

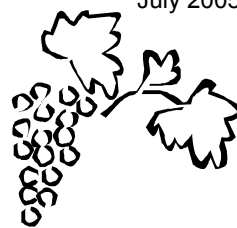
July 2005



# WineGiftClub.com

The Internet's Premier Wine Gift Shop

## The Grapevine Newsletter



### *Some Interesting Wine Trivia*

Grapes were first planted in California at Mission San Diego in 1769.

There were more than 700 wineries in California in 1920.

Louis Pasteur first determined the true nature of fermentation.

Robert Louis Stevenson referred to wine as "bottled poetry".

The term 'Blanc de Noir' refers to white wine made from red/black grapes.

When pouring wine, the glass should typically be no more than half full.

The descending tears of wine seen on the inside of a glass after it has been swirled are called legs.

The 17th century Benedictine monk, Dom Perignon, is credited with discovering the cork as a means to seal wine and champagne bottles. He is also credited with discovering the process of making champagne. It is said that upon his first taste of champagne he cried, "Come quickly, I am tasting stars."

A bit of humor: The Bible states that Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding. Our universities are trying to figure out how he did it. Our Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms says it was illegal because he didn't pay taxes on it.

In 1870 the United States unknowingly exported Phylloxera (a louse that attacks roots of grape vines) to Europe which virtually destroyed all of Europe's vineyards. As a consequence, all European vineyards had to be grafted to native American rootstock, which is Phylloxera resistant, and re-planted.

During prohibition, an interesting product called the 'Grape Brick' was sold to thousands of wine-parched households across America. Attached to the 'brick' of dried and pressed wine grape concentrate was a packet of yeast, and the stern warning, "Do not add yeast or fermentation will result."

Asked when she drinks champagne, Madam Lilly Bollinger replied, "I drink it when I'm happy and when I'm sad. Sometimes I drink it when I'm alone. When I have company, I consider it obligatory. I trifle with it if I'm not hungry and drink it when I am. Otherwise, I never touch it---unless I'm thirsty."

### *What Can the Taste Tell You?*

**Quality:** A good sign of quality is balance. A wine is balanced when all of the wine's components (e.g. sweetness, acidity, tannins) blend together. The balance or potential to be balanced after ageing is a sign of quality.

**Maturity:** Older red wines tend to taste more savory and spicy. Older white wines tend to taste more honeyed and yeasty. Younger wines tend to taste more of fruit.

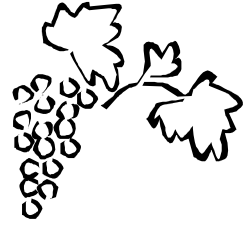
**Origin:** Hotter locations generally mean riper grapes and more overtly fruity wines, and frequently a higher degree of alcohol.

**Grape Variety:** Certain grape varieties taste of certain flavors, e.g. Sauvignon Blanc typically tastes and smells of gooseberries, Cabernet Sauvignon of blackcurrants.



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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!**

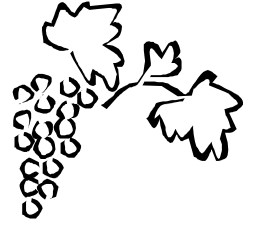
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## This Month's **Classic Wine Club** Selections

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!

[WineGiftClub.com](http://WineGiftClub.com)



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### *Mendocino Wine Country*

Mendocino County is on the Pacific Coast, and is greatly influenced by this large body of relatively cool water. Prevailing winds from the ocean in the summer are cooling, and in the winter, they bring copious amounts of rain. The terrain of the county is mountainous, and the more open to the ocean a location is, the cooler and wetter it tends to be. Mendocino County has a long tradition of grape growing that goes back to the 1850's and the first Spanish land grants in the county. Italian immigrants in the 1870's began winegrowing, and amazingly, some of these vineyards still exist and produce very complex and wonderful wines. Mendocino County is the center of organic and biodynamic wine growing in the world. Mendocino County winegrowers are not conformists, and their approach to wine growing is different than surrounding counties. People in the industry tend to be friendly, accessible and very interesting to interact with! Winemaking overall occurs on a small commercial scale, and wines are hand crafted rather than industrially manufactured.

### *Girasole Vineyards, Mendocino*

The vineyards have been certified organic by California Certified Organic Farmers for the past 19 years. Certification requires the grapes are grown without conventional pesticides or herbicides, synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, bioengineering, or ionizing radiation. Bell beans, red clover, peas and vetch are planted between the rows of vines, and then, just when the flowering plants are turning to either seed or starting to bear "fruit", the plants are turned back into the soil where they are converted to nutrients for the vines. The soils are alive with micro-organisms that allow the vines to take up the nutrients in a more efficient manner.

### *Girasole Vineyards 2003 Estate Pinot Noir*

The 2003 harvest in the Girasole estate vineyards was especially good for red varietals. The grapes were hand-picked at 24 brix, fermented in stainless and then aged in new and used oak to lend the added complexities to the wine. Taste the sweet flavors of ripe blackberries and cherries as the wine envelopes your senses and opens up on your palate. If you like fruit-forward wines with nuances of strawberries and cherries with a round mouth feel at the end, then you'll love this wine. No harsh tannins, no strange off-flavors.

### *Girasole Vineyards 2004 Estate Pinot Blanc*

The 2004 harvest continued to yield superb fruit as the dry weather allowed the grapes to mature to perfection. This wine shows off its apple, melon, and citrus flavors on the front end with a lasting finish you won't soon forget. Try this wine with light appetizers, chicken, fish or salads which have lemon in the dressing. Take the time to hold it in your mouth so you can experience the explosion of flavors.

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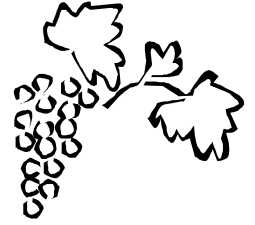
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## This Month's **Epic Reds Wine Club** Selections

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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### *Santa Cruz Mountains AVA*

Astonishingly, given the hardships of viticulture in the Santa Cruz Mountains, this appellation hosts some of North America's elite wineries. Rugged mountains, thin soils, high land prices, earthquakes, and Pierce's disease are among the challenges which grape growers face. Yet more than fifty wineries operate here, producing wines that include well-regarded Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon. The appellation is large, crossing the borders of three counties. However, with less than 1500 acres under vine, the Santa Cruz Mountain AVA is small compared to similarly recognized appellations. Microclimates are particularly important here, as the climate can change substantially depending on which side of the range and at what elevation vineyards lay. The coolest climates are at the lower elevations on the Pacific side. In this environment, vineyards which can be as low as 800 feet (with most actually closer to 2,000 feet) are greatly affected by ocean winds and fog, making varietal selection critical. Low-lying inland vineyards are generally the warmest in the appellation, but still benefit from the moderating effects of San Francisco Bay.

### *Fernwood Cellars, Santa Cruz*

Fernwood Cellars resides on 98 acres of land in the Santa Cruz Mountain Appellation and has been in the winemakers family since the 1860s. Originally a homestead, the property was transformed into a vineyard in 1999 and a winery site in 2001. The estate is unique in that it has multiple microclimates within the property boundaries. The winery is located approximately 2.5 miles from the Pacific Ocean as the crow flies, with the Santa Cruz Mountains lying in-between. During the summer, the fog from the ocean creeps up to the mountains each night, skipping over the canyon where the winery is located. As a result, the cold maritime air is pushed in front of the vineyards, cooling off the vines in the evening. This allows us to reap the benefits of the warm summer air, as well as the cool evenings, which, in turn, allows our grapes to mature at a much slower rate than most vineyards. The final result is a selection of balanced wines that display true character and structure.

### *Fernwood Cellars 2003 Small Lot Merlot*

Aged 16 month in 100 percent French oak barrels, this wine is a combination of several small vineyards nestled in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The concentration of this wine is testimony of the effort these small growers have put forth. This superb wine will continue to improve over the next 5 - 8 years.

### *Fernwood Cellars 2002 Redwood Retreat Cabernet Sauvignon*

This is the first vintage harvested entirely from the estate vineyard showing great depth and character. The quality of the wine is a phenomenal glance into what the vineyard holds in store. This fine Cabernet wine will be at its best in 10 - 15 years.

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