

CellarMasters

"All the wines that are fit we drink"

www.cellarmastersla.org

A Monthly Newsletter

Vol. 38 Issue 11 November 2011

Monthly meeting

Your questions about Sparkling wine will be answered by Jess Stevenson.
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Harvest 2011 continues



Ask Dave

Mead
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BARRELMASTERS

Twentyeleven
4500 lbs picked,
fermented and pressed.



38th Annual Amateur

Winemakers Competition
Enter a wine, Judge or be a steward
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Ads

Grapes, Barrels and Carboys and Bottles for sale.
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Holiday Cellarbration

Dec 3rd
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Fall Harvest - November 2011 President's Message

Well I don't know about you but this year has once again just seemed to rush along and we are nearing the grand finale of events...the 38th Annual Amateur Winemaking Competition and the world famous Holiday Party. Look for all the details in the newsletter and make sure to participate whether for the first time or as a returning veteran of events gone by.

Speaking of events gone by, the October meeting "Grape Therapy", was one of the most robust discussions that we have had and it goes to show the amount of talent, knowledge, and energy that we have in our group. I learn something at every meeting and saw many of you taking a note or two that will hopefully help you in making delicious and award winning wines. Thanks again to everyone who participated and shared some good stories as well.



Lots of questions were answered about winemaking during last month's Grape Therapy

Your Board of Directors and all those who help on one committee or another are very hard working and Cellarmasters would not be what it is today with them. So pitching and give them a hand as we enter a very busy time of the year. We need Judges! We need Stewards! We need set up and take down help! And we need each and every one of you to enter a wine (or more) into the competition. We are already getting entries from around the country and even

beyond so let's make this the best competition to date with a wide range of wines to be tasted and evaluated. Please don't delay any longer as the deadline is right around the corner! Sign up for judging and stewards right away.

The invitation for the Holiday Party is in the newsletter so let us know that you will be attending. It is so much fun with good food and friends, music by the perennial favorites "The Magpies" and raffle prizes galore. In the meantime, enjoy the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. It is a great opportunity to connect with family and friends and break out a bottle of your award winning wine from years past.

See you all soon!

Robert Crudup, 2011 CellarMaster's

President www.cellarmastersla.org



Over the Barrel

"A Day in the Life"

by Robert Crudup

"I read the news today...oh boy. About a lucky man who made the grade. And though the news was rather sad, I just had to laugh. I saw the photograph."

It all started about 5 years ago. Sitting on a small bluff that overlooked a lush green vineyard it was a moment of peace and self reflection. The air was warm and gentle on my face; the ancient oaks cast shadows that created a feeling of dimension and seemed to anchor the vineyard to the earth as it attempted to crawl up the golden hills in the distance. It was like a place that we have all been and as I drew in a deep breath and held it for a moment I could sense that something was happening and it would change me forever. I thought to myself.....I need a vineyard.

Now, we have all seen something amazing and said the same thing...I need that. I want that. I can get, make, build, buy, do, or create that. And, why not? Sitting there with a glass of Cabernet and very mentally relaxed it all looked so organized and properly put together. It can't be that complicated and after all, there is

a lot of resources right there on the internet. I've been growing plants for a hundred years or so. Those pesky mental gears began to slowly grind into action mode. I hatched a plan. Not a grand scale -all or nothing - type plan, but a modest beginners plan that wouldn't consume the little free time I have or more importantly land me on the doorstep of home with my suitcase in hand trying to explain to my wife why this was a good idea that she should embrace.

So, with my wife on board, we built a small vineyard on the hill at our house. It's a steep hill and so we added stone terracing that provided for 8 rows of grape vines. "How exciting", she would exclaim as the workers put the final touches on the trellising and planted the Chardonnay and Pinot noir. That winter and the following season we pruned and tied the vines with care knowing that it wouldn't be long before we would harvest the first crop. All was good. Almost.

Phase 2. Oh, I forgot to add that while the little vineyard on the hill was being built, I was already thinking about a bigger one that could produce some real grapes. And we did build that one, too with only 400 vines which would be manageable. I have told you the story of that in a prior episode of Over the Barrel. This summer these Syrah vines went berserk

and had fruit hanging everywhere. I kept thinking that I might have over-reached on this one and had no idea what I was going to do with all these grapes but life was again good. Almost.

The bird nets went up just as the first signs of veraison appeared. The irrigation was managed to coincide with the weather. And I walked each row every week and checked the sugars. September came and still under 20 Brix. October came and we had almost 23. An inch or two of rain came and cold weather and it dropped back a point.

"Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away".

Then last week it was 100 degrees for 3 days. As I walked the rows I stopped in my tracks. The corner of my eye caught movement in the vines. The birds had found a way in and were living inside the mesh! Luckily, I was able to chase them out and close up the opening. Then I heard the buzzing. Looking closer there were hundreds of bees working away at eating the grapes. Not a whole grape but a bite here and then a bite there and then move on to the next cluster. And the heat had taken its toll as well.

"I get by with a little help from my friends".

It was 7am, Piru, California and the sun was edging over the

surrounding hills. The air was crisp and clear as we assembled for the safety tailgate topic of the day...Don't cut off your fingers it will mess up the wine! And away we went, being selective to which cluster we would take and which to leave. The clusters were firm and cold in our hands as they were carefully harvested and in bucket brigade fashion, they were hauled to the awaiting bins. Break-time with sandwiches and fruit didn't last long enough, but the sun was up and warming the grapes and awakening the bees for another day of eating our harvest. We picked only the best for about four hours and ended up with about 2000 pounds and probably that much more left behind. The men at the winery said they had been getting really bad grapes recently and that these were the best grapes that had seen in weeks. Syrah clone 174: 23 Brix, 3.8 pH, 1500 pounds to the winery and the rest to the team, SO2 and pH adjusted. All is good. Oh, here is the photograph. Thanks for a LOT of help from our friends! Next month: Lessons Learned.

November 3rd Dinner Meeting

6:30 pm

The Shop

22836 VENTURA BLVD
WOODLAND HILLS, CA 91364

Winemakers Topic of the Month:

Sparkling Wine

Jess Stevenson has been making wine since 1984 and still continues to make a couple of 60 gal barrels each year. Over the years he has been known as the premier chemist in the club and John Daume still calls him the Chief Engineer of his winery.

He has held many Cellarmaster's offices in the dark past including the office everyone wants.....President in 1987 and has spoken in front of the group in the back room on many occasions over the years.

As for the pitch on Bubbly, Sparkling wine has been around for several hundreds of years and is extremely popular. Jess Stevenson and Dave Lustig will go over the process of making Sparkling Wine, some different twists on the process and share some samples with the team.

It should be an interesting and entertaining evening.

Dinner Theme:

Seafood

Wine Theme:

Sparkling Wine

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



Planning Party

The meeting will be held at Casa de Coredeschi and hosted by Carolyn and Andy. Tri-tip BBQ will be served so you would be advised to RSVP to acorad@earthlink.net. If you remember last year it was a standing room only event.

4101 Defender Dr.

Agoura Hills, CA 91301

October Recipe Winner

Connie Schuh

Pumpkin Cheesecake

Ingredients:

For crust:

1 cup flour
1/3 cup brown sugar
5 tablespoons butter
1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts

For pumpkin layer:

15 ounces canned pumpkin puree
2 large eggs
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon cloves
1/2 teaspoon ginger
1/8 teaspoon white pepper
2/3 cup heavy cream

For cheesecake layer:

6 tablespoons butter
9 ounces cream cheese
3/4 cup sugar
3 eggs
1 tablespoon vanilla
3 tablespoons flour

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line 9 x 13 pan with parchment paper so that it covers bottom, sides and hangs over edges.

In food processor, finely chop nuts and combine flour and brown sugar and cut in butter. Pat into pan and bake for 10 minutes.

In mixing bowl, cream butter, add cream cheese to blend. Add sugar until fluffy and beat in eggs, vanilla, and flour. Set aside.

In another mixing bowl, mix pumpkin and eggs until well blended and add sugars and remaining ingredients and mix until blended.

Pour cheesecake layer on warm crust and then pour pumpkin mixture on top. With a sharp knife, swirl the mixtures together. Bake for 60 minutes or until set. Remove from pan using the parchment paper to lift out and cool completely. Cut into squares.

F A L L I N T O T H E G A R D E N P A R T Y



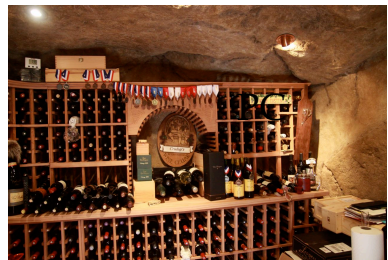
A Tour of the Crudup Vineyard



Wine and Fantastic



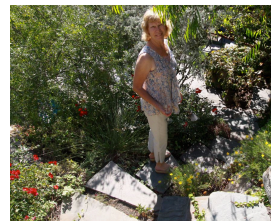
Food



The Wine Cellar



And Friends



Q&A

Ask Dave

Hi Dave,

I am in the process of making my first mead. I used honey and water to make a 23 Brix batch (adding only about a teaspoon of Super Super Food). So far, after 2 1/2 days, the yeast has reduced the Brix by only 3; it's down to about 20 Brix now. That's a lot slower than I'm used to with plain sugar. Is this pace of fermentation normal for mead? I'm using Cote de Blancs for my yeast.

- John Weisickle

Hi John!

Meads are known for slow and steady fermentation, so just kick back and wait. Some stronger meads can take *months* to go dry, even with a more aggressive yeast than C de B.

dave

p.s. -- Mark Poliner is bringing meads and some discussions points to the second seminar -- "How to Judge", in case you can make it over the hill!

dave



Custom stationery made on a
1927 Letterpress !!

My daughter celebrated her 30th birthday in Napa Valley last weekend. Her visit inspired the above card.

If you need any modern letterpress stationery for that special occasion give Sabrena a try:

<http://www.etsy.com/people/dearlolaletterpress>

Should you wish to see her beautiful Napa trip:
<http://vimeo.com/28046190> (Password:



Accurate pH Testing

How to obtain consistent results

We all know how important pH in wine is, but I've spent years getting more and more frustrated with testing for pH as I've often gotten inconsistent results.

For example, I often got pH meter readings with the same meter and the same must/wine that varied by over 0.4 (3.3 vs. 3.7 pH)!

Recently, however, I've discovered some information that really seems to help:

It is critically important that ALL CO₂ in the sample be driven off by vigorously shaking or lightly micro-waving the sample before testing for pH. CO₂ produces carbonic acid in solution and will give you a falsely low pH reading. Most grape must has some CO₂ in it - even during cold-soak and before yeast inoculation - due to wild yeast activity.

When adding acid, it is critical that the must be mixed completely 100% homogeneously, otherwise the particular sample you take to test could well have an inaccurately high or low pH.

The pH of a solution will change significantly as the temperature of that solution changes.

If the temperature of the sample or temp of the pH meter is unstable during the testing, the pH reading will be unstable as well - it will "drift."

pH meters give less accurate (and slower) readings the farther the sample temperature is away from 25C/77F.

The ATC (Auto Temperature Compensation) feature that many pH meters have do compensate for the loss of accuracy at sample temps at other than 25C/77F, but does not correct the pH reading back to any sort of standard (ie., what it would be at 25C/77F). For example, during cold soak, a pH reading at 40F by an ATC pH meter tells you accurately the pH of your sample, but only at that particular temp, ie, 40F, and not what the pH of the sample would be at 77F, which is what you want.

Meters w/o the ATC feature will give you an IN-accurate reading at that particular temp, and you then have to apply the appropriate temperature correction in order to get an accurate reading for that particular temperature. Which, again, would not be the pH at 25C/77F, which is what you want.

It helps with accuracy and speed to have the buffers you use to calibrate the pH meter be at the same (and constant) temp as the samples you'll be testing.

If the pH meter itself is warmer or cooler than the sample, that will cause problems as the meter's temp and the sample's temp constantly change as they both try to come to an equilibrium temp when you put the meter in the sample to test.

Conclusion: Keep the temp of the must, wine, buffers and pH meter at the same and constant temperature as close to 25C/77F as you can such that you can always be comparing apples-to-apples (and must-to-must, wine-to-wine, year-to-year.)

Best Practices: What I do now is immerse the buffers, samples, pH meters and a thermometer in a water bath (bowl of water) at room temp (close to 25C/77F) for an hour or so or until everything has stabilized at the same temp, and then calibrate and test the samples while keeping the calibration buffers and the samples in the water bath so that their temperature does not change.

The result has been fast and consistent readings with no drifting.

Yay!

Andy Coradeschi



Bring a game or toy to the November monthly meeting, the planning meeting or the holiday party. We dropping the toys off at a local fire station for the Toys for Tots campaign on December 5th.



September Recipe Winner

Gregg Smith

Glazed Figs and Spanish Chorizo

1 Pound Spanish Chorizo (dry cured) peeled and cut into 3/8" chunks
 1 T Olive Oil
 4 Cloves Garlic sliced thinly
 1 Medium Red Onion cut lengthwise into 1/2" slices
 1 small Fennel Bulb cut into 1/4" slices against grain
 1 Stick Cinnamon
 1 t Whole Cloves
 1 pound Dried White Figs (Whole Foods?) trim off hard stem ends and cut in half
 1/2 cup Dry Red Wine
 1/2 cup Sherry Vinegar
 1/2 cup Sugar

Render and lightly brown Chorizo on medium heat in sauce pan. Transfer to paper towels to drain and wipe out grease from pan. Heat 1 T Olive Oil. Add Onions, Garlic and fennel. Cook over medium heat to soften and only lightly brown. Add back Chorizo and heat through. Add Sugar and stir thoroughly to coat everything. Add Wine, Vinegar, Figs, Cinnamon and Cloves. Reduce heat and simmer 30 minuets until Chorizo and Figs are thickly glazed.

Calendar

November 3rd, 2011

Monthly meeting at the Shop

November 10th, 2011

Planning meeting at
 Andy and Carolyn Coradeschi's
 4101 Defender Dr.
 Agoura Hills, CA 91301
 RSVP acorad@earthlink.net

November 19th, 2011

38th Annual Amateur Winemakers Competition.
 Camarillo Custom Crush Winery
 300 South Lewis Road
 Suite C
 Camarillo, CA93012

December 3rd, 2011

Winter Holiday Party

California sparkling wine: The Chronicle recommends

[California sparkling wine:](#)
[The Chronicle recommends](#)
www.sfgate.com



I N V I T A T I O N

38TH ANNUAL CELLARMASTERS AMATEUR WINEMAKING COMPETITION

Saturday, November 19th.



JOIN YOUR FELLOW CELLARMASTERS FOR A DAY OF WINE AND FUN

At Camarillo Custom Crush Winery

Breakfast and Lunch
included

JUDGES NEEDED

Contact: Dave Lustig

DaveL256@aol.com

STEWARDS NEEDED

Contact: Jean Moore
moorepjk@aol.com

White Wines

Red Wines

Rose Wines

Fruit Wines

Sweet Wines



38TH ANNUAL WINE JUDGING
COMPETITION "AFTER PARTY" AT
CRUDUP'S

TASTE ALL THE AWARD WINNING
WINES

DINNER INCLUDED



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 Today, 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

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



Opportunity to purchase

**HIGHLY AWARDED
CABERNET
SAUVIGNON
wine grapes.**

Winemaking Equipment for Sale

- Corker
- 2x 6 gallon carboys
- 1 1/2 dozen bottles
- 2 small jugs \$60.

Please email Craig at
rupertmayo@mac.com"

38TH ANNUAL WINE JUDGING
COMPETITION AFTER PARTY
AT CRUDUP'S

TASTE ALL THE AWARD
WINNING WINES

DINNER INCLUDED

Alexander Valley

Small hillside vineyards located in the northwest hill region of Alexander Valley, Sonoma County, primarily growing Cabernet Sauvignon for local commercial wineries for their reserve programs. Since the owner started out as a home winemaker, he always holds back a few tons to sell to amateur winemakers. His growing philosophy is based on the belief that winemaking starts in the vineyard. Knowing that "great wine can only come from great winegrapes", the goal is to cultivate the best Cabernet Sauvignon winegrapes, so that the winemaker has the foundation to make the best wine possible. The impressive list of accolades awarded to the wine composed of our winegrapes made by different winemakers is the proof:

GRAND CHAMPION WINE" = "BEST OF SHOW" out of 3,422 entries!

2007 WineMaker International Amateur Wine Competition
(John Elmer and Sandra Curry's 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon)

"BEST of SHOW" Cellarmasters 34th Annual U.S. Amateur Winemaking Competition
(Alan Tryhorn's 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon)

"BEST OF CLASS" 2008 Pacific Rim International Wine Competition

and many other examples.

The vineyards are professionally managed. The vines are deficit drip irrigated, achieving stress and therefore yielding quality. Leaf pulled for optimal sun exposure. Crop is thinned to a low 3.5 tons/acre. Grape size is small to medium-small. Resulting wine has the following characteristics: Deep, inky colored. "Fruit- forward" with complex dark berry tastes.

Estimated harvest: Mid to late October.

Pricing depends on quantity and if picked or self-picked. No minimums. Crusher/ destemmer is available on site for buyer's use at no additional charge.

To start making your own impressive wine,
Contact: Ron at
WhatsUpDocs@earthlink.net



Barrels for Sale

8 used barrels, well kept and in excellent condition, routinely sulfured, that I would like to sell. They are Center of France from various cooperages:

Taransaud, Saury, Sylvain, Gamba, Demptos, Quintessence

Each had Cabernet in them for about 2 years.

my number is [213.841.0935](tel:213.841.0935)

philip.mestas@gmail.com

Thank you.

Philip

--

PHILIP MESTAS

[213.841.0935](tel:213.841.0935) Direct

[626.353.6424](tel:626.353.6424)

[909.599.1974](tel:909.599.1974)

[909.971.9951](tel:909.971.9951) Fax

SKYPE: philip.mestas

philip.mestas@gmail.com



Carboys for sale

20 - 5 gal & 2 - 6 gal carboys @ \$25

Barrels @ \$50 each.

contact George at:

George Gilpatrick
Rancho Ventavo Cellars
3046 Ventavo Road
Moorpark, Ca 93021

[\(805\) 529-4221](tel:805.529.4221)

[\(805\) 208-6341](tel:805.208.6341) cell

George@RVCellars.com



Winemaking Equipment for Sale

- Corker
- 2x 6 gallon carboys
- 1 1/2 dozen bottles
- 2 small jugs \$60.

Please email Craig at rupertmayo@mac.com"

For your wine needs in 2011

Get your order in, before we sell out!

Mail, FAX or In Person at The Shop Only,

Sorry , no web/email orders accepted

Quantities of these super-premium varietals are very limited and we sell out very fast:

It's first ordered, first reserved, until sold out

Go to: www.HomeBeerWineCheese.com



Winemaking



Beermaking



Cheesemaking

Custom Crush

www.HomeBeerWineCheese.com

Come and enjoy Camarillo Custom Crush Winery on the "Ventura County Wine Trail"

Visit, taste, and purchase our wines

Every weekend has a unique mix of three different local "vineyard estate wines."

All for only \$7.50, which also includes our custom winery glass. 11:00 – 5:00, Saturday and Sunday

300 S. Lewis, Unit C
(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: _____ City: _____
Address: _____ 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: _____

Mail To:
Dave Lustig
1270 Topeka St.
Pasadena, CA 91104-1458