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What's new in the Grapevine this week?

- **Sales, tastings and events**
- **“Backward” wine?**
- **“Happy” Riedel glasses**

Mark your calendars

This month--John Macy and Harvest Sweets sale. Come in for free samples of John Macy's Cheese Crisps and Harvest Sweets Chocolates and get 20% off each box. One taste will seal the deal!

Madison Valley Ranch plans wine dinners

After having experienced the beauty and hospitality of the Madison Valley Ranch last Fall, I was delighted to be presented a chance to offer two more wine dinners at this gorgeous venue on April 6th and April 7th. The Madison Valley Ranch sold out every seat for our last dinner and they would love to have another congenial group come by for a great evening next month. Choose either night for a great “done with winter” getaway.

The Madison Valley Ranch is located across the Madison River from Ennis in Jeffers, Montana. This beautiful setting won the Lodge of the Year from Orvis in 2015 and I can see why. There is a pond and a creek where you can practice your fly casting and it is a short walk through the Channels to the Madison if you prefer to river fish. At dusk we watched ring neck pheasants, sand hill cranes and osprey fly by serenaded by meadowlarks. In the adjacent field a moose family made daily appearances last summer and we were lucky enough to see a herd of deer foraging as we ate.

Our dinner was prepared by Chef Matt Pease who stoked his creative energies to bring out dishes made with a variety of locally sourced victuals including smoked trout, Wagyu beef, spring lamb as well as beets, parsnips and cheeses. I came up with some delicious wines to pair and I would say, in all false modesty, it was one of the best dining experiences in Madison County.

Jeanie and I (as well as some other folks from Bozeman) employed a strategy of staying at the lodge overnight instead travelling back in the dark. Believe me, the

accommodations are first rate. The good news is the Madison Valley Ranch has a special \$125 lodging deal for those who stay over (just mention the Wine Gallery dinner). It really can't be beat for a fun night away from the city. As a bonus, in the morning, we were served a delicious breakfast with some of the best coffee I've had in years.

If you just want a ticket for dinner, it is \$89 including everything. Call us for the wine dinner only option at 586-8828 and we will get you a seat. If you wish to book the dinner and lodging package, I would suggest a call to the Madison Valley ranch directly at 800-891-6158. Call soon, the last event sold out quickly.

April 26th-- Marie-Eve Gilla, founder and managing partner of **Forgeron Cellars** in Walla Walla will be here **April 26** to present her current wine releases. Marie-Eve was here a few years ago and gave one of the best winemaker presentations I have ever witnessed. I can't imagine this year's event would be anything less. As for the particulars of the evening-we are going to alter our usual format a bit to accommodate a Thursday night wine function. Our start time will be **6:00 PM** with Marie-Eve doing a short presentation for each of the wines. Since we are at the **Food Studio**, we plan to have a curated line-up of cheeses, charcuterie and French canapes that will focus the flavors of the wines and highlight pairing possibilities.

The cost for tickets is a mere \$39. You may reserve seats by calling us at 586-8828 or by e-mail at bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com

May 16th-- Annual Extraordinary Wine Tasting. Winemakers, executives and winery owners will be on hand to give up close and personal information on over 50 wines. Bring your notepad and pencil, there will be plenty of great wines at great prices to stock you cellar for summer.

July 14th--The Museum of the Rockies Wine and Culinary Classic will take place at the Museum. Reserved seat tickets are available with a \$25 discount until April 30th. Sip, savor and support by calling 406-994-1998 or send an email to events@montana.edu to reserve your seats

What the heck is a “backward” wine?

When reading wine reviews, there are always some words that are unfamiliar or to which we have no reference. The ***Wine Advocate*** website has published a list of some of these words that I think can be very helpful in understanding wine. Many of these words will help most wine drinkers articulate what they smell, taste and feel as they sip on wine. Here is a short lexicon:

Acidity: The acidity level in a wine is critical to its enjoyment and livelihood. The natural acids that appear in wine are citric, tartaric, malic, and lactic. Wines from hot

years tend to be lower in acidity, whereas wines from cool, rainy years tend to be high in acidity. Acidity in a wine can preserve the wine's freshness and keep the wine lively, but too much acidity, which masks the wines flavors and compresses its texture, is a flaw.

Angular: Angular wines are wines that lack roundness, generosity, and depth. Wine from poor vintages or wines that are too acidic are often described as being angular.

Aroma: Aroma is the smell of a young wine before it has had sufficient time to develop nuances of smell that are then called its bouquet. The word aroma is commonly used to mean the smell of a relatively young, unevolved wine.

Backward: An adjective used to describe (1) a young largely unevolved, closed, and undrinkable wine, (2) a wine that is not ready to drink, or (3) a wine that simply refuses to release its charms and personality.

Balance: One of the most desired traits in a wine is good balance, where the concentration of fruit, level of tannins, and acidity are in total harmony. Balanced wines are symmetrical and tend to age gracefully.

Body: Body is the weight and fullness of a wine that can be sensed as it crosses the palate. Full-bodied wines tend to have a lot of alcohol, concentration, and glycerin.

Bouquet: As a wine's aroma becomes more developed from bottle aging, the aroma is transformed into a bouquet that is hopefully more than just the smell of the grape.

Briery: I think of California Zinfandel when the term briery comes into play, denoting that the wine is aggressive and rather spicy.

Chewy: If a wine has a rather dense, viscous texture from a high glycerin content, it is often referred to as being chewy. Wines from great vintages can often be chewy, largely because they have higher alcohol hence high levels of glycerin, which imparts a fleshy mouthfeel.

Closed: The term closed is used to denote that the wine is not showing its potential, which remains locked in because it is too young. Young wines often close up about 12-18 months after bottling, and depending on the vintage and storage conditions, remain in

Cuvée: Many producers in the Rhône Valley produce special, deluxe lots of wine or a lot of wine from a specific grape variety that they bottle separately. These lots are often referred to as cuvées.

Dumb: A dumb wine is also a closed wine, but the term dumb is used more pejoratively. Closed wines may need only time to reveal their richness and intensity. Dumb wines may never get any better.

Fat: When the Rhône has an exceptionally hot year for its crop and the wines attain a super sort of maturity, they are often quite rich and concentrated, with low to average acidity. Often such wines are said to be fat, which is a prized commodity. If they become too fat, that is a flaw and they are then called flabby.

Hot: Rather than meaning that the temperature of the wine is too warm to drink, hot denotes that the wine is too high in alcohol and therefore leaves a burning sensation

in the back of the throat when swallowed. Wines with alcohol levels in excess of 14.5% often taste hot if the requisite depth of fruit is not present.

Jammy: When wines have a great intensity of fruit from excellent ripeness they can be jammy, which is a very concentrated flavorful wine with superb extract.

Nose: The general smell and aroma of a wine as sensed through one's nose and olfactory senses is often called the wine's nose.

Rich: Wines that are high in extract flavor, and intensity of fruit.

Soft: A soft wine is one that is round and fruity, low in acidity and has an absence of aggressive, hard tannins.

Spicy: Wines often smell quite spicy with aromas of pepper, cinnamon, and other well-known spices. These pungent aromas are usually lumped together and called spicy.

Supple: A supple wine is one that is soft, lush velvety, and very attractively round and tasty. It is a highly desirable characteristic because it suggests that the wine is harmonious.

Tannic: The tannins of a wine, which are extracted from the grape skins and stems, are, along with a wine's acidity and alcohol, its lifeline. Tannins give a wine firmness and some roughness when young, but gradually fall away and dissipate. A tannic wine is one that is young and unready to drink.

“Happy” Riedel glasses

Last week we received our latest order from Riedel and in it was a new product that is not only attractive but useful. The “Happy” series of Riedel glasses are fashioned after the ever popular Riedel “O” series stemless crystal wine glasses. The salient and pragmatic feature is that each glass has a different colored tint to its base. It has always been difficult to remember whose glass is whose and without a stem, the “O” glasses could easily be mistaken. With each “Happy” glass showing a different color, the distinction is easily made about which glass belongs to each wine drinker. These attractive wine glasses are specially priced at \$54.95 for a set of four. They will make a beautiful addition to patio gatherings this summer.

