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What's new in the Grapevine this week?

- **February Wine Club Wines**
- **Winner of Camelot Tickets**
- **Wine Classes Poll**
- **93 point tasting set for March 9**

Preview of February Wine Club (Available Friday!)

The first red wine for February is the **Vina Maquis Carmenere**. With an expressive nose containing hints of laurel, spicy clove and a pleasant note of rosemary, this wine also exudes a layer of deep red fruit. Forest berry aromas combine with woody, coffee and herbal notes. On the palate, it's fresh, with sweet tannins and a full-bodied flavor that ends in a lovely, lingering finish. Smoky roasted flavors of hickory, black plum and pepper add together for the toasty finish. Try it with this month's recipe. **\$18**

As a rule I shy away from "critter" wines. Usually, the cuter the varmint on the label, the sketchier the wine. Our white wine for February turns that rule on its head. The **2015 Secret Squirrel White** is a secret second project (hence the name and fun label) from one of Washington's top estates, Corliss Vineyards. The **Secret Squirrel White** is a Rhone-inspired blend of Grenache Blanc, Marsanne, Roussanne, Picpoul, Clairette and Viognier. Layered and complex, it features oodles of stone fruit flavors like white peaches and apricots that are accented by a lush, textured mid-palate and followed by a subtle spicy, nutty dry finish. The label may be a little silly but the wine is all elegance and class outperforming its modest price point by a mile! Pair it with soft cheeses as an appetizer or with any roasted poultry. **\$15**

The Wine Club members who signed up for two red wines will receive the **2011 Flavium Seleccion Mencia**. This Spanish red shows intense ruby color, with ripe blackberry and blueberry aromas beautifully balanced with smoky cedar

oak notes. These dark fruit notes transpire onto a silky smooth, mouth wateringly juicy, herbal rounded palate. This wine is weighty yet balanced boasting earthy flavors of baked black fruits, tea and spice, while the finish is oaky and generous with a touch of mint. The Flavium Seleccion was deemed a **Best Buy from Wine Enthusiast and earned a 90 point score. \$15**

The group that receives two white wines will get the **2017 Bleasdale LX White Blend**. We chose it for its crisp, fresh, dry unwooded style with hints of fruit salad and citrus flavors. The blend is headed up by Verdelho (85%) which is a proven performer in Langhorne Creek with over 160 years of history. The Verdelho is complemented by cool climate Sauvignon Blanc (15%) featuring great tropical flavors making it the perfect blending partner. Key lime pie, green apple and pear flavors are vivid and crisp, with refreshing acidity and fragrant notes of lemon verbena that linger on the finish invite food pairing with seafood or lemon chicken. **(\$12)**

Millennium Club members will be treated to the **2016 Luce Lucente**. The Lucente is the second wine of Luce, a premier producer of Tuscan wines primarily known for its Brunello. The Lucente is a wine with contemporary style, surrendering immediate and immense pleasure. Like its elder sibling, the Lucente is an authentic interpretation of Montalcino and the Luce estate but representing a more approachable expression of the estate's unique terroir. This blend of Merlot and Sangiovese opens with aromas of violet, black plum, cedar and a whiff of bay leaf. On the concentrated palate, lively acidity lifts black cherry jam, licorice and mocha alongside fine-grained tannins. The Lucente has delicious undertones of sage and thyme that highlight ripe yet refined notes of red fruit and darker blackcurrants. Full bodied, the Lucente has a dense, generous texture and a polished finish. **92 points** from James Suckling. **(\$36)**

Wine Classes in March

Whenever any event is scheduled, there always seems to be some calendar conflict. We are preparing Wine Classes for March and April and we think we have the curriculum figured out but we are toying with alternative scheduling to find the most convenient times for classes.

As for the curriculum, we plan to have an introductory session covering the basics of wine—history, process, vocabulary, basic varieties and how to taste wine like a professional. Subsequent classes will focus on different varietals and wine

growing regions. All of the classes will be completed with opportunities to taste and evaluate wines while comparing them with various foods.

We know how to do the class part but we need some opinions on when to schedule. In the past, we have done the classes for two hours on four consecutive Monday nights. This time around we are toying with the idea of doing the classes on Saturday afternoon from 1 to 3 PM or 2-4 PM.

So, if you could help us with an informal poll we'd like to ask what would be more popular or convenient for scheduling. Now, answering the poll does NOT obligate you to sign up for classes, it is just to get a feel for what is more appealing. Just reply to bozemanwinegallery@gmail.com to let us know what you think would appeal to more people. Just send a message that says "Option A" for a week day evening session or "Option B" if you think more people would attend a Saturday afternoon class. Again, we are asking a marketing question and giving us your honest feedback is all we need; we aren't going to obligate anyone to attend.

93 Point Tasting March 9th



If you were to read Wine Spectator and note that there was a 93 point rating on a Syrah from the Northern Rhone, a Syrah from Washington State rated 93 and a 93 point Shiraz from the Barossa Valley, how would you decide which

one fit your palate? I recommend that you taste them side by side and buy the one you like. Is the one we have for \$18 better than the \$29 bottle? You decide!

For many a high scoring wine, there is a higher price tag involved and spending \$30 to \$40 to find out if you like that wine (or not) may be a little dicey for most of us. If the new \$13 bottle you open on Tuesday doesn't tickle your taste buds, it is no big deal if it goes in to Saturday night's stew. On the other hand, if you open a 95 point \$35 dollar wine and it doesn't appeal to the palate, we would all cringe pouring it down the drain or making it into sauerbraten.

Fortunately, your friendly wine merchants at the Wine Gallery have come up with a way to taste and try some of the highly rated wines before the "buy" or "not buy" decision is made. Our **Annual 93 Point Tasting** is scheduled for **March 9**. For the price one would pay at a restaurant for a single bottle of these fine wines, there is a chance to test 35 to 40 different 93-point wines and compare them side by side. Our format also allows you to try the samples with various foods to form a reference for special dinners at home.

Mark your calendar for **March 9th** and pay attention to next week's Grapevine for more details.

Winner of the Camelot Tickets

Well, we got a winner of the Camelot tickets but when I told her she had won, she wanted to remain anonymous. Now I can tell you there was a winner but I can't tell you who. If you were waiting to find out if you won, drop what you are doing and get on line with Intermountain Opera and get seats! I looked at the website and there are seats left for every performance (Feb.8-9-10, Feb 15-16-17) but some of the performances are close to being sold out.

Click on <https://boxoffice.diamondticketing.com/intermountainopera/events> and choose your seats.