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What's new in the Grapevine this week?

- **Second Spring Wine Class Announced**
- **Steals on great Qupe wines**
- **A ten foot Poll**
- **Nutritional information about wine**
- **Tips on finding “good” wine**

Second Wine Class Session

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. The classes will be held at the Food Studio on West Kagy. Saturday sessions go from 1 PM to 3 PM and the Monday session goes from 7 PM to 9 PM

This week we are announcing the second set of sessions. The sessions are scheduled **for 1-3 PM on Saturday, April 13 and 7-9 PM on Monday, April 15** at the Food Studio. Again, both Saturday and Monday sessions will be identical but offered for the most convenience of your schedule. Our second session is designed to give in depth information on the major (or “noble”) grape varieties. You will learn the techniques used to discern the difference between Pinot Gris and Pinot Blanc and how to pick up the cues on what Syrah tastes like. Can't tell the difference between Merlot and Cabernet? Come to this session and we will show you how. Know how to tell New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc from French Sancerre? We will teach you the clues and what to look for when you sample wine. These wines are the foundation a great wine education.

The cost for either 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. We will confirm your preferred class time when we have reached enough participants for each session.

Deal on Qupe Wines

Bob Lindquist of Santa Barbara's Qupe Winery was one of the first "Rhone Rangers" on the Central Coast to plant Rhone varietals like Syrah, Grenache, Viognier, Marsanne and Roussanne. Bob sold his winery last fall and we were able to get some great deals on the remaining inventory.

For instance, the **2016 Qupe Syrah** is just **\$14.95**. I couldn't find a better price in America for this great example of cool climate Syrah. . I love how this dark, rich Syrah with sublime notes of boysenberry, blueberry and black olive transitions into a long and lingering finish. Qupe Syrah always offers up this expressive nose of black cherry, blackberry, smoke, soil, and grilled meat. On the palate, the 2016 is medium to full-bodied, velvety and open-knit, with a juicy core of succulent fruit, polished tannins and a flavorful finish offers plenty of oak influence.

We also got the last of the **2013 Qupe Marsanne**. Again, I couldn't find any place in America that had it for under \$20 and we have it for **\$14.95**. Marsanne is one of my favorite white grapes and this one is at its prime right now. It has a beautifully layered nose of buttered pears, dried apples and steaming brioche that show well on this Bob Lindquist bottling. As an added treat the Marsanne is bolstered by 25% Roussanne. Once sipped, brisk lemon peel and Asian pear flavors evolve into tropical fruit and slight earth notes on the palate. Like the Syrah, there is a bit of oak influence.

Obviously, Bob Lindquist isn't making any more of this wine. So looking forward to Easter, grab a bottle of the Syrah for lamb or roast beef and a bottle of two of the Marsanne for Easter Ham.

The Best of Bozeman Poll

For those of you who like to let the world know your opinion or just like to share a good thing, BoZone magazine is sponsoring a Best of Bozeman poll this month. Like the Bozeman Magazine poll last fall, there are a myriad of choices about venues, restaurants, bars, events and retailers. If you do enter your choices, there is category on Best Wine Retailer near the end of the poll. We would appreciate every vote we can get. To fill in the poll just go to <https://thebestofbozeman.com/>

Nutritional information about wine

Readers of the Grapevine know that I often print articles pertaining to the health benefits of wine. However, there are many people who just want to know how many calories per glass or whether wine contains carbs, lactose, animal products, gluten, fat, or sodium.

The good news is that wine which is completely fermented (i.e. all the grape sugar has been converted to alcohol) has no carbohydrates of any significance. This is

especially relevant for weight watchers and folks who must monitor blood sugar levels. Dry table wine has no glycemic load so it does not affect blood sugar levels during moderate consumption.

Wine is also fat free and contains no cholesterol. As I have noted in previous columns, moderate wine consumption has a positive effect on “good” cholesterol and helps lower “bad” cholesterol.

If you are watching your sodium intake, wine is very low in sodium as well. Again, moderate consumption has shown to have a leveling effect on blood pressure.

Lactose and gluten intolerant people can also partake in a glass of wine. In spite of Internet rumors, there is no way for lactose to get into wine. Similarly, investigators have yet to find a wine barrel sealed with wheat based glue. Even if they had found a barrel, the amount of gluten would be less than what you’d breathe passing the bakery at the supermarket.

Folks allergic to foods containing eggs or fish generally have no concern with wine. Even if the eggs or fish products are used as fining agents for finished wine, the trace amounts left over are well below detectable thresholds for allergic reaction.

What about sulfites? If you can eat jelly, jam, cheese, french fries, packaged meats, or prepared soup, the sulfites in wine will have no effect on you. Sulfite sensitivity is extremely rare (<.05% of the population according to the National Institute of Health), but if you are asthmatic there is a 5% chance you may be sulfite sensitive.

There you have it: Carb free, fat free, gluten free, lactose free, and sodium free. No wonder wine is good for you!

Even though my nickname is “Dr. Wine”, none of what I say in this article is meant to be professional medical advice. Please consult your health care provider before changing your diet.

Good wine is the kind you like

A few weeks ago a new customer came into the Wine Gallery and inquired about a wine tasted recently at a local restaurant. It wasn’t one we had in stock so I looked it up and found the wine she considered “the best wine in the world” only cost \$4 per bottle. When she and her husband came in to pick it up, I asked them what they liked about their selection. He said that the wine was extraordinarily smooth but what really sold them on it was when their server said that this wine had been “breathing for over a week”. While this isn’t the most orthodox wine geek response, I had to give them credit for knowing what they liked.

After all, when it comes to buying wine, the most important thing is to know what you like. If you have been in the Wine Club you may have already come up with a good idea of what wines appeal to you. If not, remember wine tasting is all about finding out

what you prefer. Take the time to evaluate what it is you like or dislike about wines you are served at bars, restaurants or parties.

Different people prefer different wines. Not everyone likes broccoli so why should everyone like Chardonnay? We all dress differently, drive different cars, and have an opinion about Italian and Asian food. Wine preferences are just that: preferences. If you are just looking at labels, beware of a few things: Modern wine labels are designed to amuse you so that you will select the bottle without knowing what is inside. It may be a better idea to ask our staff to give you an opinion about each wine. We aren't here to up-sell wines; we are here to serve your needs in finding the right wine. I never have a problem with one of our folks suggesting a lower priced wine if it is the right answer for what customers require.

We stake our reputation on the notes next to the bottles, so use those as an accurate guide. Feel free to call one of us over and explain what kind of wine you are looking for. Be clear about what you like, what you do not like and your budget. If you say, "I have \$15 to spend. I like Merlot but don't really like Pinot Noir", that gives us a guideline and we can then point you to the type of Merlot you would like. We can usually give you at least a couple of choices and you can choose the one that suits your fancy.

Here's another tip: Write down the names of the wines we suggest but you do not buy and then order a glass of one of those the next time you are in a restaurant. Another way to find wines that appeal to you is to attend the frequent wine tastings we host and try different wines in a side by side comparison.

Remember that personal preference is the key to wine selection. No wine store owner is going to share your exact taste in food or wine so improve your wine education and choose wines which you personally like—the research is well worth the time. To really know what "good" is, you will have to make comparisons for yourself. It will broaden your view and introduce you to wines you may never have considered.