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The Internet's Premier Wine Gift Shop

The Grapevine Newsletter



Favorite Wine Quote

"A bottle of wine contains more philosophy than all the books in the world."

- *Louis Pasteur*

Wine Tips

Food Pairing Trends

Red wine with fish? White wine with steak? That's not the traditional way to pair wine and food, but it doesn't seem to matter anymore. Instead, those doing the pairing concentrate on taste. Traditionally, like courses in a meal, you would start with lighter wines and end with the heavier or richer. Champagne with an appetizer, white wine with a salad or light meal, red wine with more hearty fare such as a steak and a wonderful glass of port to round off the meal. But today, it seems that many people are choosing a wine they enjoy drinking rather than the appropriate accompaniment to the dish.

Wine Glass Selection

Next time you serve a glass of wine, remember that the type of glass you choose is important. White wine should be served in a tulip-shaped glass and red wine in a glass with a large, rounded bowl, to allow more air to contact the liquid and enhance the wine's aroma. The perfect wine glass is also clear and undecorated. The stem should be long enough for you to hold without touching the bowl. If you hold the glass by the bowl, you change the temperature of the wine, which can ruin a great glass of vino.

Decanting

Red wine should always be allowed to breathe before you serve it. Decanting allows the oxygen to reduce the acidity in red wine and brings out its bouquet. And remember, the ideal storage temperature for all wines is 55F.

Recipe of the Month

Here is a wonderful recipe that is relatively easy to prepare and certain to impress your guests. We recommend you serve with this month's featured Pinot Noir selection from Bouchaine Vineyards for a memorable meal.

Lamb is usually tender because it is from animals less than 1 year old. However, when selecting your cuts look for good marbling (white flecks of fat within the meat muscle), and meat that is fine textured and firm.

Braised Lamb Shanks with Sour Cream and Capers

Ingredients

2 lamb shanks, each cracked into 3 pieces
 2 Tbsp meat drippings or cooking oil
 3/4 tsp salt
 1/2 cup liquid (water, dry white or red wine, beer, cider, or beef consommé)
 1 bay leaf and 1 sprig each of parsley and thyme, tied in cheesecloth (bouquet garnish)
 1/2 cup sour cream
 2 Tbsp capers

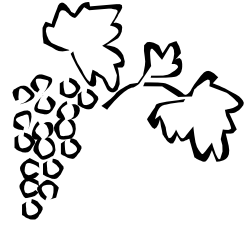
Instructions

Brown shanks well in drippings in a heavy kettle over moderate heat; pour off drippings, add remaining ingredients. Cover and simmer about 1-1/2 hours, turning shanks once or twice, until tender. Or cover and bake about 1-1/2 hours at 325 degrees F.

Lift shanks to a deep platter. Skim fat from broth, mix in sour cream and capers. Spoon a little sauce over shanks and pass the rest.



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Wine Gift Baskets

Our wonderful collection of Wine Gift Baskets, Corporate Gift Baskets and Gourmet Food Gift Baskets are perfect for any occasion. **Customizable** - You can choose to include only reds, only whites, or a combination of red and white wines. You can even substitute bottles of our fine Private Label Wine (see below) with any wine gift basket we offer. We are definitely the most unique and complete Wine Gift Shop online!

Wine of the Month Club

Because California is widely regarded as the finest wine growing region in America and one of the best wine producing regions in the world, the vast majority of our featured wines are from **California's finest, boutique wineries**. Now and then, when our wine experts find an outstanding selection, we may feature wines from some of the best growing regions of Washington and Oregon. However, the vast majority of our featured wines are California wines - arguably the best wines in the world.

- **You pick the number of bottles** - Monthly Wine Club memberships can be either 1-bottle per month or 2-bottles per month.
- **You pick the Wines** - all red, all white, or a mixture of both red and white wines.
- **You pick the Frequency** - Wine Club deliveries can be Every Month or you can Skip Months between deliveries.
- **You pick the Duration** - Wine Club memberships range from 2 to 12 months in duration.
- **You choose how to pay** - you can pay monthly or prepay the wine club membership up front - it's totally up to you.

We give you all the choices - **You make all the decisions!** No other clubs can compare.

Personalized Label Wines

We have a great selection of wine label templates available on our website that you can use to create your very own Private Label Wine. Simply click your favorite label template and change the words. You can also take a digital photo, or create your own label design and email it to us. Either way, we will print professional quality labels and apply them to your choice of our fine private wine selections. **Minimum order - only 1 bottle!**

Our private label wines come in either red or white varieties and you can mix and match them as you please. You can even choose to substitute private label wines in any of our wine gift baskets!

Private Label Wines are perfect for Birthdays, all Holidays, Thank You, Congratulations, House Warming, Corporate Gifts and Promotional Items.

The California Wine Store

We always purchase a few extra cases of the fine wines we send our Wine Club members, and the wines we include with our Wine Gift Baskets. While these fine wines last, we make them available to you in our Wine Store, at discount prices that you won't be able to resist. As a bonus, our Wine Club members can buy more of the wines they really enjoyed at these discount prices, while they are available. **Check it out NOW!**

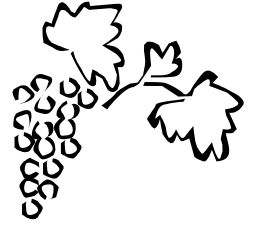
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October 2005 Classic Wine Club Selections

Every month our **Classic Wine Club** members receive one or two bottles of our featured wines. The wines you get depend on the membership you are enrolled in. If you're not yet a member, we invite you to join the fun. Happy wine tasting!

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Bouchaine Vineyards

Bouchaine Vineyards is established in the oldest continually operated winery in the Carneros wine region, and the site was first planted to vines and orchards in the mid-1800s by pioneer farmer Boon Fly and his family. In 1927, before the end of Prohibition, the property was established as the Garetto Winery and Vineyards. Johnny Garetto was a pioneer in the planting of wine grapes in Carneros, an area with climate and soils similar to his home in Italy. Immediately after the Repeal of Prohibition, Garetto operated perhaps the first winery with a tasting room in Carneros. Garetto shipped his wine to San Francisco and elsewhere from Buchli Station, a historic railway station located just south of the Bouchaine property. The road that Bouchaine is located on is called Buchli Station Road and Bouchaine created Buchli Station wines in honor of this era.

At the heart of Bouchaine's philosophy is love of the earth and the people that inhabit it. Most important to Bouchaine is growing high quality wine grapes with environmentally friendly, sustainable winegrowing practices. Fortunately, many practices that are good for the general environment are also conducive to high quality wine grapes. Deficit irrigation, cover-cropping, compost application, and organic methods are all part of the vineyard management program. Bouchaine utilizes the concept of 'micro-farming,' where each vineyard block is designed to have the clone, rootstock, irrigation, and vine management regime appropriate to the soil, microclimate and aspect of that block. The Bouchaine estate vineyards have received the Napa Green Farm Certification, an endorsement that they are farming in accordance with the preservation of their natural resources.

Bouchaine Vineyards features an incredible 100-acre estate vineyard located in the heart of the Carneros wine region in the Napa Valley, a relatively cool climate region perfectly suited for growing Burgundy grape varieties Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Carneros is located just north of the San Pablo and San Francisco Bays and is greatly influenced by the dramatic fog that rolls in nightly off the bays. Carneros soils are shallow clay loams that retain enough water to sustain the grapes with minimal irrigation throughout the growing season, but constrict the growth of the grapes to create low vigor, perfectly balanced vines. Bouchaine is dedicated to the pursuit of enticing Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, whose grapes are best suited to the climate and soils of the region.

2003 Buchli Station Pinot Noir

Fruit forward in style, with balanced acidity and tannins. Aromas and flavors of cherries and pomegranates with hints of sage and spice mix in the bouquet. Aged for eight months in new and seasoned oak, this is a fruity, juicy wine with flavors of cherries, with the right structure to keep everything in focus. Goes well with anything!

2003 Buchli Station Chardonnay

This mid-weight Chardonnay is long on flavor and delivers lots of true Chardonnay character - lemon zest and citrus notes with a touch of pineapple layered with vanilla and spice on the finish. This is a versatile Chardonnay but we suggest you try this with a fresh, crisp Caesar salad or seafood.

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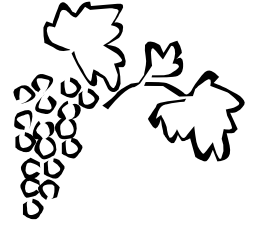
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October 2005 Epic Reds Wine Selections

This is our top-shelf wine club and is limited to only 750 members. Every month our Epic Reds Wine Club members receive two bottles of California's finest red wines. If you're not yet a member, we invite you to join the fun. Happy wine tasting!

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Murrieta's Well Winery

Murrieta's Well is a small wine estate in the Livermore Valley with a rich history that reaches back to the Gold Rush era of California. As old as California itself, the story of Murrieta's Well springs from the legend of Joaquin Murrieta, the notorious "Robin Hood of El Dorado." An infamous vaquero who roamed California throughout the Gold Rush era, legend has it that Murrieta and his men often stopped to water their horses at the artesian well that marks the entrance to the winery named in his memory. Joaquin Murrieta was noted as a "handsome folk hero driven to crime by social injustices." He was steadfast in his loyalty to his gang, his friends and associates. It is written that he loved his ladies and his horses, taking good care of them both. Joaquin and his gang would round up wild horses from the Sacramento delta region and bring them to his campsite at the artesian well. The gang would later drive the horses and take their gold down to Sonora, Mexico to give to the poor.

Today, Murrieta's Well winery is named after the artesian well that is located in front of the winery building where the legendary Joaquin Murrieta and his band of desperados watered their horses. In 1990, Philip Wentz, in a joint effort with winemaker Sergio Traverso, brought the historic winery back to life with the objective of producing "old world" style field blends from the unique combination of original plantings. Like most classic wine estates around the world, the Murrieta's Well Estate Vineyard is small, just 92 acres. A favorable variety of predominantly undulating terrain and gravelly soil types shape the character of this estate's wines. Murrieta's Well produces handcrafted blends, including Meritage, Zarzuela, Tempranillo, and Zinfandel.

2001 Red Meritage, Livermore Valley

The red Meritage is a subtle, sophisticated, Bordeaux-style blend that has elegance and finesse. Each varietal was aged separately in small oak barrels before being masterfully blended to showcase the best attributes of each of the grape types. This is a big, rich wine, with black cherry and cassis aromas from the Cabernet Sauvignon and the Merlot. The Cabernet Franc adds a nice level of mint, and helps add weight to the front and mid palate. The wine is rounded out with well-integrated vanilla, chocolate, coconut, and clove flavors. The tannin, most of which are delivered by the Cabernet Sauvignon, are greatly aided by the Petite Verdot, creating a rich, yet subtle and smooth wine.

2002 Zinfandel, Livermore Valley

With the warm days cooled by the San Francisco Bay breezes during growing, the potential for this zinfandel is optimal. Coming from only a single vineyard, one can taste the individuality of this wine accustomed to its terroir of the Livermore Valley. The 2002 Zinfandel shows the classic character of Zinfandel from old vines: a rich concentration of ripe fruit flavors and a nice spicy combination of black pepper and anise. Fullbodied, this wine has subtle oak flavors and a long, pleasant finish. The fruit comes from the renowned Raboli Vineyard. Part of the 92-acre Murrieta's Well estate, these vines are more than 85 years old, head pruned, and dry farmed. Yielding less than one ton per acre, the fruit has exceptional concentration, which carries over into a deep, rich wine.

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