

**Portland  
Winemakers  
Club**



# Portland Winemakers Club

**February 2020  
"Bill's Meanderings"**

## Monthly Events

**January 15th, 2020**

Crush Talk & Planning

**January 25th, 2020**

Annual Gala

**February 19th, 2020**

Bordeaux varietals and  
Bordeaux blends, Blind  
Tasting

**March, 18th, 2020**

Speaker

**April 15th, 2020**

Barrel / Carboy Samples  
Tasting & discussion (not  
blind)

**May 20th, 2020**

Best Practices; winemaking  
skills & discussions. Tips &  
Tricks. Vineyard grape  
sources.

**June 17th, 2020**

Speaker

**July**

Annual Picnic

**August 19th, 2020**

All Whites Blind Tasting

**September, 16th, 2020**

Other Reds Blind Tasting

**October 21st, 2020**

Pinot Noir Blind Tasting

**November 18th, 2020**

Crush Talk

**December 16th, 2020**

Elections, Planning for Next  
Year, More Crush Talk

**NOTE:** Tours, Gala & picnic  
date & times may vary  
depending on availability.



This time of year usually entails the winemaker doing the tedious chores, cleaning carboys, cleaning bottles, cleaning equipment. You know, all the fun stuff of winemaking that non-winemakers aren't aware of. A suggestion to include at this time that may not be so tedious is to start doing your research and thinking of what varietal you want to use this year for your winemaking. If you're planning on buying fruit this year look into all the different regions we have nearby. From Southern Oregon to Willamette Valley to Hood River and Eastern Washington we have fruit available just four hours away. To help in that decision making the club has decided to switch the May/June meeting agenda so that we can discuss the different regions and the wines available in those areas. So the May meeting will be shared topics of best practices and grape purchase discussion and June will be a speaker date.

On another note, I think I can speak for the 45+ members that participated at the club Gala/Awards dinner that a huge thanks of appreciation needs to go out to the Grants, Dennis and Marlene, owners of Parrett Mountain Cellars, for hosting us again this year. A beautiful setting in the woods with a spectacular view, their timber style tasting room is a wonderful venue for our club to be able to use for this event. We held a raffle this year thanks to several local winemaking suppliers and Parrett Mountain Cellars. Davidsons in McMinnville donated a glass wine thief, Mainbrew in Hillsboro donated a \$50 gift certificate, Steinbarts in Portland donated two \$25 and one \$50 gift certificates, Crush2Cellar in Newberg donated a very expensive refractometer kit and Parrett Mountain Cellars donated five bottles of wine at a steep discount to the club. We need to show our appreciation to these vendors so the next time you go to any of these businesses mention it to them. And a shout out needs to go to the events coordinators Marilyn Brown and Mindy Bush for organizing and putting together a fantastic eventful gathering. Finally, the food was delicious and so were the wines and I hope a good time was had by all.

.... Bill



## Upcoming events / Save the date

**Next Club Meeting: February 19<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm at the Aloha Grange Hall.**

**Agenda: Blind tasting & judging of member produced Red Bordeaux varietals & Bordeaux Blends. Red Bordeaux varietals are Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Malbec, Carmenere or any blend containing 2 or more of these 6 grapes.**

**Renew your club membership and sign a new waiver for 2020.**

**All regular meetings are potluck, bring a small appetizer to share. Also bring 2 wine glasses for tasting.**

**The club meeting will begin at 7:00 pm and end by 9:00 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/>**

### January Meeting Minutes

Present: 24

- Gala reminder for January 25<sup>th</sup> at Parrett Mountain Cellars tasting room. The event starts at 5:00 pm but you are asked not to arrive too early since the tasting room is still open to the public until 5:00. Please consider taking Uber or Lyft to and from the event. Barb Thomson says the event fee will be \$15 per person and you might as well pay your club dues at the same time which is \$25. There will be a raffle of wine & other donated items. A Gala wine swap was suggested.
- After discussion, it was decided to hold our November & December meetings on the third Wednesday of the month.
- After discussion, it was decided we would still not have a meeting in July but will continue having our Summer picnic.
- After considerable discussion we decided to try adding an event in which as many members as possible will all obtain the same grape varietal at the same time, from the same vineyard. The wine will then be made by each participating member. These wines will be tasted and compared at a January meeting. It was decided that the first wine will be 2019 Albariño from Jamison Vineyards and will be tasted compared at the January 2021 meeting. Six or seven members are presently making this wine all from the same grape juice source.



**Our Annual Holliday Gala was held on January 25<sup>th</sup> at the Parrett Mountain Cellars tasting room. We feasted on great food, even greater member produced and Parrett Mountain wines. A good time was had by all. Pictures on pages 3 & 4.**

**Raffle winners were rewarded with some very nice prizes donated by our local suppliers. Thanks go out to: Davison Winery Supply in McMinnville; Crush2Cellar Winery Supply in Newberg; F. H. Steinbart Beer & Wine Supply in Portland & Mainbrew Beer & Wine supply just off Highway 26 North of Hillsboro. Members are encouraged to visit and support these suppliers.**

**Thanks also to Dennis & Marlene Grant at Parrett Mountain Cellars for allowing us to use their beautiful tasting room. You may not know that Dennis & Marlene are members of the Portland Winemakers club and have been for several years before opening their own winery. The new tasting room was designed by Dennis & Marlene and uses various woods obtained directly from trees on their property.**





# How To Use and Test Free SO<sub>2</sub> in Wine

by Bob Peak and Nancy Vineyard

This article has been a go-to reference for understanding and making additions of SO<sub>2</sub> in wine. It will help you understand how to use campden tablets or other sources of Free SO<sub>2</sub>, and know how much potassium metabisulfite per gallon of wine is needed. Additionally, a survey of available SO<sub>2</sub> test options and their efficacy is presented. When you add sulfite to wine, sulfur dioxide ionizes to the sulfite ion, SO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, and bisulfite ion, HSO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>. A small fraction remains in the “molecular” form, SO<sub>2</sub>. It is this molecular form that protects the wine from spoilage organisms and oxidation. As sulfite reacts with other wine components, it becomes “bound” to them and is no longer available to participate in producing “molecular” sulfite.

We cannot measure molecular sulfite directly. Rather, we measure “free” sulfite, and use a table of wine pH values to predict the amount of ‘molecular’ sulfite we will achieve. This is why it is so important to frequently measure your free sulfite. No matter how high your total sulfite (within reason), it is only the free sulfite number that really counts. Don’t just guess and toss some sulfite in. Analyze it first, then add it. To this end, we offer some advice on ways to keep up with testing your SO<sub>2</sub>.

## Methods for Testing Free SO<sub>2</sub> in Wine

### Aeration-Oxidation (AO) Method for Free SO<sub>2</sub>

This is the original primary laboratory method for sulfite measurement in wine that helps define what “free” SO<sub>2</sub> means. In the AO method, a wine sample is placed in a flask and phosphoric acid is added to force the sulfite ion into molecular SO<sub>2</sub>. A small air pump pushes air bubbles through the sample. Since sulfur dioxide is a gas, it dissolves in the air stream and transfers to a trapping solution. In the trapping solution, hydrogen peroxide oxidizes the sulfur dioxide into sulfuric acid. Also in the trapping solution is an acid-base indicator that changes color as the sample gas accumulates. After the 10 or 15 minute transfer period, the trapping solution is titrated with sodium hydroxide solution to measure the acid formed. The free sulfite level can be calculated from the titration results.

Please note that while we can sell you a 250 ml bottle of 25% phosphoric acid for use in your home apparatus, we cannot ship it. If you are outside the area, look into sourcing this reagent locally.

### Ripper Method for Free SO<sub>2</sub>

Titrets, based on the Ripper method are only recommended for white wine. The Ripper method is an iodine titration that is often faster, easier, and cheaper than A/O. It is limited by the chemistry involved. Any substance that reacts with iodine—including some tannins—will be measured as sulfite. Further, the acidification of the sample for the titration tends to release some sulfite bound to anthocyanins (color compounds) in red wine, making it appear “free” when it is not. These Ripper limitations have been largely overcome through a combination of equipment and techniques from Vinmetrica. That company produces proprietary instruments for sulfite analysis and for sulfite plus titratable acidity (SC-300) that rely on amperometric titration with iodine instead of a visual endpoint or a straight oxidation-reduction (redox) detection. Allowing very rapid titration to overcome release of additional sulfites and showing a very sharp endpoint on the meter to improve precision, they have reduced the discrepancy between AO and Vinmetrica Ripper to only 2 to 3 mg/L (ppm) for most wine samples. Those differences are small enough that the convenience and ease of use will make the Vinmetrica meters attractive choices for many users.

## Laboratory Testing

If you would rather not do sulfite analysis yourself but you want to do a good job keeping up with your levels, a wine testing laboratory can do it for you. Find a commercial lab or perhaps a university lab near you to minimize shipping of samples.

Under average conditions the information that follows should keep about 20 to 30 ppm of free SO<sub>2</sub> available throughout the wine’s cycle of production through bottling. If you plan to use ML bacteria, pre-ML sulfite additions should be kept below 50 ppm.

After ML fermentation is complete add 30 ppm, and five days later add 30 ppm again, and again one week later. Now get the wine tested for free SO<sub>2</sub>. The test results may surprise you, as the SO<sub>2</sub> you have added may have been dissipating at a rapid rate initially.

Above pH 3.5, you will notice that the amounts of free sulfur dioxide required become quite high. It is best to lower the pH by adding tartaric acid early in the fermentation cycle.

Continue testing every 6-8 weeks, adding SO<sub>2</sub> as required to keep at least 20-30 ppm. available in the wine.

**(editors note: 6 – 8 weeks seems a little too long. 1 test & add sulfite every 4 weeks)**

### Sources of SO<sub>2</sub>

SO<sub>2</sub> is available as Campden tablets, effervescent Inodose metabisulfite tablets and as powdered potassium metabisulfite. A premeasured Campden tablet equals 65 ppm in one gallon (13 ppm in a five gallon jug) and is very convenient for those making small amounts of wine. Crush the tablet to a powder to add it.

The 2 gram Inodose effervescent tablets add 528 ppm per gallon or 9 ppm per 60 gallons. The 5 gram Inodose tablets add 1320 ppm per gallon or 22 ppm per 60 gallons. The tablets can be dissolved in water to accurately dose carboys. Metabisulfite powder is added in a liquid preparation to adequately disperse it, and because it is very potent. This is also the least expensive method and accurate to measure for any size container.

### pH and SO<sub>2</sub>

It is generally recognized that only a small amount of molecular SO<sub>2</sub> (.5 to .8 ppm.) needs to be present to provide bacterial stability in wine, but pH has an important effect on how much free SO<sub>2</sub> is needed in order to provide that amount, and this is why both pH and SO<sub>2</sub> need to be tested.

Regard the Table of Molecular SO<sub>2</sub> below. The amount of free SO<sub>2</sub> needed is based on the pH of the wine. A fairly safe amount for protection of the wine is either .5 ppm for red wines or .8 ppm for white wines. If you know the pH, simply make sure you have the corresponding level of free SO<sub>2</sub>, or slightly more, present in the wine during storage and bottling.

## Preparing Metabisulfite Solutions

### 10% Metabisulfite Solution

Using a gram scale, weigh out 100 grams of potassium metabisulfite and dissolve in 1 Liter of water. Tightly stopper and store labeled: poison.

When adding your sulfite additions make sure you measure carefully.

Replace your solution every 3 months.

A Sulfite calculator can be found on line at <https://winemakermag.com/resource/1301-sulfite-calculator>. They can be found at other sites as well.

pH	0.8 ppm	0.5 ppm
	White Wine	Red Wine
2.9	11 ppm	7 ppm
3.0	13	8
3.1	16	10
3.2	21	13
3.3	26	16
3.4	32	20
3.5	40	25
3.6	50	31
3.7	63	39
3.8	79	49

SO<sub>2</sub> needed for Stability (ppm)



# Are Those *Diamonds* In Your Glass?

By Michael Schafer

If you've ever noticed "diamonds" in the bottom of your wine glass you're certainly not alone. Also known as wine snowflakes or wine shards, these crystals are totally harmless and are a naturally occurring part of the winemaking process. Let's explore what they are and where they originate. These crystals are perceived by some as a benefit and by others as a detriment to the wine.



Tartrates are natural products of winemaking. Their scientific name is potassium bitartrate. Wine diamonds are simply tiny deposits that occur when tartaric acid and potassium, natural products of grapes, fuse together to form a crystal.

Wine has numerous organic acids that occur naturally. The main acids are tartaric and malic acid. Let's explore malic

*"Sommeliers, winemakers and wine critics consider wine diamonds a sign of quality, attesting to the fact that the wine was not over-processed."*

acid first. Malic acid (malum is apple in Latin) is frequently converted to lactic acid through bacterial fermentation, aka malolactic fermentation. Malolactic fermentation, commonly known as MLF, is used for almost all red wines and for a few white wines, primarily Chardonnay and Viognier. MLF converts tart malic acid into creamier, softer lactic acid. A special bacteria (not yeast) converts the malic acid into the preferred lactic acid. MLF typically occurs when the wine is aging in oak barrels. MLF is used to create a creamy, buttery element in wine. When used in white wines, particularly Chardonnay, usually only a very small amount of the finished wine undergoes MLF.

Getting back to those diamonds, if you cook, you know this is cream of tartar! Cream of tartar is used for a few different functions in cooking. The most common purpose is to stabilize egg whites while whipping them for meringue pies. When combined with baking soda the final product is baking powder.

Wine diamonds are found in both red and white wine but much more frequently in white wine. In red wine, they are usually seen on the cork or at the bottom of the bottle. They form less in red wine and, when they do, usually fall to the bottom of the barrel during the longer aging process. The primary acid we taste in wine is tartaric acid. It's key to the balance of the wine and the way it feels on our palate. There are so many components in a glass of wine that all coalesce to provide us pleasure and enjoyment when we taste it!

For white wine, these Weinsteins (wine stones) as they are known in Germany, are viewed as an indication of a high quality wine! Many Europeans think the crystals show the wine has been slowly and properly fermented from fully ripe grapes—all very positive qualities! Sommeliers, winemakers and wine critics consider wine diamonds a sign of quality, attesting to the fact that the wine was not over-processed.

For those who consider the crystals unsightly and off-putting, it's comforting to know that many wineries, particularly American wineries, cold stabilize their wine to minimize the presence of those pesky crystals. What is cold stabilization? It sounds like part of a NASA space probe! It's actually a relatively simple process. For many wineries, the wine is cooled down to almost freezing for a minimum of 14 days. Other winemakers stabilize their wine for 10-14 days at 38-40° F. The crystals adhere to the sides of the fermentation tank due to the temperature. The wine is pumped out and filtered, removing any crystals that remain. "Back in the day" the standard was to keep the wine at 28°F for ten days. That is no longer the standard because that temperature robs the wine of its character, aromas and flavors.

How can you avoid serving a wine with wine snowflakes? It's best to store your wine between 55°F-60°F at 58% humidity. If you're really concerned about having crystals in your glass, chill the wine between just between 45°F-48°F before serving.

How can you serve a wine if it does have tartrate crystals when you pull it from your cellar? If the diamonds are on the cork simply wipe them off with a dry cloth. If the diamonds are in the bottle, stand it upright so they drop to the

bottom of the bottle. You may decant the wine, leaving the unwanted particles in the bottle. Another option is to strain the wine through a cheesecloth or a coffee filter!

Whether you find tartrate crystals repulsive and repugnant or appreciate them as indicators of quality, unfiltered wine, please keep in mind they are completely harmless and should in absolutely no way distract you from enjoying your “diamondwine”.



# The Epic Rise and Tragic Fall of a Yeast Empire

NOVEMBER, 2012

The unfermented must is a vast and plentiful breeding ground for yeast. Food in the form of dissolved oxygen and sugar abounds. For the right strain of yeast this is the perfect place to establish a thriving empire.

The winemaker sets the yeast in motion. They hydrates the yeast, preparing them to conquer this new-found domain. Once the yeast is awakened they are transplanted to this new land.

## The Lag Phase

The first order of business is for the newcomers to get the lay of the land. The yeast will acclimate to its new surroundings and environment. This is called the lag phase because there is not a lot of visible activity. The only evidence that anything is going on is an occasional bubble rising to the surface.

After one to two days, however, our invaders have adapted to their new land and it is time to conquer it!

## The Rapid Growth Phase

The yeast population is still small but because there is plenty of food they begin to multiply at a feverish pace. The population explodes at a logarithmic pace during this phase.

Evidence of their activity can now be seen in the form of vigorous bubbling. They're now producing carbon dioxide at a staggering rate as a result of consuming their primary food source dissolved oxygen.

Eventually the population reaches a peak. They've been producing carbon-dioxide in such a huge quantity that it begins to saturate their new dominion. At the same time with the airlock in place on the fermentation tank there is no longer a source of oxygen to replenish what has been consumed. Something must give! As the population reaches a point where there is no longer enough dissolved oxygen to support new yeast they cease to multiply save to replace fallen yeast on the front line. However, with the booming population they've created the yeast eventually runs completely out of food. This marks the end of the rapid growth phase.

## The Stationary Phase

Now that the yeast has asserted its dominance over the known lands inside the fermentation tank, the population is maxed out, and the food has run out the yeast must change tactics. Yeast, as it turns out, is a well adapted invader that can do what few other micro-organisms can. They switch to a different food source! At this point they shift from consuming dissolved oxygen to consuming sugar.

Yeast can live in both aerobic environments (with oxygen) and anaerobic environments (without oxygen). Other micro-organisms simply perish once their food source has run out.

While there is plenty of dissolved oxygen the yeast produce mostly carbon dioxide. However, when yeast switches to consuming sugar they not only produce carbon dioxide but alcohol as well!

## The Decline Phase

While the yeast is still going strong it is starting to decline for two reasons. On the one hand food is becoming scarce but at the same time their waste product, alcohol, is starting to accumulate to levels too high for them to withstand. Whether the lack of food or the concentration of alcohol kills of the yeast depends upon the strain of yeast used to ferment the wine. More resilient strains can withstand alcohol content up to 25% and will likely run out of food. A weaker or wild strain of yeast that can only hand alcohol around 10% will likely perish due to an over abundance of alcohol.

Thus one way or another, the yeast empire that flourished during the Rapid Growth Phase tragically falls and the last remaining yeasts die off. They did not die in vain though. Through all their hard work they've created one of the most amazing agricultural products known to man, wine.







Baco Noir, also known as Baco No.1, is a small berried, thin skinned black grape that is hardy to very winter hardy in the cool climate regions of North America. It was bred in 1902 by François Baco of Armagnac, France. It is a cross of Folle Blanche (a traditional grape variety used to make brandy in Armagnac) by a mix of pollen of a riparia grape called Grand Glabre and V. riparia ordinaire.

Baco Noir is moderately susceptible to black rot and powdery mildew, but is more resistant to downy mildew. It is susceptible to botrytis, especially if it rains during harvest time, in which case the berries readily crack and botrytis and bunch rot set in rapidly. In wet vineyards, crown gall can be a problem. The plant is not sensitive to sulfur, so it can be used in a fungus treatment program. Baco Noir can be grown on moderately heavy clay soils. Since Baco is genetically a riparia hybrid variety, it tolerates excessive soil moisture, but the ground cannot be wet or swampy for long periods of time. Further, locating vineyards on relatively heavy soils for grapes can help to suppress Baco Noir's wild growth, encourage the growth of quality grapes, and allow for better hardening off of canes to avoid winter injury.

As Lucie Morton Garrett and I believe that there are two clones of Léon Millot, the Foster's Nursery clone, also known as the Millot Rouge, and the Boordy Nursery clone, also known as Millot Noir, I believe the same to be the case with Baco Noir. Many Baco Noir vines in the Hudson Valley, initially came from Middle Hope, New York and Benmarl Vineyards of nearby Marlboro. These Baco Noir clones were smuggled from France into the United States via Canada by Philip Wagner, one of the founding members of the American Wine Society, in the chaotic 1940s. These Middle Hope Baco clones are very Pinot Noir like in their color, flavor profile, and tannin structure. The other Baco clone that I have made has come from the Finger Lakes, Foster's Nursery, and Double A Nursery. The wine made from the Baco Noir clone is much deeper in body, ripens about five to six days after the Middle Hope Baco Noir clone, and is much darker in body and flavor profile, chocolate being more predominate in the Finger Lakes Bacos. While this is just a theory, at the Hudson-Chatham Winery, we have two blocks of Baco Noir, the Middle Hope and Finger Lakes clones. The wines that come from these adjacent blocks of Baco Noir clones are completely different in many ways as described above.

Baco Noir is a productive and slightly above-average producing variety. It ripens consistently by mid-season around the third week of September with sugars of between 20° and 23° Brix. Two weeks or more before Baco becomes fully ripe and is ready for harvest, the birds will descend upon the vineyard. Hence, bird netting is necessary to protect the crop before its harvest date. Ideally, the grapes should hang longer to reduce their excessively harsh acids, but the risk/danger is that these thin-skinned grapes will easily crack if they are subjected to heavy rains at harvest time. Because of its mid-season ripening date, Baco Noir is suitable for the shorter growing season regions of North America.

Overall, while Baco Noir has some issues in the field, particularly for commercial growers, it is great in the cellar. It ferments easily, finishes rapidly, and is bright and clear within one month of fermenting. To make quality wines from Baco Noir, the grapes need to be mature to reduce the naturally high malic and tartaric acids commonly found in Baco Noir, as is the case with most riparia hybrids. If picked before maturity, it produces noticeably thin and acidic wines in a "riparian" fashion. This can be a challenge for both the grower and winemaker because birds also like Baco Noir, so the recommendation is to allow the birds to feast as the grapes ripen to their proper maturity for wine production.

Today, Baco Noir is still grown to a very limited extent in greater Burgundy and more so in the Loire Valley, but it was extensively cultivated in France before 1968. Baco Noir is now widely grown in New York, Oregon, and Ontario, Canada. Over the years, Baco Noir has been identified as one of the signature red grape varieties of the Hudson Valley. The grape grows well in the Valley and makes a wide range of quality wines similar to Burgundian Pinot Noirs, Bordeaux like Cabernet Sauvignons, light young fall wines or Nouveaus, and even rosés.

Baco Noir wines can have deep color, lots of berry and plum fruit, and relatively high-acid levels that stand up well to barbecued meats or other heavy dishes. If picked ripe, it can develop into a big muscle wine, but due to its insufficient tannins when compared to its relatively high middle acids of tartaric and malic acid, it does not fill out adequately.



Hence, to round out the wine, it should be blended with between ten to twenty-five percent of other quality grape varieties such as, Chelois, Cabernet Franc, Maréchal Foch, Léon Millot, Burdin, or Chambourcin. Baco Noir has great aging potential and brings presence to red wine blends. Further, its large leaves are suitable for making dolmas (stuffed grape leaves). If Baco is left on its skins for more than ten to fourteen days as it ferments, it can, with age, have many big Bordeaux-like qualities. It can be a deeply colored red wine that is robust with aromatic flavor elements such as cedar, tobacco, leather, and chocolate. It can have complex fruit flavors of black- and chokecherries, blackberries, and prunes. As it ages for ten to twenty years, Baco Noir can become a complex, medium to full bodied wine that accompanies red meats very well.

Baco Noir can also be made into a slightly lighter wine style reminiscent of a Burgundian Pinot Noir. When made in this style, it has a rich nose similar to raspberries, black raspberries, plums, blueberries, cherries, and strawberry jam. The herbal notes remain, but include more muted flavors of lavender, black pepper, mint, and licorice. Several twenty- to thirty year-old Baco Noirs I have tasted have reminded me of some better quality red Burgundy and Bordeaux wines of the same age that retain their bright fruit, but which melds with a luscious and an integrated “barnyard” bouquet, middle, and finish. As Baco Noir matures, they can also take on a toasty, burnt-sugar flavor profile. Baco Noir has a varietal flavor that is easily distinguished from other French-American hybrids. The wines have a soft tannin structure that needs to be enhanced to produce superior wines. Further, it can benefit from a malolactic fermentation to reduce its high malic acids, which are firm but manageable. To increase complexity and give the wines body and tannin structure, it is highly recommended to barrel age these wines for at least six to eighteen months.

A rosé can also be made from Baco Noir, however, its acid levels tend to be very high, so some blending is recommended. It is also capable of being made into rich ports due to its heavy pigment, rich flavors, and high acids, as long as it is finished semi-sweet. When fermented, it does so quickly and cleanly to become a bright purple wine, so it lends itself well as a Nouveau or fall wine.

If not made properly, Baco wines can be herbaceous and weedy. Baco, especially if picked too early and then made into a varietal wine, can be relatively austere and herbaceous, and can develop muscle without completely filling out into a big wine. This is why it is critical to blend it with at least some other French-American hybrid or vinifera wines to minimize its somewhat bitter edge and make it into a complete and interesting wine.

Baco Noir is a great grape to be used in blending. It is clean and brings quality to any blend, but does not dominate. It brings to blends a nice big berry nose and a long clean finish. With that said, Baco Noir made in many cool climate areas of North America can truly be of exceptional quality. Below is a short biography of the creator of Baco Noir.

## A bit about François

François Baco was a teacher from the Commune of Belus, Department of Landes, in what was the Armagnac Province of France. This area is along the Atlantic Ocean just south of Bordeaux and north of Spain. After 1898, Monsieur Baco began his work to hybridize grapes to minimize their susceptibility to black rot and to improve on the American grape variety Noah in Armagnac. Out of the approximately 7,000 hybrids that he created, only Baco Noir (Baco 1) and Baco Blanc (also known as Maurice Baco or Baco 22A) remain commercially important in Europe, the United States, Canada, and New Zealand. Many of Monsieur Baco’s categorized hybrid selections used Noah, Couderc 201, Couderc 4401, and other Couderc hybrids as pollen parents, and vinifera varieties such as Folle Blanche, Tannat, and Chasselas as the genetic pool for his hybridization program. It seems that much of Monsieur Baco’s work was dedicated to creating hybrid grape varieties that could be used for distillation into brandy that were less sensitive to fungus diseases.



François Baco (middle) with his students (1896)



09/21/1952. A monument of François Baco in Bélus, France is inaugurated by Minister Guy Petit

He extensively used riparia grapes in his breeding program to bolster their fungus disease resistance. None of Baco's work after the mid-1920s was commercially successful. Also, unlike other more sophisticated breeding programs, he relied almost exclusively on the same early, not very genetically complex varieties. He did little cross-breeding of his later hybrids with each other and did not incorporate much new genetic material into his hybrids. The seed parents he used were primarily vinifera grape varieties, of which he relied on only a few, such as Folle Blanche, Tannat, and Baroque.

Looking to François Baco's other hybrids may give the reader a glimpse into his grape-breeding philosophy and goals. Baco Blanc is still very extensively grown in Baco's home region of Armagnac. It makes a low-alcohol, high-acid wine that is perfect for distillation and the production of Armagnac style brandies. Surprisingly, it also makes a simple, but refreshingly delightful white wine.



## Tidbits of Interest

### **'Panic' over 100 percent wine tariff threat in US**

Job losses and higher prices for Champagne and other top European wines in the US would be inevitable under 100% import tariffs, US industry leaders have warned as the Trump administration deliberates on its next move. US wine retailers, importers and distributors have rallied to the cause of protecting their sector from import tariffs of up to 100% on a range of European wines, from Champagne to the châteaux of Bordeaux and the vineyards of Piedmont.

'The proposed tariffs would be the greatest threat to the wine industry since Prohibition in 1919,' said Benjamin Aneff, managing partner of New York-based Tribeca Wine Merchants, at a government hearing in Washington DC last week.

**A source of significant deal activity** in 2018 were transactions in the Pacific Northwest, which have also been less pronounced in 2019. Notable acquisitions in 2018 included **Foley Family Wines'** acquisition of the 150,000-case **Acrobat Winery** brand in Oregon, **The Great Oregon Wine Company's** purchase of **Duck Pond Cellars** in Dundee, Oregon and **Farmland LP's** purchase of the 6,000-acre **Weidert Farm** in Washington's Walla Walla Valley. In 2019, the only transaction of significant scale involved **Vintage Wine Estate** purchase of the 60,000-case **Owen Roe** and Owen Roe's **Sharecroppers** brand. Announced in September, the transaction included tasting rooms in Oregon and Washington, as well as 90 planted acres. In August 2019, Foley Family Wines also announced the acquisition of the Huntington Hill vineyard in Oregon in order to add to its holdings in the area, but the 21 vineyard acres acquired in the deal are incremental, rather than transformative, for Foley.

Oregon remains a market with significant ongoing growth potential. For the year-to-date period, both sales and case volume in the state have grown at a mid-teens percentage rate, according to Nielsen data. Such growth is well in excess of the flattish industry-wide trends for wine. Given these favorable trends, we would expect further deal activity to target the region in 2020.

**Aliens probably ride  
past Earth and lock their  
doors....**

# Portland Winemakers Club

## Leadership Team – 2020

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

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

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

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

Chair of Education/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** [bobhatt2000@yahoo.com](mailto:bobhatt2000@yahoo.com)

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

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

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

Chairs for Social Events : **Marilyn Brown & 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)