



Volume 13, No. 29 (published by the Wine Gallery, Bozeman, MT) July 19, 2017

What's new in the Grapevine this week?

- **A rose by any other name**
- **Keep Priorities in order**
- **Short Grapevine next week**

A Rose by Any Other Name

With the onset of hot weather, I am getting a lot of requests for Pinot Grigio. When I suggested an Oregon Pinot Gris, one of our customers balked insisting that that wasn't the grape they wanted. We politely pointed out that Pinot Gris and Pinot Grigio are the same grape and the customer decided to test it out. Two days later they were back for more Pinot Gris!!

If you paid close attention to some of the recent Wine Club selections you noticed that the grape the French call **Mourvèdre** is the same grape the Spanish call **Monastrell**. In California, the very same grape is known as **Mataro**.

It is sometime confusing that **Syrah** and **Shiraz** is the same grape known by different names in Europe and Australia.

Here is a short list of grapes with more than one name:

Tempranillo is called **Ull de Llebre** (eye of the hare) in the Penedes region of Spain. In Portugal the same grape is called **Tinta Ruiz** and is used to make Port. When this grape was cultivated in Argentina, the natives referred to it as **Tempranilla**.

The **Zinfandel** grape we consider to be uniquely American is known as **Primitivo** in Italy.

The "gray" clone of Pinot Noir is known as **Pinot Gris** in France and **Pinot Grigio** in Italy. The white clone is **Pinot Blanc** in France and **Pinot Bianco** in Italy.

Muscat is also known as **Hanepoot** in South Africa (the same country where **Chenin Blanc** is called **Steen**).

Italian **Vermentino** is referred to as **Rolle** in France. The Italians also grow great quantities of **Trebbiano**, which is known as **Ugni Blanc** in France.

Pinot Noir is a finicky grape that prefers cooler temperatures. In Austria the grape we know as Pinot Noir is called **Blauburgunder**. Just across the border in Germany, it is referred to as **Spatburgunder**. Italians refer to that grape as Pinot Nero.

The Austrians also cultivate a hearty, earthy grape called **Blaufrankisch**. The same grape grown in Washington State is called **Lemberger**.

The red grape we know as **Carignane** in California has a slightly different spelling in France. It is spelled **Carignan** in most of Southern France. The Italian version of the same grape is **Carignano**, while the Spanish refer to it as **Carineno**. Similarly, Spanish **Garnacha** is known to the French as **Grenache**. On Sardinia, Grenache is called **Cannonau**.

Petite Sirah from California is genetically identical to the French grape **Durif**. The grape Californians adopted as **Napa Gamay** is really **Valdiguie** in France.

Just to make matters confusing, **Sangiovese** has multiple clones that are used to make different wines. Chianti is made from the **Sangiovese** clone. The **Brunello** clone of Sangiovese is made into Brunello di Montalcino, while the **prugnello** clone is the basis for Vino Nobile di Montepulciano. All of those clones are Sangiovese.

Keep Priorities in Order

Last week at the Wine Tasting, I got several questions about the order in which the wines should be tasted. I have a few rules of thumb that I follow and they seem to work well for my taste buds.

First, a few general observations:

Don't trust the first sip. If you taste more than one wine, the second wine you taste always seems to taste better than the first. This is just another way of describing "order error". To most people the first wine will taste strong and poorly balanced, while the second wine seems smooth and well balanced. This phenomenon occurs no matter how good the first wine is. The reason for this is that all wines have the bite of alcohol and acidity which jar the taste buds. After the taster gets by the first wine, the palate becomes acclimated to the bite. (Your eyes react similarly when you go

from a dark room to bright sunlight. At first the light seems harsh and overstimulating, but after a few seconds, your eyes adjust and everything comes clear and sharp.) Remember to come back to the first “break in” wine during your tasting to see how it really tastes.

Don't try to taste too many wines. Even if you are of the taste-and-spit school, your taste buds will begin to dull after six or so wines. Again, your senses are playing a trick on you to keep you from being over-stimulated. This happens when you walk into a bakery, and are overcome by the delicious smell of baking bread. If you stay in the bakery for ten minutes, you won't smell anything. Most city dwellers don't even notice how noisy the urban environment is because their brain tunes out the racket of traffic, the throb of HVAC systems and the hum of electric lights. Your taste buds fatigue just like your other senses and after a finite number of tastes, their sensitivity is gone.

Use the proper glass: Last month at the American Wine Society everyone was provided with a Riedel “Professional Taster” wine glass. The size and geometry of the bowl on this extraordinary stemware allows the proper evaporation of the wine and delivers it directly to the nose. Many of tasters commented that the same wine tasted better out of the Riedel glass than the smaller restaurant glasses and I think that gives merit to Riedel's claims.

Watch what you eat: In some of the last issues of the Grapevine, we have discussed food and wine pairing and specifically cheese and wine pairing. Wine tasting can be greatly influenced by what else has been on the palate. Cheese, with its high butterfat content tends to coat the palate and hide the defects in wine. Hence, there is an old saying from the French wine merchants “Buy on water, sell on cheese.” Chocolate and coffee throw my taste buds off. If you do eat anything during a wine tasting, a good choice is plain French bread. A few sips of water between wines also helps keep the palate fresh.

Because of the way chemicals affect human senses, there are also some guidelines to follow in the serving order of different wine types. These guidelines have rank and importance. In order, the first listed usually supersedes the subsequent

Dry before Sweet. Sweet wines linger in the mouth for a long time. Dry wines drunk following sweet will taste sour and uninteresting.

Light before Full. Again, full-bodied, full-flavored wines will tend to cancel out the flavors of more delicate wines. A light, dry rosé will show

better ahead of a big Chardonnay than behind it. Pinot Noir is more enjoyable before Cabernet Sauvignon than the reverse.

White before Red. This rule has to be viewed in light of the rules that precede it above. Off dry or sweet whites should be tasted at the end. In a similar vein, delicate reds should be tasted before full-bodied white wines. Serving a light Pinot Noir or Beaujolais before a big, full Chardonnay could be a correct choice on occasion.

Old before Young. This rule goes against the common wine dogma that is based on saving the best, the most complex, until last. Every wine drinking experience I have had where the older wines were served last says this is bad advice. Young wines are simpler, yes, but also generally fruitier, more intense, crisper and more tannic than older wines -- they overpower their seniors. Give maturity the first chance to be appreciated for complexity, grace, elegance, softness and length. Then let the youngsters show off their hard bodies and vigor.

Speaking of young wines, whenever I visit wine tasting rooms at most wineries, the wines are always from the most current vintage and the reds are invariably too young to drink. Take that into consideration when you taste a young, tannic red. What will it taste like in three or four years?

To reiterate, the rules listed first usually supersede the subsequent rules. For example, a Young Dry Red should be served before an Old Sweet White. In this case *dry before sweet* is more important than both *old before young* and *white before red*. There may be mitigating factors, such as food courses, that occasionally might dictate exceptions. A Light Sweet White with an appetizer would be served before a Full Dry Red with a meat course, for example.

Grapevine abbreviated for July 26

I will be on vacation next week so the Grapevine will be shorter than usual. It will just be the preview of the August Wine Club Wines. The wines will be available Saturday, July 29th.