



Volume 13, No. 45 (published by the Wine Gallery, Bozeman, MT) **November 1, 2017**

## **What's new in the Grapevine this week?**

- **November Wine Club**
- **Last tickets for Nov. 4th**
- **Is Wine Gluten Free?**
- **Tiffany Olson Steps up**

## **Preview of November Wine Club**

Our first red wine is the **2015 Evolution Pinot Noir** (food's best friend) from Oregon's Pinot Noir country by a pioneering wine family – Sokol-Blosser. This wine exhibits aromas and characteristic flavors of bright red and jammy fruit. In the nose, this food friendly Pinot Noir expresses notes of chocolate covered cherries, black plums, and baking spice. The mouthfeel is round and rich at first sip with some good tannins which soften with acidity in its long finish. You can sense flavors of black cherry and a hint of toasty oak when the **Evolution Pinot Noir** is enjoyed on its own. Open a bottle to enhance flavors of wood fired pizza or Thanksgiving roasted turkey as a wonderfully paired wine and food experience. **(\$15)**

Our first white wine comes from Greece. The **2015 Boutari Moschofilero** hails from the Peloponnese area west of Athens. Boutari has been recognized for 17 years as one of the best wineries in the world by Food and Wine Magazine and the Moschofilero is the flagship.

The wine itself has a brilliant, crystal-clear, white yellow color with green tints that glimmer in the glass. This wine shows an intense floral and fruity bouquet dominated by aromas of white rose, melon and citrus. A well-balanced fresh wine, it treats the tongue to intense flavor and long aromatic aftertaste with traces of orange blossom and grapefruit. If you want to impress your friends and serve them something they will have a hard time pronouncing (let alone spelling), this would be a great wine to serve. Chill and serve with some chilled garlic shrimp appetizers. **(\$15)**

Our second red is from Walla Walla winemaker Brett Isenhower. His **2015 Isenhower Yakima Valley Syrah** is a tour de force. He chose indigenous yeast fermentation and included 25% whole clusters, followed by 18 months in Burgundian barrels, a third of which were new. As a result, the nose offers blueberry jam on toast, blackberry and black licorice with vanilla and lavender in the background. It's down-right yummy with those same dark fruit, pleasing grip of tannins, juicy acidity and a touch of pepper. Enjoy with strongly flavored meats

like lamb or venison. This wine normally retails for \$34 but Wine Club members will pay just **\$20**.

One of my favorite white wines is an unconventional blend of Viognier and Sauvignon Blanc from Rhone winemaker, St. Cosme. **The 2016 Saint Cosme Little James Basket Press White** will be our second white wine for November. This aromatic white wine combines flesh and depth of Viognier with the freshness and acidity of Sauvignon Blanc. Light yellow in appearance with green hues, the **Saint Cosme Little James Basket Press White** boasts alluring aromas of grapefruit, apricot, and mango, with tropical flavors on the palate. Refreshing acidity and structure grace the palate and follow through to a remarkable finish. **(\$13)**

Millennium Club members will receive the **2013 Hedges Family Estate Goedhart Syrah**. Like the Isenhower Syrah above, this Washington State beauty has a dark, rich garnet color. An exciting combination of white pepper, cassis, dried blueberry and dried cherry with a little bit of coffee, cocoa powder and Cointreau make up the nose. A tart cherry flavored entry awakens the palate. The mid-palate follows with a nice lushness with flavors of sweet orange peel and vanilla. The finish adds a nice contrast of spicy gamey flavors and a bit of fine tannin. Only 504 cases were made. If you want to try it with rich hearty red meats, open it tonight or you can cellar it for the next 3-5 years. **(\$32)**

## **Is wine Gluten free?**

Last week a woman called us asking for gluten free wine. She insisted that wine barrels and fining agents contain wheat products and gluten protein. How does this set of “facts” survive? Gluten is a protein found in certain cereal grains notably wheat, barley, rye and spelt. Wine is made from 100% grapes (or in some cases, other fruit, like cherries), that’s it, that’s all. Grapes and yeast in barrels or tanks. No grains of any kind.

There is one caveat, however: Wine based beverages like wine coolers or sangria mixes can include gluten containing products. We do not carry those products at the Wine Gallery so you can stamp all of our wines as gluten free.

I am always leery of ad campaigns that tout the obvious about wine. “Fat free”, “Lactose free”, “Sugar Free”, and “Gluten Free” are true about most table wines. The gold standard for “Gluten Free” is 20 parts per million and I haven’t heard of or seen one wine that comes close to that concentration.

The woman who called said that wine barrels are put together with wheat paste. First of all, the wheat paste is only rarely used on the barrel heads so little of the paste is used or left after the barrels are cleaned. Any gluten concentration in the wine is microscopic. The barrel staves have no adhesive of any kind so gluten is certainly not an issue there either. There may be a few European barrel makers who still use wheat paste but paraffin based glues are much more effective and sanitary and are the standard for domestic barrel makers. (Wheat paste glues are the standard for wall paper but not for wine barrels). In the rare case where wheat paste is used, the paste barely touches the wine, and in the case that it did, the extended fermentation period would kill virtually all traces of the gluten protein. So – I’m not worried about it, and I don’t think you should be either. If you want to be super-safe, drink domestic wines or those that are tank fermented. (In tank fermentation, the wine is made in stainless steel tanks. Even though I am no mad scientist, I know stainless steel is gluten free.)

Just so the science is clear, Tricia Thompson MS, RD used sophisticated gluten screening tests called Sandwich R5 ELISA and Competitive R5 ELISA to test wines that were aged in barrels sealed with wheat paste. Her conclusion was that wine is gluten free as all samples were under 10 ppm. They don't call her the "Gluten Watchdog" for nothing. To read about the experiment go to <http://www.glutenfreedietitian.com/gluten-content-of-wine-aged-in-oak-barrelssealed-with-wheat-paste/>.

So what about gluten based fining agents? Some winemakers use products made from other allergens, including: micronized potassium caseinate (that's casein, for you GF/CF folks), skim milk powder (rarely), gelatin, egg whites or egg albumin, and isinglass (from fish.) There are lots of other filtering and fining agents too, most of them more popular than those I just listed, so not all wines contain allergens. Even if gluten were used, the flocculated particles go to the bottom of the barrel and the amount of residue is less than 1 part per million.

If there is any question at all, please consult our staff about wines aged in stainless steel or concrete vessels.

### **Date night cocktail attire?**

I don't know how many times I have heard "There is no place to go in Montana where I can get dressed up!" Every year at the Grand Tasting, we have folks who take advantage of a grand occasion to dress up. You can't do it every day but this is a grand occasion to dress up.

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. This 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](mailto: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. Send an e-mail to [bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com](mailto:bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com) and we will forward the line-up for Saturday.

More icing on the cake: we will once again have the pleasure of welcoming Atlanta area wine critic and gourmand, E. Ray Babcock. He will be available with his perspicacious insights and bon mots on a one-on-one basis for everyone to enjoy.

This is a wonderful "date" night or a special event for just rounding up your friends. We encourage you to dress up in cocktail attire and make a really great night of it. Along with good wine and good food, you are guaranteed good conversation as well. There are still a few tickets left so get them while you can!

### **Tiffany Olson Steps up**

Many of you have seen Tiffany Olson back in the store. She has finished her prerequisites for her advanced degree and is back at the Wine Gallery full time.

That event also brings my life back to an equilibrium. October 28<sup>th</sup> marked the beginning of my 14<sup>th</sup> year as proprietor of the Wine Gallery. As many of you know, I will turn 66 in January and I keep reflecting that these events and milestones would be a good time to work toward backing away from running the Wine Gallery on a day to day basis.

In that regard, I am pleased to announce that Tiffany has accepted my offer to become General Manager of the Wine Gallery. Even though I think of Tiffany as my daughter, she also acts as my advisor, supervisor confidant and mentor. (As you can see this promotion isn't a stretch for either Tiffany or me). She has been part of the Wine Gallery for over ten years and she knows as much I do about how it operates, who our customers are and what our aims and philosophy entail. A fresh set of eyes and youthful energy bodes well for the future of the Wine Gallery. In my opinion it is time for her to take the reins and the promotion confirms my trust and faith in her to do a better job of running the store than I ever could.

Before you start singing "Happy Trails to You", be reminded that I will continue to publish the Grapevine to keep everyone abreast of the goings on here at the store. I will also be here to help out during the busy times to keep my skills honed and guarantee my employee discount.

The next time you see Tiffany, offer her your congratulations on her new position.