After *méthode ancestrale* wines are bottled, the fermentation conditions are less than ideal for even the most robust commercial yeast strains and can lead to a variety of faults including sulfur off-aromas and volatile acidity. Assessing YAN content prior to inoculation and adjusting as necessary with a complex yeast nutrient like Fermaid K can help keep the fermentation clean through completion. For a hardy yeast strain like EC-1118, an initial YAN of 100–200 ppm should be sufficient.

As timing of bottling is critical for achieving desired pressure and/or residual sugar, careful monitoring of fermentation speed and temperature must be observed. Daily measurements of Brix and temperature can help the winemaker determine fermentation speed and make adjustments if necessary. If the fermentation appears to be proceeding too



*A precision hydrometer is critical to accurately measure the gravity of the fermenting wine so that it can be bottled at just the right gravity to result in the desired level of carbonation and residual sugar.*



quickly it may be slowed by chilling to between 50–55 °F (10–13 °C), giving the winemaker time to track sugar depletion and prepare for bottling. As fermentation begins to approach the target for bottling, a precision hydrometer becomes an indispensable tool for accurate monitoring.

## Bottling Protocol

CO<sub>2</sub> is generated as fermentation proceeds. Unless the fermenting wine is bottled in a timely manner, the gas will escape, leaving a less-than-pétillant final product. Considerations made around bottling will have a direct impact on the carbonation, flavor, and appearance of the finished wine. Proper bottling timing, use of riddling adjuvants, and appropriate bottle/closure selection play significant roles in shaping the textural, organoleptic, and visual profiles of pét-nat wines.

Appropriate timing of bottling dictates the carbonation level and residual sugar of the finished wine. The winemaker would be well-served to have a target effervescence and sweetness level in mind prior to initiating fermentation, but on-the-fly adjustments may be made with regard to balancing sweetness and acidity. Daily Brix analysis and tasting allows for tracking of fermentation health, balance, and speed. As mentioned in the section on juice chemistry, 4 g/L sugar generates roughly one atmosphere of CO<sub>2</sub>, and fermentations may be arrested via pressure in the range of 6 atmospheres. This information can be weighed alongside the sweetness and effervescence targets in order to time bottling effectively.

An additional measure that may be taken to assist in timing bottling is to arrest the fermentation by chilling. If EC-1118 is used, chilling to 35–40 °F (2–4 °C) when the Brix reading drops to within a degree of the target should be sufficient to stop further depletion of sugar without killing the yeast. A secondary benefit of chilling the wine to arrest fermentation prior to bottling is tartrate stabilization. If tartrates are not effectively stabilized, they may precipitate in the bottle, which can lead to gushing — bubble seeding by wine diamonds can result in messy losses when bottles are finally opened.

The addition of riddling adjuvants may also help to prevent gushing by assisting in the compact settling of spent yeast. While there are a host of commercially available additives that may be used in this pursuit, standard issue bentonite is equally effective. Adding a properly-swelled bentonite suspension of 100–300 ppm prior to bottling will have a significant impact on the clarity and stability of the finished product.

A final consideration that needs to be made for safe and effective pét-nat production is the selection of proper bottles and closures. Crown caps are the preferred closure for wines of this style, as they are cost effective, simple to use, and hold pressure well. Corks may be used, but a wire cage is required in order to prevent them from pushing out of the bottles as they pressurize. **For safety reasons, pét-nat wines should always be bottled in punted Champagne bottles.** As the wine may reach pressures up to 6 atmospheres (assuming that it was bottled at 2.4–3 °Brix or higher), using a heavily reinforced bottle is the surest way to prevent a fun experiment in sparkling wine production from becoming a literal time bomb.

Following bottling, cellaring the wine at 50–60 °F (10–16 °C) for 1–2 months should be sufficient to allow for the fermentation to finish. The winemaker is advised to open the first few bottles over a sink or outdoors; for all the planning and attention to fermentation management, there is still an element of unpredictability to pét-nat, and unpredictability in sparkling wine usually means a mess.

## Crown Capping it Off (Conclusions)

Though the earliest analogs of pét-nat wines were often both unexpected and undesirable, advances in the understanding of fermentation science have allowed winemakers to capture and leverage fermentation's gaseous by-product to make complex, vibrant wines of distinction. The integration of modern winemaking technique and technology into méthode ancestrale has carried pét-nat out of obscurity and into the mainstream.

While pét-nat is enjoying growing commercial success, it's a style that is particularly well-suited to home winemaking. With careful attention to a few key parameters, winemakers of varying experience levels can produce layered, lively, naturally-sparkling wines without the extended time, effort, or equipment investments required to produce wines via méthode traditionnelle.

Next time you're looking to add a new technique to your home winemaking arsenal, give méthode ancestrale a try. Follow the steps outlined here and you're likely to succeed in making bright, bubbly, interesting wine. And if it doesn't turn out perfectly — remember, pét-nat is unpredictable — well, that's nothing a little orange juice can't fix.

# Properly Measuring Wine Cap Temperature

## Q

In a great article about Syrah, I found the following: “Syrah needs a warm fermentation, at least a day or two with a temperature in between 80–90 °F (27–32 °C).”

That got me thinking, how should one measure the temperature of the fermentation? In the cap before punching down (that’s not an average temperature but a local maximum), or on top of the cap after punchdowns, or someplace else?

I tried to search for the measuring process but have not found one yet. Could you please point me to an article that describes it, if there is one?

## A

That is a great question and I’m really glad you asked. Sometimes when those of us who have been making wines for quite some time write about some technique, process, or concept that we may think of as “simple,” we need to rethink for a moment that how we describe something might not be so obvious to everyone. I think your instincts are pointing you in the right direction. During an active fermentation the cap (the grape skins that float to the top of the vessel) can get very hot and so the cap’s temperature is definitely not indicative of the temperature of the entire must/fermentation.

I’m not aware of any specific article that points to “how to measure the temperature of a fermentation” but I’ll pass on to you what I know from how I was trained over many harvests and how I still conduct temperature measurements today. Like you say, the cap is always a local temperature and during the peak of fermentation, when we want to make sure we’re getting a red fermentation warm enough to extract “the good stuff” (anthocyanins, tannins, etc.) but we don’t want it so hot that the yeast start to be inhibited (no one wants cranky yeast), the cap will always be hotter than the juice below. This is why I will only “take the temperature” of the overall fermentation after a really good punch down or pumpover, after the tank is well mixed.

Let’s say you’ve got your fermentation going in a one-ton (910-kg) macro bin and it’s been ripping along at about three °Brix drop per day and is now at about 10 °Brix. This is just about at peak fermentation time. I’d wager the cap would be super-hot and the wine would be slightly cooler below. Give your macro a big punch down, going over the surface at least twice, very vigorously. Then, sink your cylinder or sample-collecting device underneath the cap about 2/3 of the way down (covered with your hand), let it fill, and bring it back up. That’ll give you a good idea of the overall, mixed temperature of that fermentation. That’s the 80–90 °F (27–32 °C) range you want to try to hit. In a stainless steel tank, you’d do a decently long pumpover to mix the tank well and then would take a sample from the sample valve, which is usually about 1/3 of the way up from the bottom of the tank. Winemakers may have their own specific definitions or techniques, but I’m pretty sure most of us mean a “well-mixed, just-punched-down” temperature when we talk about starting, finished, or peak fermentation temperatures.

**Response by Alison Crowe.**

**Editor’s note: I ferment my reds in 44 gallon “Brute” containers, considerably smaller than the macro-bins mentioned above. After a thorough punch down to ensure temperature uniformity, I insert a simple *digital* kitchen or BBQ temperature probe as far down as it will go in the center of the must. The reading is immediate and sufficiently accurate.**





# The Wine Tasting Method

The wine tasting method is a simple process that will help you identify specific characteristics of a wine while tasting it. This video will teach you how to taste using this professional method. Anyone can do it and it's easy to learn how to do. Just grab a glass of wine and follow along.

**Look:** Your eyes will help you size up a wine before you even sniff it. Here's what to do:

**Hue and Intensity:** Identify the wine's most prominent color as a point of reference. See the wine color chart for a complete list of hues.

**Tears/Legs:** When you swirl the wine, you will see tears develop on the sides of the glass. It is a phenomenon called the Gibbs-Marangoni Effect and it indicates the presence of alcohol in the wine. Increased tearing is an indication of a higher alcohol level.

**Smell:** There are hundreds of aroma compounds found in wine. As we learn to smell wine, we become more adept at isolating and identifying these aromas. Try to identify the smells to get a clear impression of the wine before you taste it.

**Intensity:** Position the glass just below your nose and take a quick, light whiff to judge the intensity. If the wine is highly aromatic, you will be able to smell it quite distinctly. Now position the glass where it's most optimal for you to smell individual aromas (usually by pulling it back a bit).

**Fruit:** If you're having trouble identifying aromas besides a strong "vinous" note, try holding the glass farther away from your nose. Identify the type of fruit and also the condition of the fruit. For example, if you detect strawberry, ask yourself: is it fresh, ripe, or dried? A good goal to set is to attempt to identify 3 fruit aromas before moving on to other smells.

**Herb/Other:** Note all the other aromas you smell in a wine that are not related to fruit. You'll notice that some wines are distinctly more savory, have notes of herbs, flowers, and even minerals. By the way, no answer is wrong, notes in this category can include things like black pepper, espresso, balsamic, petroleum, and beeswax.

**Oak:** If the wine has aromas of vanilla, coconut, allspice, chocolate, cola, and cedar or cigar, it's likely to have been aged in oak barrels. Aging wine in oak causes some flavor compounds from the barrel to transfer into the wine. Different species of oak trees affect flavors differently. For example, American oak (*Quercus alba*) tends to add more dill and coconut aromas whereas, European oak (*Quercus petraea*) tends to contribute aromas of vanilla, nutmeg, and allspice.

**Earth:** When you taste earthiness in a wine, note whether it tastes organic (loam, forest soil, mushroom) or inorganic (slate, chalk, rocks, dried clay). These aromas, while still unexplained scientifically, offer more clues to where the grapes were grown. For example, wines from Burgundy and Champagne often have subtle, organic, mushroom aromas. A lack of earthy aromas also helps to identify (or narrow down) a wine's potential origin.

**Taste:** When you taste a wine, you'll focus on flavors and feel (how the wine feels on your palate/ in your mouth). Make sure you swish it around in your mouth to get the full effect before swallowing.

**Sweetness:** Sweetness in wine is primarily from grape sugars that are leftover after fermentation, which are referred to as residual sugar (RS). Of course, our human perception of residual sugar in wine is influenced by the other characteristics in the wine, particularly acidity. Sweetness is less perceivable in wines with higher acidity. See [the sweetness levels in wine](#).

**Tannin:** (for red wines) Tannin is a polyphenol (antioxidant) found mostly in red wine. Tannin tastes astringent and gives a drying sensation felt on your tongue. High tannin wines will grip the insides of your lips to your teeth. Tannins can taste





bitter, but mostly, they are astringent and can be described like sandpaper: fine, medium, gritty, or grippy.

**Acidity:** Acidity is the level of sourness in wine. Acidity makes your mouth water. Low acid wines generally taste round, or even flabby and high acid wines taste lighter in body and very tart. Understand how acidic wine is compared to over beverages.

**Alcohol:** Alcohol is felt in your throat as a warming sensation. With practice, some tasters can estimate the alcohol level within a 10th of a percent. Alcohol adds to the overall body of wine.

**Overall Body:** All the traits mentioned above come together to give you a sense of the wine's body, which is essentially a measure of how bold it tastes in your mouth. Ask yourself if the wine is light-, medium-, or full-bodied.

**Additional Flavors:** Are there any flavors you can identify while tasting the wine that you didn't identify in its smell? Take note!

**Conclusion:** After you've tasted the wine, now you have the opportunity to consider the wine's quality. Here are some of the questions to ask yourself:

**Is the wine in balance?** This is a question referencing the notes you made in the tasting section. Wines that are "in balance" have tastes that are balanced between one-another including acidity, tannin (if it's a red), and alcohol level. While different wines have different intensities, a quality wine will be in balance with itself.

**Is the wine complex?** If you have a great deal of tasting notes for this wine and can still think of more, you've got a pretty complex wine on your hands.



## References

Here is a list of hobby winemaking manuals and other materials in the Secretary's digital file. They are available for downloading by e-mail or via an internet transfer service. All are PDF format, E-mail Ken Stinger at [kbstinger@frontier.com](mailto:kbstinger@frontier.com)

- Scott Labs 2021 Winemaking Handbook - 21 mb - 119 pages
- Scott Labs 2018 Cider Handbook - 24 mb - 49 pages
- Scott Labs 2018-2019 Sparkling Handbook - 8 mb - 58 pages
- Anchor 2021 – 2022 Enology Harvest Guide 15.7 MB - 16 pages
- A guide to Fining Wine, WA State University - 314 kb - 10 pages
- Barrel Care Procedures - 100 kb - 2 pages
- Enartis Handbook - 4.8 mb - 108 pages
- A Review Of Méthode Champenoise Production - 570 kb – 69 pages
- Sacramento Winemakers Winemaking Manual - 300 kb - 34 pages
- Sparkling Wine brief instructions - 20 kb - 3 pages
- The Home Winemakers Manual - Lum Eisenman - 14 mb - 178 pages
- MoreWine Guide to red winemaking - 1 mb - 74 pages
- MoreWine Guide to white Winemaking - 985 kb - 92 pages
- MoreWine Yeast and grape pairing - 258 kb - 9 pages
- Wine Flavors, Faults & Taints – 600 kb, 11 pages

# Portland Winemakers Club

## Leadership Team – 2021

President: **Bill Brown** [bbgoldieguy@gmail.com](mailto:bbgoldieguy@gmail.com)

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

Treasurer: **Barb Thomson / Jim Ourada** [bt.grapevine@frontier.com](mailto:bt.grapevine@frontier.com)  
[jmourada57@gmail.com](mailto:jmourada57@gmail.com)

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

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

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

Chair of Education / Speakers: **Rufus Knapp** [Rufus.Knapp@fei.com](mailto:Rufus.Knapp@fei.com)

- Arrange for speakers & educational content for our meetings

Chair for Tastings: **Paul Sowray / Barb Stinger** [davids1898@aol.com](mailto:davids1898@aol.com)  
[kbstinger@frontier.com](mailto:kbstinger@frontier.com)

- Conduct club tastings
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

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

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

Chair of Group Purchases: **Bob Hatt / Al Glasby.** [bobhatt2000@yahoo.com](mailto:bobhatt2000@yahoo.com)  
[alglasby@gmail.com](mailto:alglasby@gmail.com)

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

Chair of Competitions: **Paul Boyechko / Michael Harvey** [labmanpaul@hotmail.com](mailto:labmanpaul@hotmail.com)  
[mharvey767@gmail.com](mailto:mharvey767@gmail.com)

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

Chairs for Social Events : **Marilyn Brown & Mindy Bush** [brown.marilynjean@gmail.com](mailto:brown.marilynjean@gmail.com)  
\* Gala / Picnic / parties [mindybush@hotmail.com](mailto:mindybush@hotmail.com)

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

Zoom Moderator: Jon Kahrs. [jekahrs@aol.com](mailto:jekahrs@aol.com)