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What's new in the Grapevine this week?

- **Calories in wine**
- **New arrivals**
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- **New details on 2017 Grand tasting**

Calories in Wine

One way to get an idea of how many calories you're drinking is to look at the wine's alcohol content. A 5-ounce glass of wine that's 14 percent alcohol by volume (ABV) will contain nearly 17 grams of alcohol. One gram of alcohol contains 7 calories, so the higher a wine's ABV, the more calories you're going to consume. (Watch out for those fortified wines!) Our 5 ounce, 14 percent sample would get 120 calories from alcohol.

Also contributing to your caloric intake? Carbs. At 4 calories per gram, the amount of carbohydrates—including sugars—in your glass can also affect your overall calorie count, so while an average table wine may only contain around 2-3 grams per glass, a typical 3-ounce pour of a dessert wine would clock in at 12 grams, even at the smaller serving size.

In addition, carb count can affect more than just your calorie intake. In the body, carbs are broken down into glucose, which can be burned off when used for energy. But when there is an excess of glucose, it's stored as fat.

Despite that, there are many wines that work within low-carb consumption goals. A good rule of thumb: The sweeter the wine, the higher its carb count will likely be; dry reds and whites, plus sparklers, are often great low-carb options. (Also, keep track of your serving sizes; many drinkers underestimate how much they're pouring, and an extra ounce of wine here and there adds extra calories and alcohol.)

One other factor to consider: Alcohol disrupts the metabolic process. Because alcohol is a toxin, your body cannot store it as it does nutrients like protein, fats and carbs. Instead, it must be immediately broken down and filtered out of the body. Since it can't be stored, the body prioritizes processing alcohol and halts the metabolization of all other nutrients, meaning whatever carbs you've consumed are less likely to be burned off, and more likely to get broken down into sugars and then stored as fat.

But to say alcohol is making you put on fat isn't quite right, says Tanya Zuckerbot, a New York–based registered dietitian and founder of the F-Factor Diet. “It’s the other foods that you’re eating that can be converted into fat when you’re drinking too much,” she said. “The solution is to not have carbs sitting around [in your belly]. When my clients drink alcohol and they combine it with protein and vegetables, which are both low-carbohydrate foods, it’s almost impossible to put weight on.” (I seem to be able to do the impossible, then.)

The rest of wine's figurative nutritional label bodes even better for the health-conscious. According to the USDA, the average glass of wine is devoid of cholesterol and fat, and it's also low in sodium—three components you probably want to avoid when watching your weight and overall health.

New arrivals

This is the time of year we start getting the “rock star” releases of great wines for the fourth quarter holidays. The four wines we have this week are not your everyday pizza wines but meant for special occasions like birthdays, anniversaries and family feasts during the Holidays.

For those of you who have enjoyed the 2014 Wine Gallery Columbia Valley Cab made by Tamarack Cellars, we have another rare bottling this remarkable winery. Tamarack Cellars’ **2012 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Reserve** is an outstanding blend of 42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot and 29% Cabernet Franc that spent 22 months in 50% new and 50% once-used French oak. Classically styled, with lots of smoke, tobacco, licorice and blackcurrant aromas and flavors, it has everything in the right place, in the right proportions, and is incredibly enjoyable to drink. Enjoy this medium to full-bodied, moderately tannic, balanced beauty over the coming decade, although it will probably last longer. They only made 250 cases and it garnered a 91 point Wine Advocate score. **(\$52.95)**

The second wine is probably the finest wine I’ve tasted from Ron Coleman and Danny Gordon, the **2012 Tamarack Sagemoor Vineyard Reserve** is a sensational blend of 58% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot and 9% Cabernet Franc that was brought up in 65% new French oak. Possessing classic notes of crème de cassis, red currants, licorice, spice and toasty oak, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, a layered, seamless, sexy style and ripe tannin that emerge on the finish. This beauty will continue to evolve nicely for 3-4 years and keep for a decade or more past that. This is a 200 case cuvee that rated 94 points from Wine Advocate. Bravo! **(\$52.95)**

A wine that I would put up there with the crème de la crème of Washington State Cabernet is the **2012 Columbia Valley Cabernet Sauvignon from Corliss**, which is insanely good and does everything right. It is made from 97% Cabernet and 3% Petit Verdot that spent 28 months in 70% new French oak. Its saturated ruby/purple color is followed by fabulous notes of crème de cassis, toasted spice, chocolate and tobacco leaves. These give way to a full-bodied, seamless and layered 2012 that has fabulous purity and freshness, a big, rich mid-palate and sweet tannin that emerge on the finish,

all suggesting it will have a long life. Drink before 2040. 97 points Wine Advocate **(\$89.95)**

Also from Corliss is the **2011 Corliss Red**. A Merlot and Cabernet Franc-dominated blend, it shows the freshness and purity of the vintage. Exhibiting classic Bordeaux-like aromas of red and black fruits, cedar and graphite, it falls on the fuller side of medium to full-bodied and carries a silky, refined profile on the palate. Balanced, rich and elegant, with masses of polished tannin framing the finish, it has loads of potential and will have a minimum of 10-12 years of prime drinking. 92 points Wine Advocate. **(\$76.95)**

Wine Country Fire Update

The loss of lives and property during the recent catastrophic fires in California is almost beyond comprehension. The devastation caused by these wind powered wild fires has reached heart-breaking proportions and it may be another week before we find out what the total damage is.

Call me Pollyanna but I think the recent fires in Wine Country may not be as bad for the wine industry itself as was once feared. There is a good chance the vines survived, even if the last remaining grapes have not. Doug Shafer at Shafer vineyards used to make a wine called “Fire Break” because vineyards actually serve as a fire break in many instances and have saved nearby wineries and structures during historic fires. I believe the vines' green foliage and the mowed cover crops in the vineyards helped slow or halt the flames—green vegetation is harder to burn than the fires' typical fuel, the dry scrub on the ground in the hillside forests of oak and pine. Grapevines are hard to burn and the strong winds actually helped to blow the fires through the vineyards very quickly.

On top of that, almost 90% of the harvest was complete and the wine was safe inside metal or cement winery buildings surrounded by concrete pads. Not every winery was fortunate enough to avoid damage and the real assessment will come in the next weeks when the properties are accessible again.

New Details on the Grand Tasting

In this Amazon.com and “Google it” world we have grown accustomed to having anything we want by tapping on our smart phones. I agree that it's a fine idea for a lot of things but not for the wines that fit our own palate as original, distinctive and unique. For wine, there is one way to decide if it is to your liking and that is to taste it. Read about it, look at the pictures or see the podcast and you won't be any closer to truly knowing if you like the wine without that critical tasting step.

If you have a nickel and want to hear me rant about Montana law not allowing us to do wine tasting in the Wine Gallery, you can. But it makes much more sense to avoid the rant and come to the **2017 Grand Tasting on November 4th at the Hilton Garden Inn**. We will have approximately 60 wines rated 90 points and above with

price tags from \$12-\$20. It is your chance to find the wines you love and get them for gifts, Holiday parties, or just for your cellar.

One other enticement: the Hilton chef loves this event and every year, he puts out some amazing small plate delicacies for us to sample with the wines. This year I saw Seafood Risotto, Roast Tri-tip, Wild Mushroom Pizza, Bangers and Mash, juicy slices of Pork Loin, a gourmet assortment of cheese and charcuteries and something with dark chocolate for dessert.

Ask anyone who went last year; this event combines great food, great wine and a great time. I know we set a record for number of bottles sold last year because the quality and value of this event outshines any other event in Montana.

It's a very modern mistake to think that today's most interesting and memorable wines will come to you without any effort. You've got to know about, and care enough to go find them. Never have so many great wines been created and yet been so challenging both to know about and to acquire. It is not impossible: you can find the right ones for your own self by just purchasing a ticket for \$79 at bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com or calling us at 586-8828.

I know 60 wines seems daunting but you don't have to randomly taste every one. As a service to our guests, we can forward the line-up of wines so you can put your priorities together. If you want to taste Pinot Noir, you will know our offerings and table locations ahead of time. If Chardonnay is lower on your list or if you just want to try something you've never had before, you can organize your evening based on your own curiosity and preference. Watch for the chart the week before the Grand Tasting.

This is a wonderful "date" night or a special event for just rounding up your friends. If you want to dress up in cocktail attire and make a really great night of it, we always welcome that! Along with good wine and good food, you are guaranteed good conversation as well.