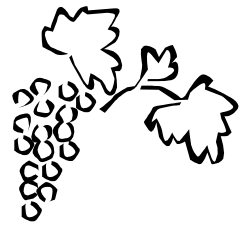




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The Grape Vine Newsletter



Happy Mother's Day - Wine Benefits to Women

Red wine is the toast of the town when it comes to health benefits for women this Mother's Day. Of course these benefits apply to men as well, but this month it's all about the women, so be sure to let the wine flow this year during your Mother's Day celebrations!

When it comes to reducing a women's risk of heart disease and cancer, there is one easy and pleasurable method of prevention - a little red wine each day. That might be why studies touting the health benefits of red wine consumption always get a lot of attention. Properties in red wine have been shown time and time again, through clinical testing, to help prevent heart disease, some cancers, and reduce inflammation caused by arthritis. Some studies have also shown that moderate amounts of red wine will also help prevent or delay the onset of Alzheimer's Disease and raise the HDL (good) cholesterol levels in women.

"Red wine in small amounts has been shown to have beneficial effects," says Christine Gerbstadt, MD, RD, spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association. "The antioxidants in red wine may be more concentrated than in other foods because of the fermentation process they go through," says Gerbstadt.

However, those women who favor white wine are out of luck. White wines do not have any of the same benefits as red wine because the healthy antioxidants are found in the skin and seeds of the grapes, which are left in during the winemaking process for red wines only. White wine is fermented without the skins of the grapes.

If you're going to drink red wine strictly for its health benefits, one small glass a day for women is enough according to Gerbstadt. As with any alcohol, moderation is important when enjoying your favorite wines this Mother's Day.

Mother's Day Gift Ideas

Looking for the perfect gift for Mother's Day? Look no further. We've got them right here.

Flower of the Month Club— All women love flowers! Show Mom you really care by having a beautiful flower bouquet delivered right to her door every month. Imagine the smile on her face!



Personalized Wine— We have a great selection of wine label templates available, that you can use to create Mom her very own Private Labeled Wine! Create your own label for that extra special touch, or try one of our photo labels. You can put Mom's picture, or even baby pictures of yourself, right on a bottle of fine California wine!

Gift Baskets— We have a wonderful selection of wine gift baskets to choose from that any Mother would love. If you really want to show your appreciation for her, our award winning design team can make a beautiful customized gift basket. Call us for details.



Recipe of the Month

Sausage Sauerkraut Supper

4 carrots, cut into 2 inch pieces

4 cups red potato chunks

2 (14 ounce) cans sauerkraut, drained and rinsed

2 1/2 pounds fresh Polish sausage, cut into 3 inch pieces

1 medium onion, thinly sliced

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 1/2 cups dry Chardonnay or Sauvignon Blanc wine

1 teaspoon pepper

1/2 teaspoon caraway seed

In a 5-qt. slow cooker, layer carrots, potatoes and sauerkraut. In a skillet, brown the sausage; transfer to the slow cooker (slow cooker will be full). Reserve 1 tablespoon drippings in a skillet; sauté the onion and garlic until tender.

Gradually add wine. Bring to a boil; stir to loosen browned bits. Stir in pepper and caraway. Pour over sausage. Cover and cook on low for 8-9 hours or until vegetables are tender and sausage is no longer pink. Pour a glass of Gewurztraminer and enjoy!



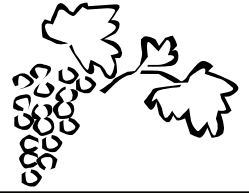
Wine Quote of the Month

“A man loves his wine the best, his wife the most, but his Mother the longest.” *Irish Proverb*



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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!

Balletto Vineyards & Winery

A wine tasting trip to the Russian River Valley means winding country roads leading you over rolling hills of vineyards and redwood trees along the banks of the Russian River into one of California's most beautiful wine regions. In addition to sampling wonderful wines, you can explore the Sonoma coast and enjoy camping, golfing, fishing, biking, hiking, and horseback riding. The Russian River Valley is renowned for producing world class Pinot Noir and Zinfandel, but also produces an excellent variety of both red and white wines. Russian River Wineries range from large elegant estates to small unpretentious family owned businesses. This month's featured winery is the perfect representation of a small family owned business focused on growing the best possible grapes and producing small batches of award winning wines.

John Balletto began farming in 1977 at the tender age of 17. He had just graduated from high school, and, due to the untimely death of his father, gave up what looked like a promising college football career. With the help of his mother, Hazel, John began farming zucchini on her 5 acres in Sebastopol, California. Eventually, John purchased his first ranch in Santa Rosa with the help of former high school counselor and friend, Pete Barbieri. As business grew he leased more land. With the increasing costs of leased land, John and his wife Terri decided to purchase more land in order to grow vegetables, and to build a new produce facility. This land is where the winery and one of the vineyards is today. With the competition in the vegetable business extremely tough, the Ballettos began converting their vegetable land to wine grapes.

Balletto Estate Gewurztraminer, 2006 Russian River Valley

Only 793 cases handcrafted

After tasting this wonderful wine you wouldn't guess that it is only the second vintage of Gewurztraminer produced by Balletto Vineyards. While this cool Russian River Valley microclimate is renowned for Pinot Noir and Zinfandel, it also provides ideal growing conditions for distinctive Gewurztraminer. Only a small batch of this barrel-fermented, exotically aromatic wine is made.

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Tolosa Winery

The first vineyard plantings in early California came with the establishment of the missions. The vineyard at the Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa was the first planted in San Luis Obispo County and was situated in what is now the Edna Valley appellation. Original documents show the quality of wine produced from this mission was highly valued and often traded to other missions.

Being situated on the Central Coast, north of Santa Barbara and south of Paso Robles, the weather conditions prove ideal for producing grape clusters that are fewer in number, but linger longer on the vine to yield flavor of exquisite intensity.

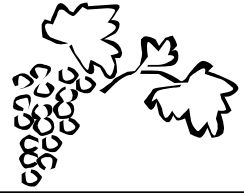
Tolosa Vineyards Pinot Noir, 2005 Central Coast

A pure, feminine expression of the Pinot Noir grape, it shows an intense floral perfume, bright red-berry fruit, and spicy accents of citrus peel & cardamom pod. We look forward to the evolution of this wine over the next 14-20 months. Pair it with paella, spicy Indian curry, or a soba noodle and seared ahi salad.



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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 among 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!

Zucca Mountain Vineyards

Calaveras County is a picturesque and remote area in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Through the 1850s and '60s, Calaveras County was the heart of the Gold Rush. Prospectors of many national origins arrived in the area afflicted with Gold Fever. Those who stayed, notably the French and the Italians, quickly established vineyards and a reputation for producing the best wines in California. Many of these vineyards would long outlive the boom and bust of the Gold Rush and a century and a half later, the red clay and gravelly slopes of Calaveras County are yielding another kind of Mother Lode – the gold medal winning wines of the region.

Calaveras County forms the southern third of the broad Sierra Foothills appellation, which also includes much of El Dorado and Amador counties to the north. Vineyards here generally lie between 1500 and 2400 ft elevation.

Zucca Mountain Vineyards is a family owned and operated winery in Murphy's, California. Carol and Gary Zucca are both owners and winemakers. They had been making wines for themselves for a number of years and decided to become professional wine makers about 11 years ago. One of Carol and Gary's main goals when starting Zucca Mountain Vineyards was to create an opportunity to bring the Zucca family together. Each member of the family contributes in different ways.

Wanting to stay small to make certain that their wines remain of the highest quality, they produce less than 1000 cases a year. All of their grapes are hand sorted so that only the very best grapes are used in Zucca Mountain Vineyards wines.

The vineyard is located on a peninsula surrounded on three sides by the water of the New Melones Reservoir. This site produces a unique micro-climate with cooling breezes from the lake that moderate the temperature and provide an excellent environment for Rhone and Italian varietal grapes. These vineyards produce grapes from a great combination of climates and soils to make superb wines using the Zucca family touch.

Zucca Mountain Vineyards also has a unique tasting room in Murphy's across from the historic Murphy's Hotel. Their tasting room is in a grotto like cellar under a 150 year old building, a definite must-visit if you ever find yourself in Murphy's. And now for our featured wines, two of Zucca Mountain Vineyards finest!

Barbera, 2004 - Amador County

California State Fair Commercial Wine Competition - Gold Medal & Best of Class

Calaveras County Fair - Gold Medal

San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition, 2006 - Silver Medal

The 2004 Barbera is Zucca Mountain Vineyard's reserve Barbera from 2 vineyards, known for their fine Barbera grapes. It is full-bodied, fruity, smooth yet elegant with a marvelous structure and mouth feel. You will love the subtle complexity, the interesting finish and moderate acidity. The wine contains aromas and flavors of cherry, blackberry and a hint of spice. Drink the wine now or lay it down to smooth out the tannins even more. We recommend this wine with any meal where the food flavors do not overpower the wine such as veal or pork.

Reserve Syrah, 2003 - Calaveras County

San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition - Gold Medal

The 2003 Syrah is from Tanner Vineyards, well known for producing fine Syrah grapes. The wine is full-bodied, fruity, and smooth, with a marvelous structure and mouth feel by itself. You will find up-front fruit, a nice middle and a smooth, interesting finish. The wine contains aromas and flavors of cherry and berry with a hint of spice, and vanilla. We recommend this wine with any heavy meal such as good barbequed steak.