

CellarMasters

"All the wines that are fit we drink"

www.cellarmastersla.org

A Monthly Newsletter

Vol. 38 Issue 12 December 2011

Monthly meeting

Learn wine secrets from our Gold Medal Winners
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Holiday "Cellarbration"

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December 2011 President's Message

by 2011 President, Robert Crudup

"All things that sparkle" was the theme of our November meeting and we were treated to an evening of exploring the method and the madness that goes along with the art of making sparkling wines. Jess Stevenson, a Cellarmaster president from years gone by, brought a trove of knowledge from his experience through the years and took us on a history tour of the key players during the last 30 years. His samples were eagerly passed around and there were more than a few people who said they might try this exciting variation on the theme of home winemaking. Many thanks to Jess and his lovely wife for taking the time to visit with us. Recommended reading: "Sparkling Wine" by Jon Gifford



Many great wines were tasted at the 38th Annual Cellarmasters of LA wine competition

Well the year is winding down as we head into the holiday season and I won't be the first one to wonder where the time has gone. The year was filled with fun activities, educational events, celebrations, the 38th Annual competition, and energy filled planning parties where all the "work" got done by a dedicated group of Cellarmasters! One of the highlights of the year actually took place at the November meeting when I asked how many in the

room had been members for 5 years or less and 80% of the room raised a hand! I was astonished because while it seems like we've known each other for so long, it was really exciting to know that Cellarmasters is alive and fulfilling its mission to provide for the advancement of the home winemaking craft to so many new people.

The 38th Annual U.S. Amateur Winemaking Competition was a huge success with 264 entries and what seems to be a record number of medals awarded. Details of the winners are on the website and congratulations to everyone! A consensus was that the number of outstanding wines means we are getting better each year. The "Silver" after-party was a time to easily taste the many selections and discuss the individual styles and unique types of wines that were entered from around the country. To everyone who was involved at every level of putting this event on, thank you. This can only be done with a super team like Cellarmasters!

Wine of the Month - Vidal Blanc

Best of Show winner from the 38th Annual Cellarmasters of LA wine competition.

Gold Medal Winners



Vidal Blanc is a hybrid of Ugni Blanc (vinifera) x Rayon d'Or (French American hybrid) and was developed by French breeder, Albert Seibel.

Flavors: Vidal Blanc is fruity with grapefruit and pineapple aromas and floral characteristics.

Color: The white grapes have large clusters of thick-skinned berries.

Notable regions: **Northeastern US and Canada.** Finger Lakes of New York State, many Mid-Western States, the Niagara Peninsula and as well as Ontario, Canada

Viticulture: Vidal blanc is well

Silver Medal Winners



sued to cold climates The grape is a mid-season ripener and has the ability to produce a good crop even with secondary buds.

Wine making: Vidal Blanc is one of the most versatile varietals in North America. It is used in a wide range of styles from light and crisp with high acid to off-dry. It is used to make many late harvest dessert wines because it's tough outer skin makes it adaptable to ice wine and it's acidity makes a good partner with wines containing residual sugar.

Food pairings: Vidal Blanc is a versatile white wine suitable for many cuisines including shellfish, salads, fruit and cheese platters,

Bronze Medal Winners



chicken dishes and vegetarian fare.

Vidal blanc can be made into a bone-dry, steely wine for fish, a barrel-aged wine reminiscent of a Fumé Blanc, or an ice wine that can rival the best dessert Rhine wines produced in Germany.

<http://wine.appellationamerica.com/grape-variety/Vidal-Blanc.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vidal_Blanc



Over the Barrel

"When you don't know Jack"

By Robert Crudup

Spring...Summer...Fall... Winter. It seems like sometimes summer lasts for such a long time and then fall steps sideways and lets winter rush right in. The long shadowy afternoons of September and the October breezes creeping in to rustle leaves along the path to the vineyard give an easy feel to life like an old friend who had come by for an afternoon visit. And then, in early November he arrived again but this time in the middle of the night without much of a warning and left quickly with the rising sun. When I headed off for work that morning I knew he had been there last night. My breath made white puffs as I walked to the vineyard and then.... I saw him. Or at least traces of him on the steps leading

up the hill; Jack Frost was in town.

Ahead in the vineyard, the scraggly rows of vines still reached out for each other and tangled themselves up in anticipation of the coming of the pruning season like a dog waiting for its ears to be scratched. Patient. Silent. Loyal to the master. But that reward must wait for another day once all the leaves have fallen and I can get a good look at each vine and see how it has matured this season. For now, it's just a friendly stroll to take in the feeling of where the fruit had been borne and the now senescing vines.

Here and there is a splatter of color; mostly red and burgundy but hints of yellows and orange are there, too. There's another trace of Mr. Frost, I thought....the cold snappy

nights causing the leaves to finally turn their deep green canopy to a festival of colors. I survey the scene and had the sense that there was more going on than Jack had taken credit for. And it's true. I know that there is a huge body of scientific debate over why the leaves even bother to change colors in the middle of the night. And that some people in the tourism industry call the whole Fall Color tourism thing "Leaf Peeping".

Seriously.

It turns out that there are three bundles of pigments that control the universe of colors that can be seen at this time of year: Chlorophyll, Carotenoids, and Anthocyanins.

During the growing season the chlorophyll crowd dominates the food making work party and all we can see is green. The other guys are there, too but just hanging out until it is their

time to make a spectacle of themselves. Like all hard workers, chlorophyll gets worn out and is replenished all season long until the shorter days and cooler nights signals that their work is done for the season and so no more recruits are brought in. So with fewer green chloroplasts in the leaf structure the orange-yellow carotenoids and the red-burgundy anthocyanins begin to show their, well, their colors and the party is on!

And now you know more about...Jack!

January 5th Dinner Meeting

6:30 pm

The Shop

22836 VENTURA BLVD
WOODLAND HILLS, CA 91364

Winemakers Topic of the Month:

Gold Medal Winners

The Gold Medal Winners from the 38th Annual Cellarmasters of Los Angeles wine competition are invited to present their wines and tell us how they were made

Dinner Theme:

Vegan

Wine Theme:

Vidal Blanc

Dinner Meeting Protocol

DUES: Everyone attending should be a fully paid member of CellarMasters. Please make sure to pay your dues.

GUESTS are welcomed as an introduction to our club.

POT LUCK means everyone is expected to bring a dish to share.

GREEN dining is bringing your own plates, glasses, and utensils. We have emergency supplies only.

WINE is meant to be shared. Please bring a bottle along and share it.

ATTENTION given to our speaker is a sign of respect.

WELCOME new people by learning their names. Ask them to join you.

CLEAN UP is everyone's job. Don't leave without doing your share.

RESPONSIBILITY means drinking sensibly



The unique guide to restaurants where

you can bring your own wine (BYO) — including many with no corkage fee.

goby.com

November Recipe Winner

Elissa Rosenberg

Crab Rangoon with Special Sauce

Ingredients:

1 tub (8oz) Philadelphia chive and onion cream cheese spread or one pkg Philadelphia Neufchatel cheese

2 green onions, thinly sliced

1 can white crabmeat, drained and flaked

1/4 cup mayo or reduced fat mayo

12-24 won ton wrappers

You can either place the wrappers in cupcake pans and stuff them and bake at 350 degrees for 18-20 min. or you can moisten edges of wrappers with water, fold diagonally in half and seal edges together and cook in 1 1/2 cups oil for 1-2 min until golden brown on both sides, turning once. Put on paper towels to drain.

Secret Sauce:

One jar apple jelly, one jar apricot jam, 2/3 a bottle of dry mustard, and horseradish to taste (don't be afraid to add a lot). Blend and chill. You can also put over cream cheese on a cracker. Yum!

38TH ANNUAL WINE COMPETITION



Wine Tasting flight



Judges



The Amazing Camille
data entry extraordinaire



Stewards



Organizers

Q&A

Ask Dave (From The Telegraph)

http://www.wineindustryinsight.com/ex_nf.php?url=http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/8862520/Music-makes-wine-taste-better

Music makes wine taste better

It has long been known that you should pair your wine with your food.

11:11AM GMT 01 Nov 2011

But a new study reveals wine drinkers should also consider what's playing on the stereo if they want the perfect tipple.

The study shows that people who drink wine while listening to music perceive the wine to have the same taste characteristics of the particular artist. The research published in the British Journal of Psychology found that for the best earthy and full-bodied Merlot taste experience, drinkers should try listening to Tom Jones.

Or to add a little zing to a glass of Pinot Grigio pull out the latest Lady Gaga album.

Professor Adrian North of Herriot-Watt University gave taste tests to 250 students - half male, half female - while playing music in the background. They were given either Alpha 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon - a red wine - or Chilean Chardonnay and played one of four songs on loop for 15 minutes picked for their contrasting musical characteristics.

Some of the volunteers sampled their glass to the tune of Carmina Burana by Orff - a song identified by researchers as "powerful and heavy".

Others were played the "subtle and refined" Waltz of the Flowers from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker.

Another group listened to the "zingy and refreshing" Just Can't Get Enough by Nouvelle Vague and the fourth group were played the "mellow and soft" Slow Breakdown by Michael Brook.

A fifth group drank the wine with no music.

After five minutes the volunteers were asked to rank how much they felt the wine tasted like the musical descriptions: powerful and heavy, subtle and refined, mellow and soft, zingy and refreshing. The results showed the music the volunteers listened to consistently affected how they perceived it to taste.

For example both red and white wines were given the highest ratings for being powerful and heavy by those participants who drank them to the tune of Carmina Burana.

Those who listened to Michael Brook rated their wine as tasting mellow and soft consistently higher than other tastes.

The study is titled 'the effect of background music on the taste of wine' and was published this month.

It says: "The research reported here considers the possibility that the emotional connotations of music may be able to function as a symbol that influences perception of taste.

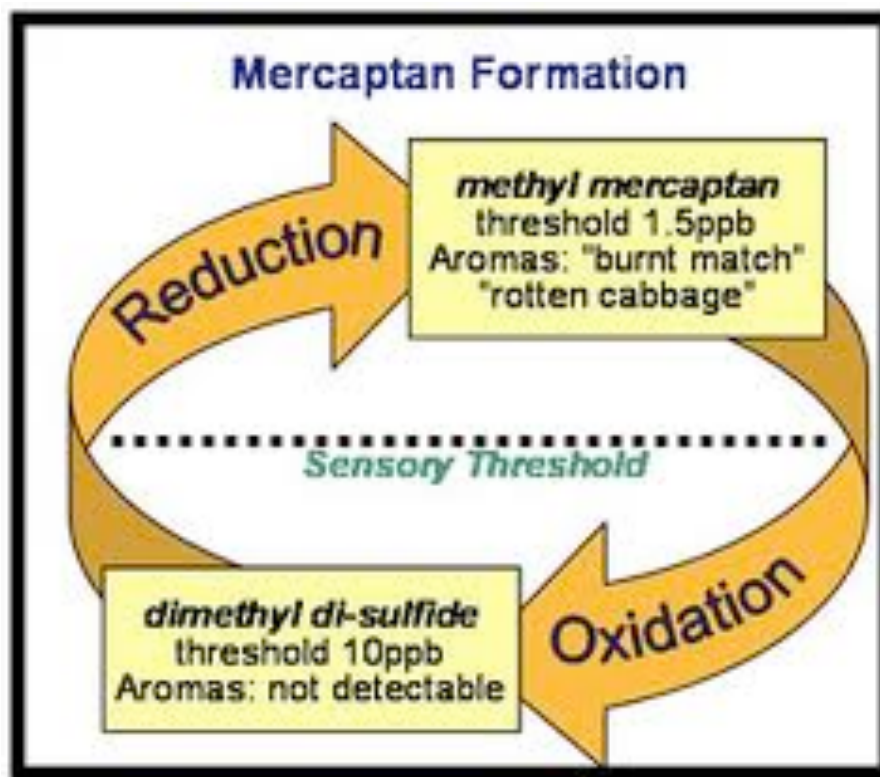
"The results reported here indicate that independent groups' ratings of the taste of the wine reflected the emotional connotations of the background music played while they drank it.

"These results indicate that the symbolic function of auditory stimuli (in this case music) may influence perception in other modalities (in this case taste).

"More simply, participants appeared to perceive the taste of the wine in a manner consistent with the connotations of music."

The study was not able to say whether the outcomes are a result of the cultural connotations of the music influencing the drinker or whether they are explained by the physical properties of the sound.

It builds on previous research that shows that restaurant diners spend more money when they are played classical music over pop music.



Does my wine have the "stinkies"? What are they? What do I do if I have them?

Now is the time of year that many of us start to notice problems with our '11 wines, if we haven't noticed them before. One of the big problems often found is the "stinkies," or H₂S.

The chemical compound of H₂S (Hydrogen Sulfide), in surprisingly small amounts, gives wine a strong and distinct rotten egg smell. Sometimes, in even smaller amounts, you won't smell rotten eggs, but will notice that your wine has oddly, little to no aroma, or "nose," at all.

One of the troubling aspects of H₂S is that it can, and will, progress to mercaptans and di-mercaptans. These mercaptan compounds have their own nasty smells (garlic, boiled cabbage and asparagus, among others) although they need higher concentrations to be noticeable.

To determine if you have the "stinkies," pour two glasses of your wine. In one glass stir in a couple drops of Ascorbic Acid solution, wait a few minutes, then stir in a couple drops of Copper Sulphate solution (these chemicals are

all available from John Daume at the Home Wine Beer and Cheese Making Shop. Add nothing to the second glass and cover both glasses with saran wrap. Wait about 10 minutes and smell the glasses. If the treated glass smells better, you know what you have to do – treat the wine for stinkies!

(Warning: Don't drink from the treated glass! You don't want to ingest unknown quantities of copper.)

Treating simple H₂S can be as easy as splash racking and stirring the wine with a copper pipe, but the latest research has shown that if you have H₂S, you almost assuredly have mercaptan compounds as well. So, if you treat just for H₂S only, you won't cure the mercaptan compounds.

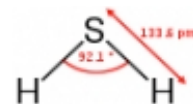
Because mercaptan compounds can, and will, degrade back to H₂S over time, a problem you thought you had cured will likely once again raise its stinky head. However, by the time this happens, you'll have dozens of bottles of it, and not one big, easily treatable, barrel/keg/carboy full.

Even if the mercaptan compounds were at a low enough concentration level that they were not noticeable, and since H₂S is very objectionable at much smaller concentrations, it only takes a small amount of the of mercaptan compounds to degrade back to H₂S for you to get big H₂S "stinkies" once again.

So, the only permanent cure is to treat any H₂S as though it were di-mercaptans - which means treating with appropriate doses of Ascorbic Acid and Copper Sulphate.

John Daume at the shop can lead you through this treatment process, provide you with the appropriate chemicals, and give you advice about how to try to prevent it in '12.

Andy Coradeschi



H₂S (Hydrogen Sulfide)



Bring a game or toy to the holiday party. We will be dropping the toys off at a local fire station for the Toys for Tots campaign on December 5th.



Wine Deals

winestilsoldout.com has 24 hour sales where you can get bottles for up to 70 percent off retail price. And, shipping is free as long as you order the minimum number of bottles which is never more than six.

Cheers to that!

For Our Beer Makers

Check out the first BEER PAPER ever! Yes, it's handmade paper artisan-crafted by Twisted Limb Paperworks with recycled paper and spent barley from brewing beer! Their Cheers! note card bundles make great holiday gifts for the beer lovers on your list. They can custom print your brewery, bar, or sports team logo on the cards for an awesome marketing piece! Even better,

couples can choose one of their four beer colors--amber, wheat, pilsner, or porter--from their selection of thirty handmade paper colors for their custom wedding invitations! Choose INVITATIONS

ON TAP or their flower, fern, or grass flecked 100% recycled handmade paper for truly one of a kind announcements. To sweeten

the deal, Twisted Limb Paperworks is a carbon-neutral, super eco-friendly business that donates 22% of profits to environmental and community groups: <http://bit.ly/zvK3H>. To

purchase Beer Cards: <http://bit.ly/pgMsyn>. Cool!

Calendar

December 3rd, 2011

Winter Holiday Party

January 5th, 2012

Monthly Meeting at the Shop, 6:30pm

January 12th, 2012

Planning Meeting to be announced

February 5th, 2012

Monthly Meeting at the Shop, 6:30pm

February 12th, 2012

Planning Meeting

Wishing everyone
Memorial Holidays
and a
Happy New Year!



HOLIDAY “CELLARBRATION”

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2011

4:30pm-10:00 pm, Dinner at 6:00 pm

RSVP jkswank@gmail.com



TOPANGA COMMUNITY CLUB

1440 N. Topanga Canyon Blvd, Topanga, 90290

\$10 cover per person includes a commemorative Cellarmasters' glass

Live Band, one free Raffle Ticket, Wine Exchange, Dancing and Lots of Fun!

Jennifer Swank Nov 8, 3:01 PM

What to Bring



Bring a bottle of wine to drink and another to share!

Bring an additional bottle if you want to participate in the wine exchange

Bring a Log for the Fire



A Toy or Game to Donate to Toys for Tots

Bring a dish to share

if your birthday is:

Jan- Feb: Appetizers

March-October: Side Dish

Nov-Dec: Dessert

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Sorry , no web/email orders accepted

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(The Imation building, Lewis at Dawson)
805-484-0597.

<http://www.venturacountywinetrail.com/>



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The CellarMasters Home Wine Club is a volunteer organization dedicated to promoting the art and science of home winemaking. We provide a forum for the exchange of information on winemaking methods and personal experiences.

Monthly meetings are normally held the first Thursday evening of the month at the "Home Beer, Wine and Cheese Making Shop" (our sponsor) in Woodland Hills, California.

CellarMasters is the sole sponsor of the annual U.S. Amateur Winemaking Competition.

This is the official CellarMasters newsletter. Annual subscriptions are complimentary with CellarMasters membership. We attempt to publish monthly but harvest, bottling, and/or purely educational wine-tasting may well deter us.

The opinions expressed herein are those of the editor and are often wildly mistaken.

The CellarMasters newsletter welcomes your letters and comments. Any and all winemaking, wine growing, wine drinking and Club-related topics may be addressed, please send them to: editor@CellarmastersLA.org. Our website is www.CellarmastersLA.org. Copyright © 2010 CellarMasters Home Wine Club and its licensors. All rights reserved.

RENEW YOUR CELLARMASTERS MEMBERSHIP!

Dues: \$30 for 2012

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: CELLARMASTERS

You already know WHAT YOU GET:

- Network with fellow winemakers
- Info on upcoming informational meetings, winery trips, seminars, wine tastings and more!!
- 10% off merchandise at the Home Winemaking Shop
- All the information you need about home winemaking!!

_____ CHECK HERE IF IT IS **NOT** OK TO PUBLISH THE INFORMATION BELOW
IN THE CELLARMASTERS ROSTER SENT TO FELLOW MEMBERS ONLY

Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____
_____ State: _____ Zip _____ Phone: (H) _____
_____ (W) _____ **Newsletter via Email**

ONLY!

Email Address(es) *** **Write VERY clearly:** *** _____ (multiple
email address are allowed if you also want this sent to home, office, or significant other.)

If a new member, how did you hear about Cellarmasters?

_____ Do you have a backyard vineyard you would be willing to show a newbie?
Or can host a vineyard educational day? Info: _____

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Pasadena, CA 91104-1458