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What's new in the Grapevine this week?

- **January Wine Club Ready on Friday**
- **New Year's Prosperity**
- **Is Champagne an Aphrodisiac?**

January Wine Club Ready on Friday

Tamarack Cellars in Walla Walla produced our first red wine for January. The **2016 Wine Gallery Cabernet Sauvignon** was sourced from several vineyards in the Columbia Valley and harvested during the fifth outstanding vintage in a row. This Cab offers up classic aromas of crushed cassis, loamy soil and cedar. On the palate, it's medium-bodied, layered and flavorful, with chewy but ripe tannins and succulent balancing acids, hints of red fruit and finally concluding with good length. Considering the scale of this cuvée and the pittance it commands, it's a remarkable achievement. **(\$18)**

White wine drinkers are in for a treat in January. The **Chateau Vrai Entre Deux Mers** is a classic White Bordeaux. It is fresh, with light lemon pulp, white peach, and thyme notes that zip through the blend of Sémillon, Sauvignon Gris and Sauvignon Blanc. This dry white wine is still light and fruity, poised between rich tropical and herbal-laced green fruits. It has a perfumed touch from the Sauvignon Gris and a crisp texture. Serve with shellfish, poultry in cream-based sauces, or smoked salmon. It is ready to drink now. **(\$12)**

Our second red comes from Australia. The **2014 Border Crossing McLaren Vale Shiraz** is full-on opulent, voluptuous and a powerhouse of black fruits and chocolate box notes. Full-bodied with lovely richness and plenty of velvety tannins to frame the structure, it finishes with great length. The Border Crossing offers gravelly tannins, concentrated plum notes and a chewy finish, accented by floral details of violet. White pepper aromas linger and gain

momentum on the finish. You could drink it now or cellar it for another 5-6 years. Only 1,800 cases were made. **(\$18)**

Viognier fans need to own our second white wine this month. The **2017 Cinquante Cinq Viognier** is aged on fine lees for six months. Crisp and clean, with flavors of citrus oil, white flowers and minerals, and that knock-your-socks-off nose that you can only get from Viognier, this is a great example of what comes out of Languedoc these days. Aromas of orange blossom, peach, honey, citrus and a touch of mint erupt from the glass. Delicious flavors of citrus, honeysuckle, orange zest, and stone fruit deck the palate with a tropical note. The finish is crisp and clean with refreshing acidity and a kiss of minerality. Richer than a Sauvignon Blanc but softer than a Chardonnay, this stunning value is perfect for light sipping or your next party. **(\$15)**

For years, we have stocked and sold the **Tikal Amorio Malbec** from Argentina. When we sampled the 2016 version, we knew we had to present it to our Millennium Club members. Aromas of smoky oak and cherry tickle your nose while the palate features mouthwatering, penetrating flavors of red berries, mixed with ripe red and black cherries. The Amorio is quite rich and velvety on the palate, and finishes with just enough grip to make it a real winner with food. This is some seriously sexy Malbec. Pair it with grilled or smoked meats such as beef, pork, and lamb. The Amorio also complements dishes prepared with cheese or cream sauces. **92 wine Advocate (\$30)**

Happy New Year!!

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are full of traditions. From the list of resolutions to kissing your sweetie at midnight, there are tons of things associated with the last holiday of the old year (New Year's Eve) and the first holiday of the coming year (New Year's Day). Traditions include eating foods that will bring fortune and prosperity in the New Year. Depending on your family traditions, black-eyed peas, beans, or lentils may be on the menu. Greens are also a favorite because they are the same color as money. Pork symbolizes richness and plump abundance. Long noodles, pomegranates, and corn bread also have adherents who swear by the prosperity endowed by each of those foods. Whatever brings prosperity, eat a lot this year; the way the economy is going right now, we need to get things back on course.

In the Badenoch family, we eat herring salad. It is made from red potatoes, hard boiled eggs, olives, apples, nuts, and beets mixed with pickled herring. The

fruit and vegetable parts are all round shaped to symbolize coming full circle from the beginning of the year to the end. Herring is covered with silver coin-like scales which symbolize wealth and prosperity. (We don't actually eat the scales). However, this delightfully pink (from the beets) dish is a "must" for New Year's in every household for all of my brothers and sisters and we fervently believe in herring salad's promise of prosperity.



Herring Salad

So what wine goes with pork, pomegranates, lentils and herring salad? Why, the very beverage associated with the New Year's celebration—Champagne!! America's favorite Champagne is Veuve Clicquot. (Veuve is the French word for "widow") Madame Clicquot became the driving force behind Veuve Clicquot after her husband died in 1805. Her motto was "only one quality--the finest". Her legacy has lived on and Veuve Clicquot continually strives to achieve consistent quality. This is tightly knit and racy sparkler, with a spicy underpinning and a clean-cut mix of poached pear, grated ginger and pink grapefruit zest. In my opinion, its popularity is due to the aperitif style and crisp, lacy finish. It rated 90 points in Wine Spectator and is on sale down from \$59.95 to **\$46.95 through the New Year.**

My choice is the **Roederer Estate Anderson Valley Brut**. For years, I have enjoyed this American sparkler on my birthday (which is coincidentally on New Year's Day). It is crisp and elegant with complex pear, spice and hazelnut flavors. I love the fresh and lightly fruity style presented with such great finesse and depth of flavor. Seamless and silky, showing an almost effortless sense of complexity, with notes of lemon and pear paired with toasty brioche, fresh ginger and hazelnut details, the Roederer was rated **93 points by Wine Spectator and was #27 on the 2018 Top 100 Wines.** We have the Roederer for just \$26.95. Stock up!

No matter how late you stay up, what food you eat or what beverage you toast Auld Lang Syne, all of us at the Wine Gallery wish you a Happy and Prosperous New Year!!!

Is Champagne an Aphrodisiac?

I always get asked if Champagne is an aphrodisiac. While there may be some scientific evidence of Champagne's sexual trigger, I think the real seduction is from the traditions and customary treatment of Champagne in our society. Champagne tends to be expensive and associated with happiness and accomplishment. Corks fly after the World Series and the Super Bowl. Champagne is used to toast weddings and to launch ships.

Champagne roars of sauciness, seduction and sex. Thanks to Fred Astaire and James Bond, it is also associated with suave charm and seductive double entendre. No beverage offers quite the same romantic possibility as a chilled bottle of bubbly. We all know alcohol reduces inhibitions (Candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker) but too much alcohol is a passion killer. Women are actually aroused by small amounts of alcohol according to a study by Beckman and Ackerman at California School of Professional Psychology. Men may also feel a little more randy because it is said that the yeasty bouquet of dry champagne accurately mimics the scent of female sex pheromones.

One other reason that Champagne gets the aphrodisiac reputation is that the carbon dioxide bubbles get alcohol into the bloodstream much quicker so you don't have to drink as much to feel the effects. Inhibitions are vanquished quickly without a corresponding drag on performance.

Who really has the final say about whether Champagne is an aphrodisiac? If it makes you feel celebratory, happy and a little amorous, that seems to be evidence enough.

The Wine Gallery will be closed New Year's Day, January 1. We will re-open on January 2nd at 10 A.M.