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What's new in the Grapevine this week?

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Another reason to celebrate

Not only is March celebrated as National Irish-American month, it is also National Women's History Month. There will be more about St. Patrick's Day wine pairing later in this issue but for now we want to focus on how the Wine Gallery celebrates National Women's History Month.

Famous women in the history of wine include Veuve Barbe Clicquot, Madame Pommeroy and Marie Bollinger. All of these winemakers hail from Champagne and were a strong influence on the history of wine.

In 1965, UC Davis graduated one woman from their fermentation science program. By the mid 1990's nearly 50% of the students at America's premier wine college in Davis were women. Today, there are many exceptional women in the business. The Wine Institute notes that about 15 percent to 20 percent of winemakers in California are women. In Oregon and Washington, the percentage is closer to 10% but is growing. In the current market, their gender may give them an edge. According to the Wine Institute, women purchase 57 percent of the wine consumed in the United States. For women, label design, bottle shape, and the winery philosophy rank just as high as wine quality, so wine industry marketing professionals have had to develop more savvy in their appeal to the female consumer.

This Saturday at our 93 point tasting, we will feature wines made by female wine makers at Baer Winery (Erica Orr) and Forgeron Cellars (Marie Eve Gilla) in Washington State. But more importantly, every day we sell great wines made by women. Women like Lynn Penner-Ash of Penner-Ash, Melissa Burr of Stoller Family, and Veronique Drouhin of Domaine Drouhin in Oregon. We also sell wines made by Stephanie Jacobs at Cakebread, Alissa Jacobson at Joel Gott, Theresa Heredia at Gary Farrell, Katie Carter at Lyeth, Gina Gallo at Laguna, Chrissy Whitman at Prisoner, Bibiana Gonzalez Rave at Pahlmeyer, and Erin Miller at Twomey just to name a few California wineries.

The women we mentioned to you are icons, mega-talented, capable and fierce. They are scientists, artists, wives, moms and all around wine goddesses. Their power is fueled by raw talent, perseverance, dedication, faith and passion.

If you need great advice at the Wine Gallery you can always talk to Tiffany Olson (our long time wine expert and general manager), Gerri Lewis or Gracie Bartel. All of these women know a tremendous amount about wine, food pairing, and the flavors profiles of our 1600 wines.

93 point tasting sold out

The 93 point tasting this Saturday is sold out. I guess that is a good news/bad news sort of announcement. If you still want to go, we can add you to the waiting list in case there are any last minute cancellations.

For those of you who are attending, you can get the lineup and menu sending us a request at bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com or calling us at 586-8828.

What wine pairs best with corned beef?

All right, the best answer is Guinness but there are folks who like wine with corned beef.

Because of the distinctive flavor as well as the salt and fat in corned beef brisket, there are several wines that will pair well. I know this sounds like the wines that pair with Thanksgiving, but we recommend wines with little tannin, good acidity and a definite fruit component.

For white wines try dry to off-dry Riesling, Torrontes, Gewurtztraminer, Pinot Gris or Pinot Blanc. For red wines, a young Beaujolais, California Pinot Noir, Spanish Garnacha or a lighter Cotes de Rhone will do nicely to pair with your St. Patrick's Day feast.

Mister Manners

A few weeks ago, I wrote an article about cork etiquette and what to do with a cork when a server or sommelier hands it to you. Wine Spectator's Matt Kramer wrote an interesting essay recently that explored all sorts of topics similar to the "what do I do with the cork?" question.

At the top of the article, he posed a situation that I recently encountered. Matt and his wife were at a wine tasting at the home of a (not that close) acquaintance. One of the wines in the line-up was obviously corked but Matt was hesitant to bring it up to his host. He hedged a bit proposing some tangential remarks meant to draw attention to the wine but he really didn't want to appear the "expert" or embarrass his host.

To be clear I do not think anyone is to be embarrassed if they open a bottle of wine that is corked. It is not the fault of the consumer, the retailer, the distributor, or the wine maker; it is just the way it is. No one can tell if a wine is corked by looking at

the bottle. It is only by opening the bottle and sampling the aroma that we can tell if it is corked. If you are pretty sure that the wine is corked, I suppose it would be polite to ask the question of the host or other attendees if they think it is corked. It may be impolite to just bellow, "It's corked!"

Here's another situation that happens to me quite often: When dining out with a group, the server comes to the table with a wine list and I end up with it by virtue of my profession. When I am just with Jeanie, we both look it over and decide what we want in terms of the wine and the cost. When I am not the one picking up the tab, there is a fine line to tread. I am really not that comfortable putting someone on the spot by asking how much they want to spend. Matt Kramer suggests finding an unusual wine that has a reasonable price. He suggests that instead of ordering a \$100 Chardonnay, a \$25 Albarino from Spain might make a good choice. You don't spend as much and there is the adventure of trying something new.

While we're on the subject of dining out, I have another recurring etiquette problem. On more than one occasion when dining with Boston area wine critic and gourmand Judith Placek and her entourage, the server has come to the table with one copy of the wine list and handed it to me by virtue of my Y chromosome. I know Rush Limbaugh wouldn't agree, but just maybe it is appropriate to ask who would like to see the wine list and to bring one for everyone who requests to peruse it. A wine list is a good source of good conversation and that can only start with two or more patrons looking at the list.

Assuming that women don't know or don't care about wine should have died out with high button shoes. Service staff would hardly assume that a gentleman would look at the only food menu on the table and commence the order with "The lady will have the shrimp aspic, and I will have the veal. She will have a glass of rose' and I will have a glass of your best Brunello". That may have been chic at Delmonico's in New York when Teddy Roosevelt was president, but we've all come a long way since then. Our former assistant and certified sommelier, Laurel Mikolon, tells me that this has always been the tradition for fine dining service, but I think it may be time for a new approach.

Restaurants don't have all the tough wine etiquette questions. There is always the question of what to do when a guest arrives at your door with bottle of wine or conversely when we take wine to a friend's home. For years, I had brought a bottle or two that made a good hostess gift. By that I mean I brought wine that I did not expect to be consumed with dinner, but if the hostess wanted to serve the wine selection, it was fine with me. It is a bit awkward to bring a big California Cabernet only to find out that grilled scallops is the specialty of the house. With age comes wisdom so now a quick phone call to inquire about the menu and if the host wants us to bring wine for that specific evening solves a lot of that awkwardness. (My brother Geoff contends that flowers make a good hostess gift, too, and there is no awkwardness about the menu).

On a related note, if you are bringing a special wine that you yourself would enjoy, it doesn't hurt to call ahead and mention you have a special wine you'd love to have the hosts try that evening. Nothing is more frustrating than saving a special wine

for a special occasion, only to see it disappear into someone else's cellar and missing out on a wine that could put a real exclamation mark on the evening.

As always, I would enjoy hearing from you about matters related to wine. I'd like to hear about your peeves, your questions, and your remedies.

Update on Wine Classes

We still have a few seats left for the March 29 and April 1 wine classes. The first sessions will be Saturday, **March 30 and Monday, April 1st**. Both Saturday and Monday sessions will be identical but offered for the most convenience of your schedule. The first session will cover the basic history and development of wine, how wine is made, tips on tasting, wine evaluation method, and wine etiquette. Later sessions will cover the main wine regions and wine grapes of the world, wine pairing, reading a wine label, wine customs and law, and a host of other topics related to a well-rounded background in wine.

The cost for each session is \$49 and includes the study materials, food pairing and wines for the "lab". You can sign up by calling 586-8828 or sending an e-mail to bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com.