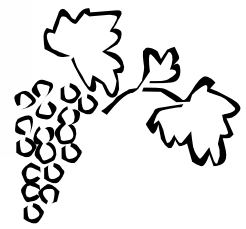




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## The Grape Vine Newsletter

### *How to Throw a Wine Tasting Party*

Those who enjoy wine, invariably want to know how they can learn more about the wines they drink. Our suggestion is to taste several wines in a sitting instead of just one, and sample them with your friends. Throwing a wine tasting party will allow you to do just that, while also enhancing your thoughts by hearing what others have to say!

*Here's how to throw a productive wine-tasting party.*

Select a group of about four to six friends so that everyone can sit around a fairly small table. Choose people who have relatively the same extent of wine knowledge, so no one feels intimidated.

*Choose a theme.* You could, for example, taste wines from one grape variety such as Merlot, and compare Merlots from different areas. Or choose a type of wine or a wine region you don't yet know very much about. How about Barbera, Sangiovese or Pinot Grigio? You could also focus on wines from a specific country, or choose an idea, such as "white varieties we've never tasted" or "Cabernets for Thanksgiving."

*Give everyone an assignment.* Ask each friend to bring one bottle of wine that fits the theme. So that everyone will bring wines of similar quality, set a price range: Zinfandels between \$12 and \$18, for example. If you've chosen a white wine theme, don't forget to have everyone bring their bottles already chilled.

Choosing wines for many themes is easy. Each person can simply go to a local wine shop and, with the help of the merchant, pick out a wine that fits the theme and price range. Don't worry, people seldom bring duplicates.

*Get ready for the tasting.* Have a few good corkscrews on hand. Also, every person will need a napkin, a pencil and paper to take notes, a water glass, and a spit cup (paper or plastic works fine--that's often what professionals use). "Spit cups?" you might be wondering. Yes, in the beginning of the evening, when everyone is forming opinions, it's best

not to swallow as you taste. Later on, abandon the cups and just enjoy.

As for wine glasses, each person will need one. If you don't have that many glasses, ask tasters to bring their own. Don't worry about having properly shaped glasses for white wine versus red. Just make sure the glasses have generous sized bowls so you can swirl the wines.

Don't worry about food until later. Wine tasting requires you to use your senses intensely to pick up flavor differences, so it's best not to make the task difficult by distracting your palate with food or cheese. During the tasting itself, all you'll need are some plain crackers or bread (not sourdough), just in case someone wants to nibble something neutral between wines. Of course, by the end of the tasting, everyone will be starving, so by all means have some cheese or appetizers ready to serve then.

*Pour the wines.* Pour about a half inch of the first wine into each glass. If you plan to pour different types of wine, begin with light white wines and move toward the heartier ones in order to preserve your palate. As the first wine is sampled, take notes and talk with each other about what you are smelling and tasting. At first you may be at a loss for words, but by wine six, everyone should be talking away!

*Taste the wines.* First swirl the wine in your glass to aerate it and release its aromas. Then stick your nose right into the glass as far as you can get it and inhale the aromas.

Next, take a small sip and let it flow everywhere, to all corners of your mouth so all flavors can be sensed. If you leave the wine in your mouth long enough, you may taste changing flavors as the wine goes from serving temperature to your body temperature.

Remember that wine tasting is a fun thing to do and should be enjoyed light heartedly. And best of all, it is completely subjective - everyone is always right!

### *Wine Tasting Trivia*

Wine aged in *new* oak barrels will often have a hint of vanilla in both the aroma and flavor.



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**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, our featured wines are from *California's finest, boutique wineries* - arguably some of the best wines in the world.

**Personalized Bottles of Wine**

We have a great selection of wine label templates available on our website that you can use to create your very own bottles of personalized 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 personalized wine selections. *Minimum order - only 1 bottle!* Our private label wines come in popular red and white varietals and you can mix and match them as you please. *Private Label Wines are perfect for Birthdays, all Holidays, Thank You, Congratulations, House Warming, Corporate Gifts, Promotional Items, or any occasion at all!*



**The California Wine Store**

We always purchase a few extra cases of the fine wines we send our Wine Club members. While these fine wines last, we make them available to you in our Wine Store at 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, while they are available. *You simply will not find these wines at any other wine gift shop!*

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**Flower of the Month Club** - Each month, our flower club members receive a beautiful flower arrangement made up of a generous variety of seasonal blooms. Of course, we include a beautiful Gift Card with your personalized message along with the first monthly delivery. Bring a smile to their face again and again, as they receive a fresh bouquet of blooming flowers for as many months as you choose. Or, send "A Month of Flowers" and get flowers every week for a month, that's 4 consecutive weeks!



**Plant of the Month Club** - Each month, the plant club member will receive a luscious, living, indoor house plant, professionally planted in its own unique container. Our plant club memberships are the perfect way to start and build a beautiful and healthy indoor urban garden!



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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!

### *Tamás Estates Winery*

Located in the gentle rolling hills of California's Livermore Valley, Tamás Estates is a premier producer of estate-grown, Italian varietal wines. The Livermore Valley's warm days cooled by evening breezes create an ideal climate for growing exceptional Cabernet Sauvignon, Barbera, Sangiovese and Zinfandel. The coastal weather at their Monterey vineyards keeps days cool and nights warm; perfect for Pinot Grigio, one of this month's featured wines.

Founded by Ivan Tamás Fuezy and Steve Mirassou in 1984, Tamás Estates has greatly influenced the Livermore Valley's wine renaissance over the past three decades. As part of Wente family Estates, Tamás Estates continues to share the family's 120 year commitment to fine wine making and land stewardship.

Tamás Estates winemaker, Chris Graves, brings fresh perspective, youthful attitude and wild enthusiasm for the Italian-style wines of Tamás Estates. As a champion of the Tamás Estates philosophy – crafting Italian varietals from grapes grown in California – his winemaking vision guides the winery's bright, approachable style. Chris is resolute in his belief that the Central Coast climate and soils provide ideal conditions for crafting New World interpretations of Old World classic varietals. He believes that they bring the best of Old World tradition to New World wines. Italian grapes meet California landscapes – take the trip!

At Tamás Estates, wine is viewed as an everyday luxury, made to enjoy at any and every occasion. The California-Italian style wines are versatile, food-friendly, and offer an exciting choice for increasingly savvy wine drinkers. Wine that is great for spontaneous meals with friends, yet provides the quality of taste you look for on special occasions.

California-Italian varietals represent one of the fastest growing segments of the American wine market, and considering the approachability and quality they offer, it's no surprise why. Tamás Estates wines are fulfilling America's appetite for home-grown, flavorful, Italian varietal wines.

Taking a tour through wine country? Surrounded by rolling hills and vineyards, the Tamás Estates tasting room makes a beautiful Tuscan-inspired getaway.

### *Pinot Grigio Rosato - 2004 "Riserva Limitata"*

This exceptional, small production wine is a member of the "Riserva Limitata" class of the Tamás Estates wines. Made from grapes grown on Tamás Estates' finest vineyards and exquisitely handcrafted to achieve a unique style, this wonderful rose colored wine was created exclusively for their Saluté Club and their tasting room guests. We have brokered a very special arrangement with Tamás Estates to bring this very limited edition wine to the Wine Gift Club members this month. This wine simply can not be found anywhere else!

A refreshing rose wine, the Pinot Grigio Rosato is created from 93% Pinot Grigio, 5% Barbera and 2% Gewürtztraminer. It is crisp and fruity, with green apple, melon and cherry flavors and will pair nicely with salads, light seafood, delicate chicken dishes and spicy foods.

### *Cabernet Sauvignon - 2002 - California*

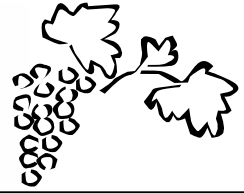
This beautiful California Cabernet has a dark, rich color, and bright flavors of plum, cherry and blackberry. These wonderful fruit flavors are complemented by a subtle splash of smokiness and a simple hint of oak. Just the right amount of acidity in the background gives this wine a very soft and balanced structure.

It is a perfect wine to be enjoyed by-the-glass and with a wide range of dishes including grilled fish, roasts, or hearty pastas. It also makes an excellent companion to grilled meats - a summertime barbeque favorite!



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## This Month's Epic Reds Wine Club Selections

Every month our **Epic Reds Wine Club** members receive two bottles of our featured red wines. These wines are some of California's boutique winery's finest offerings. If you're not yet a member, we invite you to join the fun. Happy wine tasting!

### *Kasuari Winery*

Kasuari winemakers Michael Peters and Richard Dobscha have embarked on a mission to provide what they say others cannot - "To only make wines of the highest caliber from the greatest and proven California appellations: Cabernet Sauvignon from the Alexander and Napa Valleys, Zinfandel from the Dry Creek and Russian River Valleys, Syrah and Petite Sirah from the Napa Valley."

They combine only the highest quality grapes with careful attention to vineyard and intensive winemaking practices, in a quest to make artistic, handcrafted wines that reflect their passion to provide the most enjoyable wine drinking experience possible. Each wine is hand bottled in very limited quantities and is suitable for even the most special of occasions.

### *2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley*

The 2002 Kasuari Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon was hand picked and sorted in the vineyard from low yielding (2.2 tons per acre) vines. Rocky hillside soils contribute to a wine that is supple with incredible longevity, and should increase in complexity over the next 10 - 15 years. This wine was created to mesh the long tradition of classic Bordeaux winemaking with the New World cult styling of high-end California Cabernet Sauvignons.

The long and even growing season of 2002 yielded deep wines with soft, mouth-filling tannins. A bold mix of classic Cabernet flavors unfold in the glass with lavish plum, blackberry and cassis fruit accompanied by the Jamaican all-spice and sage typical of hillside fruit. New French Oak barrels from the Nevers Forest used during aging add toasty aromas of coffee, chocolate and toffee.

Match this Cabernet Sauvignon with full flavored dishes including beef, lamb and duck. While this wine will age gracefully beyond ten years, we recommend decanting several hours in advance if consumed before 2007.

Appellation: Napa Valley

Average elevation: 1150 feet

Varietal composition: 99% Cabernet Sauvignon, 1% Merlot

Harvest Date: September 30, 2002.

Sugar at harvest: 25.6 Brix

Wine Acidity: 6.4 g/L pH: 3.68 Alcohol: 14.5%

Aged: 24 Months in French Oak Barrels from Nevers Forest, 50% New

### *2002 Syrah, Sonoma County*

The grapes for the 2002 Sonoma County Syrah come from Ladi's Vineyard in Sonoma County. Ladi's Vineyard has gained a well-deserved reputation for some of the most intense yet supple red wines in Sonoma County.

Aromas of black cherry, plum, and chocolate with a touch of earthiness leap to your nose to combine with smooth, velvety tannins and smoky French oak, providing a rich, sensual drinking experience you won't be soon to forget.

This big, hearty wine is made for big, hearty dishes like peppered red meats, sausage, or stews. Beef Bourguignon would be a great match, as would roasted game, or a juicy T-bone steak.

Appellation: Sonoma County

Varietal composition: 100% Syrah

Harvest Date: September 29, 2002. Bottled: June 15, 2005

Sugar at harvest: 25.2 Brix

Wine Acidity: 6.0 g/L pH: 3.85 Alcohol: 14.5%

Aged: 26 months in French Oak barrels, 50% new