

Halloween Wine Tasting Party

Tired of the standard spooky Halloween party? Mix things up by throwing a festive Halloween wine tasting party for a mix of sophistication and fright. With great décor, delicious Halloween treats and the perfect selection of wine, your party is a guaranteed hit.

Haunted Wine Tasting Décor

Go all out with the wine tasting theme and turn your house into a haunted wine cellar. Here are a few ways you can create this look:



- Find old wooden barrels and use them as much as possible. Use them to hold platters of food, wine decanters, decorations, and jars of candy.
- Use oversized glass apothecary jars to hold Halloween candy, cookies or other treats.
- Present food on large silver platters, and label cheeses and crackers with small toothpicks that have labels attached.
- Create a grand wine tasting table by placing an old, broken down door between two wine barrels. Scatter the table with grapes, vines and scary (fake) mice and spiders.
- On the grand tasting table, place each different type of wine in an old fashioned glass decanter. Make sure to identify the wines with labels.

Festive Favors

For a special touch, create mini tasting menus that your guests can take home. Hole punch a corner of the menu, and string black ribbon through the hole. Finish it off by stringing a spider ring through the ribbon. Tie the menu to a bottle of wine for the guest to take home as a favor.

Delicious Wine Tasting Treats

Serve your guests plenty of tasty snacks to satisfy their appetite between tastings.

- **Variety of Cheese** - Put out a variety of cheeses for your guests to nibble on. Choose an assortment of hard and soft, mild and strong flavored cheeses.
- **Crackers & Bread** - Bread and crackers are perfect to pair with the cheese, and they provide energy and something substantial for appetizers. Try getting seedy crackers, French bread and a soft whole wheat roll for a good variety.
- **Apple and Salami Rolls** - Pair a thinly sliced piece of gala apple with a thin slice of a hard cheese such as parmesan. Wrap it up with a piece of Genoa salami and pin it all together with a toothpick.

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Classic Wine Club Selections

CRU Winery: Back by Popular Demand

You may remember CRU winery from earlier this year or you may be experiencing this winery's fine wines for the first time. Due to the overwhelming popularity of the wines we featured in February, we heard your demands loud and clear and this month we will be featuring 2 different vintages of premium vineyard select wines from CRU winery for you to enjoy.

Cru, a French term identifies prestigious vineyards and the wines made from them, embodying the classification of select vineyard sites and their unique indigenous style. After nearly 20 years crafting premium artisan style Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, Winemaker Michael Leven understands the intricacies involved in attaining this rare level of elevated distinction. Michael knows where the best vineyards are located, which blocks produce the most optimal fruit and has relationships with the farmers that tend them. Focusing on Chardonnay and Pinot Noir exclusively, CRU represents a marriage of site typicity and winemaking skill that elevates their wine to a level of Artistry not commonly found.

2006 Redding Ranch Chardonnay

Monterey County

Young, with a greenish tinge, the nose is pretty and delicate. Aromas of pineapple, papaya, and citrus peel are typical of this vineyard. Light toastiness in the background aromatics gives way to pineapple and toast in the mouth, with a light buttery finish. This wine will become increasingly expressive and round as it matures in the bottle.

The Vineyard

The Redding Ranch was planted in 1996 and is located just east of the Arroyo Seco, just south of Greenfield, in the middle of the Salinas Valley. The grapes for this wine came from "Block Two," which is planted to clone 96. We pick our grapes from the middle of the block because the windward side of the vineyard is prone to wind damage, while the leeward side is too vigorous.

2007 Chualar Canyon Pinot Noir

Monterey County

The 2007 Chualar Canyon Pinot Noir has a strawberry jam nose with herbaceous notes of sage. On the palate butter crust cherry pie is layered with black cherry cola and pomegranate flavors. The fruit is well integrated with characters of forest floor, rhubarb and toasty oak. The soft yet supple tannins can be attributed to our very gentle handling of this fragile variety and the use of only very fine grain oak in our barrel-aging regime.

The Vineyard

The Chualar Canyon Vineyard is the most northerly vineyard in the Salinas Valley, located only 10 miles from Monterey Bay and directly in line with its marine breezes. Consequently, it's a very cool growing site. The block from which they pick their grapes is planted entirely to Dijon selections of Pinot Noir, and their 'rows' contain clones 667 and 777. Trellising is vertical (Vertical Shoot Positioning) to increase sun exposure in this unique site.



Q & A with winemaker Michael
Levin: CRU Winery

What does CRU stand for?
Unabashed Individualism

If CRU were a car, what would it
be?

*A Bentley - equal to anything on
the road, but never quite given the
respect commanding the same
price as its true peers. Exclusive
and over-delivering.*

If CRU were a celebrity, who
would it be?

*Jim Morrison - this brand will help
propel the Mariposa Wine
Company to 'Break on Through to
the Other Side' from headstrong
upstart to established fixture.*

Which sport would CRU play?

*Lacrosse - rough and tumble yet
elitist. Not for everybody, but
that's ok.*

What would CRU say if it got into
a fight?

"Go ahead, I dare you."