



**Volume 14, No.7** (published by the Wine Gallery, Bozeman, MT) **February 14, 2018**

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

- **Important dates**
- **Last minute wines for Valentine's**
- **February is Heart Month**
- **Washington State Wine Guide**



### **Important Dates**

**\*\*** Where would you have the chance to taste the best wines available AND nosh on the culinary creations of Chef Daniel Wendell? If you can avail yourself to this magical synergy of gustatory delights, sign up! Live life! We have set the date for our **annual 93 Point Tasting for March 8**. This is by far the best wine tasting event in Montana and we seem to sell out every year. The idea behind it is both brilliant and practical. Larry Johnson, local president of the American Wine Society noted that when he blindly buys a 90 point wine that costs \$14.95 and doesn't like it, it isn't a big deal to pour it down the drain. A 93 point wine blindly purchased for \$39 and not to his liking is hard to pour out but he would be forced to drink a wine he didn't like. His solution was to have a tasting where the best of the best bottles are opened and participants can decide

for themselves what fits their palates. Taste the best, buy your favorites, and leave the risk and uncertainty behind. The 93 point tasting will begin at 6:30 PM, March 8 at the Food Studio on West Kagy. Tickets are \$89 and are available by calling the Wine Gallery at 586-8828 or by e-mail at [bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com](mailto:bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com)

\*\* Following the successful and sold out tasting at the **Saffron Table** last month, we have decided to do another one so the folks who were on the waiting list or just missed it will have a chance to join the fun. The tasting itself is done in an intimate group of 8 or less and demonstrates the best wine pairings for South Asian food. The tasting is done prior to your dinner reservation and makes a wonderful evening that is both educational and delicious. Mark March 27<sup>th</sup> on your calendar for the date. We will have three seatings: 5:00 PM, 5:30 PM and 6 PM. Tickets for the tasting portion are \$15 each and reservations can be made by calling us at 586-8828 or by e-mail at [bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com](mailto:bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com).

Note that your dinner seating will commence 30 minutes after your wine tasting session begins. Please also note that the tasting is a separate charge from dinner. Dinner is at your option but I would take advantage of this opportunity to get both.

## **Two Last Minute Valentine's Wines**

Today is Valentine's Day and if you are looking for a last minute wine for dinner, we have two new wines to consider.

By now everyone knows that I love Grenache. Grenache really just loves the sun. Full-bodied but light in both color and tannin, it thrives in hot climates where it can easily achieve full ripeness. Grenache is best known in the Southern Rhone where its plush texture and ample body are tamed by savory Syrah and structured Mourvèdre, most notably in Cotes du Rhone and Chateauneuf du-Pape. Grenache originates in Spain, where it is known as Garnacha and is important throughout the country, particularly in Rioja where it is blended with the more austere Tempranillo, and in Priorat in tandem with savory Cariñena (Carignan). It is also responsible for dry, fruity rosés in Navarra. In Sardinia, the variety is known as Cannonau and produces bold, rustic reds. In California and Washington State, Grenache has achieved popularity both flying solo and playing a supporting role in Rhône-style blends.

It is therefore remarkable that Richard and Carla Betts sought out the best vineyards in the world for their 100% Grenache aptly named "**Sucette**" (French for "Lollipop"). For Sucette they tapped one of the finest vineyards in the Vine Vale in the Barossa region of Australia. The vines are 90+ years old

and completely wild. Nothing (literally nothing) is ever sprayed or applied in the vineyard so the vines grow totally unfettered apart from the single yearly pruning. It's beyond organic, it's feral. The result is an elegant, sumptuous, sexy, delicious bottle that will find its way onto your table. With its uncomplicated, friendly nature, Sucette is the ultimate barbecue red, pairing happily with lamb loin chops or spicy Italian sausages. Unlike most other full-bodied reds, Sucette's low tannin level ensures that it will not be fazed by a good chili kick. **(\$51.95)**

We recently tasted the **2015 Austin Hope Cabernet** from Paso Robles and were VERY impressed. Deep ruby in color, the Austin Hope Cabernet Sauvignon expresses aromas of freshly picked black currants, ripe black cherries and blackberries, with subtle notes of violets, mocha and dried spices. On the palate, it's a big, powerful, modern-styled wine layered with heaps of juicy blackberry and cherry fruit, while nuances of cedar, clove, nutmeg and vanilla bean round out the long smooth finish. It's full-bodied and rich, balanced by fresh acidity and firm, polished tannins. It rated **97 points in Wine Enthusiast** (we will have it as one of our wines at the 93 point tasting). **(\$60)**

## **February is Heart month**

Every five years the U.S. Government updates its official dietary guidelines. Whether or not you pay attention, TV commercials and food labels will be affected by the new guidelines. No one was surprised to hear that we are now supposed to eat more whole grains and load up on fresh fruits and vegetables. To give you the Reader's Digest version of the rest of the report, it also says to ease up on saturated fat, sugars, sodium, and simple starches. All of that dietary advice goes along with an emphasis on regular exercise.

In 2005 there was a whole chapter on alcohol consumption which acknowledged that moderate consumption had beneficial effects on heart health, cognitive ability and overall mortality rates. There is a clear statement of the benefits of moderate consumption in one paragraph: "Strong evidence from observational studies has shown that moderate alcohol consumption is associated with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease. Moderate alcohol consumption also is associated with reduced risk of all-cause mortality among middle-aged and older adults and may help to keep cognitive function intact with age." There was even a chapter devoted to the history of wine.

So guess what gets lumped in with the three "S's", salt, sugar and saturated fat this time around? You guessed it--wine! If you read further in the report there is a section entitled "Foods and Food Components to reduce" where alcohol is

singled out as something to avoid “because some people consume too much alcohol.”

If you are scratching your head wondering how anyone could overlook the obvious benefits of **moderate** consumption of wine and then lump it in with the known killers found in salt, sugar and saturated fat, you are like me. I am not making any political statements here but this nation is in a health crisis of obesity, heart disease and diabetes. Our health insurance system is overloaded and no matter what your position on health care, we need healthier people to take the burden down a notch. If we know that moderate consumption of wine reduces mortality and helps us think better, can prevent heart disease, fend off adult diabetes and benefit us in so many ways, why lump it in with saturated fats, sodium and sugars and tell people to avoid it?

Why is it we can be comfortable suggesting moderate exercise like jogging or walking then turn around to warn everyone that glass of red wine a day should be something to avoid? Moderate exercise like moderate wine intake is part of a healthy lifestyle.

Enough of the soapbox already! February is heart month so do the things that are good for your heart. Eat more whole grains, fresh fruit and vegetables. Avoid salt, sugar and refined starches. Get your keister off the couch and away from the computer and go for a three mile walk. When you come home, snack on some raw almonds and remember to have a glass of wine with dinner. Your heart will thank you for it.

## **Washington State Wine Guide**

One of the benefits of belonging to the Wine Club is travel information about the wine regions of the world. One of our favorite regions lies west of us here in the Pacific Northwest. Washington State is the second largest wine producing state in the country. With over 55,000 acres under vine and 900+ wineries, Washington State’s robust agricultural heritage of fruit trees, hops, grain and potatoes continues its growth into premium wine.

The Washington State Wine Commission publishes a tour guide each year full of great information about Washington wineries. If you are planning a trip to Wine Country this guide is invaluable. Addresses, maps, phone numbers and tasting room hours are included for every listing in this 100+ page guide. We received about a large stack of brand new 2018 guidebooks this week so stop by the Wine Gallery and pick one up before you go. Not only are they a great resource, they are FREE!!!