

Boise Co-op Uncorked!

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Looking Forward to Fall

— *Divit Cardosa*

After a hot summer of barbeques, salads & rosé, I start craving the cooler temperatures along with bigger wines. While I'm not quite ready for the big, tannic Cabernet based wines I enjoy in winter, I find Rhone varietals and Pinot Noir to be perfect reds for fall.

RHONES & CLONES

The classic Rhone varietals include Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre, Carignan and Cinsault with a few odd varieties thrown in. With original rootstock from the northern Rhone, Australia has grown Syrah for over a century calling it "Shiraz." California and Washington have jumped on the Syrah bandwagon as well. If you ask a vigneron in the southern Rhone Valley what the most important grape is they will certainly tell you Grenache, and the older the better. Old vine Grenache is the backbone of great Chateauneuf du Pape and most Cote du Rhone as well. The classic raspberry and pepper quality in these wines comes from the Grenache grape and the soil (or lack there of) it's grown in.

This fall look for 2004 vintage Chateau-neuf du Pape for its classic style and grace. Unlike the big, ripe, high alcohol style of 2003, the '04s will be more elegant and similar to the perfect 2001 vintage. Producers we recommend include: Beaucastel, Charvin, Ferrand, Mont Olivet, Les Cailloux, Clos du Caillou, la Nerthe & Usseglio. Expect prices to range from \$38 to \$160 (for the select cuvees) with most wines in the mid \$40s.

For the budget minded, most Cote du Rhones run less than \$20. 2004 and 2005 vintages will be available this fall. Some of our favorites include Andre Brunell, Daniel Et Denis Alary, Charvin & the killer Clos du Caillou. Look for special pricing on the Clos du Caillou: reg. \$17.99, this fall \$15.99

From California I recommend you give Qupe Syrah a try. The regular bottle at \$16.99 is always a pleasure. Look at L'Ecole, Colvin and Waterbrook for Washington Syrahs around \$20.

Australia produces enough Shiraz to make one dizzy. The bottlings tend to be very "fruit forward" meaning soft, full and easy to drink right out of the shoot. Penfolds, Wishing Tree, Rosemount, and Nine Stones are all good examples around \$10. If you want to step up try d'Arenberg and Elderton. They both have wines of great stature for those willing to spend a little (or a lot) extra on a superb Shiraz.

PINOT NOIR

The holy grail of great grapes. Most wine enthusiasts eventually make their way to Pinot Noir and enjoy it for its depth, complexity and pure sultry quality. The grape, however, is tough to grow, since it does best in places where problems with weather just before harvest is common. Also, it is impossible to make good Pinot Noir with a heavy fruit set. Most great Pinot Noir is made from vines producing less than three tons per acre and often it is closer to one ton per acre. Pinot Noir grapes must be handled carefully — without mechanical pump-over techniques that cabernet and Merlot producers use. A lot of Pinot Noir is fermented in small, open top fermenters and punched down twice a day by hand. This explains why good Pinot Noir is not cheap and cheap Pinot Noir is not so good.

2004 and 2005 will be good vintages for Pinot Noir lovers. Oregon, California and France (Burgundy) will all have excellent wines to offer. While California Pinot Noir tends to be riper and higher in alcohol; the Pinot Noirs from Oregon and France seem to have more in common. Look for 2004 Red Burgundies to be fresh and delicious early — a drinking mans vintage, while the 2005s will be a candidate for the cellar. The wines are great but there are few bargains here while the dollar is weak against the euro. Oregon and California are both happy with '04 and '05 vintages so feel free to take a stab. There is always someone in the wine department to help you with a selection. Pinot Noir is the classic wine to enjoy with mushroom dishes or any fowl.

WINE CLUB PICKS

Marchetti Vino Spumante Brut NV
2003 Huia Gewurztraminer
2003 Saint-Esprit Cotes-du-Rhone Delas
Cascina Castlet Barbera d'Asti 2004
Domaine de la Mordoree "La Dame Rousse" Lirac 2002
Vincent Dureuil-Janthial Aligote 2004
Il Paradiso di Frassina "Do" 2001 Super Tuscan
Robert Sinskey Pinot Blanc 2004 Forrester Noble T 1999



INSIDE . . .

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- New Flipside Wines
- Want to be on the email list for the Boise Co-op Uncorked!?
- Send a request to wineclub@boisecoop.com

A Port for All Seasons

— Robin Zimmermann

When seeking a bright, refreshing summer aperitif, most people would place port furthest from their mind. However, in an attempt to modernize the classic cordial and appeal to a younger consumer base, Warre's aged tawny has undergone a transformation both in bottling and body. The result is Warre's Otima, a highly approachable 10 year aged tawny, bright and delicate, contained in a sleek glass bottle with minimalistic design. Billed as "a port for all seasons... a lighter, more contemporary style to reflect today's lifestyle," Warre's Otima is true to its claim — it's a port to be enjoyed year round.



Aged for 10 years in oak casks, the port is a refreshing diversion from Warre's traditionally powerful yields. With a bright nose of walnuts and pure maple syrup, the body is delightfully consistent, with a rounded, supple mingling of nuts, maple, vanilla and sweet fruit heightened by a touch of acidity. Surprisingly light with a soft, clean finish, this tawny maintains amazing complexity without being laden with heavy syrup and tannin common in aged tawny. Although suggested that Otima is "delightful when chilled," the delicate structure of this port does not necessitate refrigeration. In fact, chilling the wine seems to disguise some of the port's character. Of course, it is up to the consumer to decide which method is preferable. Either way, Warre's Otima is an excellent year-round port, a highly versatile and delicious alternative to some of the heavier mainstays.

Wine Question? Ask a Wine Guy!

I saw the term "botrytis affected," on a bottle. What does botrytis affected mean?

— Nick Millmaren

Botrytis is a fungus disease that rots grapes. There are several types of rots that affect vines, and only one of them is good — a kind of botrytis cinerea, commonly dubbed "the noble rot."

The noble rot attacks ripe undamaged white grapes and, given the right weather, results in extremely sweet grapes which look disgusting but are capable of producing the worlds finest and longest-living sweet wines. In certain areas it's the determining factor that marks a great vintage.

The fungus develops ideally in climates with humid, misty mornings in the summer but have sunny autumn afternoons in which the grapes dry and the fungus is restrained from developing unchecked. Hot, dry climates (like Idaho) do not contribute to the production of the noble rot and the grapes do not go through the chemical transformations that create more complex sweet wine.



Grapes infected with botrytis

More than half of the water content in grapes is lost with an attack of Botrytis cinerea which also consumes both the acids and sugar in the grapes. The result is an increased sugar concentration, or must weight, and a decreased quantity of juice, which makes for a rich, sweet wines with honey tones, and often a peculiar, but pleasant nuance of mushrooms or boiled cabbage. Sauternes, Loire, and Germany are known for wines made from grapes with the noble rot.

In its detrimental form (always the case with red grapes), called Grey rot, the fungus attacks the grapes and makes it's protective skin susceptible to other fungi or bacteria. The result is rotten greyish-brown wine with off-flavors of mold and vinegar.

Wanna Ask a Wine Guy? Forward your question to wineclub@boisecoop.com

WINE TERMS

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- **Vigneron:** *French term for vine grower. Some say the term is derived from vigne ronde, implying that a vigneron actually prunes the vines himself whereas a viticulteur merely grows them.*
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- **Vintner:** *a wine merchant or wine producer. Also sometimes used to refer to a winemaker.*
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- **Tawny:** *a style of fortified wine usually associated with extended cask ageing.*
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- **Must weight:** *Important measure of grape ripeness indicated by the concentration of dissolved compounds in grape juice or must. Since about 90% of all the dissolved solids in grape juice are the fermentable sugars (the rest being acids, ions, and a host of other solutes), any measurement of these solids gives a reliable indication of the grapes' ripeness, and therefore the potential alcohol content.*
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- **Pressing:** *wine-making operation whereby pressure is applied, using a press, to grapes, grape clusters, or grape pomace in order to squeeze the liquid out of the solid parts, known as pressurage in French.*
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Why I Don't Want to Hear How Many Points That Wine Received

— Rosemary S Gray

I feel a little sheepish writing this article. Maybe because it's the first opinion article for Uncorked. Maybe because it's a controversial topic. Maybe because it could make me look like a snob. Maybe because it could alienate friends in the wine industry as well as customers. But maybe it's also important for me to put my fears and timidity aside, and stick out my neck for what will make for good conversation fodder while enjoying our 100 point wines. Because I only buy perfect wines — What? Don't you?

The worth of the 100-Point wine scoring system is not a new debate, but lately it's been on the lips of many wine writers and critics, and had a featured spot in the business section of the New York Times. With few exceptions, the writers have pointed out the flaws and advantages to the system. You can read all the diplomatic perspectives online; I may eat my words later or have to refurbish my reputation, but I think the 100-point system is totally bogus.

First of all, it's deceptively objective. A hundred points or not, a wine's level of perfection is not a quantitative quality of the wine itself. The quality of any wine is wholly dependent on the presence and perspective of a taster. It is not that this wine is perfect, it is that someone who has a certain palate, with certain taste preferences, and certain qualities they look for in good wine said it's perfect. What if your palate, taste preferences and sought after qualities are different? Then the wine isn't perfect, it's dead wrong.

It's like trying to rate a person. All due respect to my ex-boyfriend, he's a great guy, really, I'm sure he deserves at least 94 points. But for me? I'm sure when we fell in love he was a 99, but then after that first awkward summer we lived together he went down to a 89, then the winter came — 82, ouch. And by the end? Low 70s at best. I hope he's with a lady now that can see him for the 94 points I'm sure he's worth. My point is that the worth of wines (or boys), is more a reflective of the palate than of the wine itself.

Rating biases are not just a matter of taste, but are also dependent on the context in which the wine is tasted. Ratings are often assigned amongst a line up of many other bottles. Those most inclined to stand out are the more concentrated, fruit intense and transparent — the biggest and boldest. Line up a bunch of teenagers and give them 30 seconds to express themselves; the one you hear will be the boldest, but you'll miss all potential expression of the performance-shy kid who takes longer to get to know. The boldest may be the best at clearly and loudly expressing himself in a crowd, but does that mean you want to go fine dining with him or have him as a confidant for a quiet evening in the garden? A rating bestowed amongst a glut of wines in a sterile room with



Illustration from the New York Times August 13, 2006

a tired palate has little to do with whether it will serve you pleasure on a particular evening with a particular dish.

Points are a convenient sales tool, and my distributor friends may hate me for this, but that too is a flaw in the system. A bottle with a “92 point” shelf talker is going to sell more rapidly than the undescribed wine next to it regardless of which one is better suited for the consumer. Ratings cater to the masses, by reducing wine to the lowest common denominator — a number that we intuitively understand because that's how we ourselves were assessed in grade school. Points sell wine, but with a childish and misguided style of understanding.

It's not that the subjectivity of wine is problematic, it's that deceptive objectivity over simplifies to such a degree that truth and useful guidance is lost. Ratings skip the individual experience at the heart of enjoying wine. We can't grade people, books, music or wine with a definitive, constant number. The truth is in the completely subjective and contextual enjoyment or displeasure. Your experience is a more truthful barometer of quality than an impossibly-objective, over-simplistic rating.

It's not that 90, 94 or 100 point wines aren't good. Plenty are well made, and there are contexts in which they shine and there are palates that prefer them. But they are not absolutely, definitively worth their point (or dollar) value. Sometimes the smartest kid in class wasn't the one that got 100% on the test, sometimes the kid that got a 100% just knew how to memorize the right formula, and sometimes the kid that got 74% and never spoke up in class is the one you fall in love with.

Wine is about who my company is, what food we're eating, and what my mood is. Wine is about whether or not I am in the state of mind to challenge myself and experience something new or if I want comfort and ease. Wine is not a number, it cannot be boiled down to one, and if you have to quantify it you're missing the point.



**CO-OP WINE CLUB
MEMBER BENEFITS:**

- Two to four exceptional bottles the first of the month. With the option to choose from three different price tiers & themes
 - Tasting notes, recipes, and food pairing tips
 - Exclusive 10% discount on Wine Club selections for the featured month
 - Priority invitations to tastings and wine education events
 - Special offers on stemware, accessories, meals at the Flipside and other neat stuff
 - Blossoming of expertise, and a refined palate (well that's up to you)
- email wineclub@boisecoop.com and find out how to join!



The Boise Co-op Uncorked!
Is written and edited by Wine Department Staff. Please direct comments, compliments or queries for information to:

wineclub@boisecoop.com

NEW OFFERINGS FROM THE FLIPSIDE'S WINE LIST

- *New Flights: Northwest Reds, Strawberries & Spice, Uncommon White & Red Vines*
- *New Bubbles & Dessert: Marchetti Sparkling Verdicchio and Ca d'Gal Moscato d' Asti*
- *New By the Glass: 2004 Kesselstatt Scharzhofberger Riesling Kabinett, 2004 Villa Carafa Asprinio, 2005 Yalumba Unwooded Chardonnay, 2001 Andeli Saint-Emilion, 2004 Snake River Syrah-Grenache Blend, 2005 Cloudline Pinot Noir, 2004 Dow Vale do Bomfim, and 2003 Vina Progreso Tannat.*
- *New By the Bottle: Sauvignon Blanc: 2004 Highfield and 2002 Edi Simcic; Chardonnay: 2004 Au Bon Climat, 2004 Boillot Savigny-Les-Beaune, and 2004 Martinot Puligny-Montrachet; 2003 Grosset Polish Hill Riesling; 2003 Merryvale Cabernet; Pinot Noirs: 2003 Roessler Estate Dutton Ranch, 2002 Drouhin Chambolle-Musigny, 2000 Truchot Morey-Saint-Denis; 2001 Parusso Barolo, and 2003 Pibarnon Restanques Bandol.*

STAFF PICKS!

The Wine Department fesses up to their favorite everyday wines — and the bottles they'd splurge for

- **Dave: 2005 Vina Izadi Rioja White \$12.99 & 2001 Gran Colegiata Campus \$30**
- **Divit: 2005 Domaine de Pouy \$7.99 & 2004 Arlaud Bonnes-Mares \$110**
- **Bruce: 2003 LaForet Pinot Noir (it's back!) \$10.99 & 2001 Conti Costanti Brunello di Montalcino (93 points in Wine Spectator!) \$55**
- **Allen: 2005 Domaine de Pouy (that's two votes!) \$7.99 & 2000 Zatilla Cabernet Beckstoffer George III \$38**
- **Rosemary: 2001 Gaudrelle Vouvray SALE \$9.99 & Edi Simcic Sauvignon \$33**
- **Robin: La Yunta La Rioja Argentina \$8.99 & 2003 Andrew Will Sorella \$62**
- **Michael: Bonny Doon Big House White \$9.49 & 2000 Joseph Drouhin Chassagne-Montrachet \$58**

A Divit Recipe! Perfect with your 2004 Burgundy

Lemon Chicken with Mushrooms & Cream

INGREDIENTS:

Sauce —

1/2 C. chicken stock

1/2 C. cream

1/4 C. lemon juiced

1 small shallot diced

2-3 T melted butter (or olive oil)

1 1/2 C. sliced mushrooms (I like to mix shi-take and button)

Seasoned Flour —

1/2 C. flour mixed with salt and pepper

Egg Wash —

1 egg mixed with 1 tablespoon milk

Sauté shallots in butter, add mushrooms and sauté until tender. Add 1/2 tsp of flour, then add all liquids and allow to simmer and reduce. Adjust flavor to taste with salt and pepper.

Slice a boneless chicken breast in third or quarter strips, turn the strips on their side and pound flat between oiled sheets of saran wrap.

Dust chicken with season flour and dip in egg wash. Sauté chicken on each side until lightly browned on both sides

Serve with sauce over chicken or you can let chicken mingle with the sauce as you cook the strips.

It's delicious!