

## Important Dates

- June 4, Cellarmasters Monthly Meeting
- June 6-7 Wine Country Bus trip
- May 11 Board Meeting

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# CELLARM<sup>STERS</sup> of Los Angeles

May 2015

## President's Message

We had a great May! What a fun Derby Day in Malibu. We were able to visit three won-

the Derby Day hat contest. Madeline Smith was the lucky Derby winner and Matt Lester

grapes from vineyard owner, Tony Costas, and getting a vineyard tour in the future. They have Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec and Merlot for sale.

Krystian and Anata Orlinski's Vineyard. Derby Day 2015

Yes, that is the ocean in the background.



derful vineyards and taste some amazing estate wines thanks to Dave and Ruth Gomez, Krystian and Anata Orlinski and Steve and Sherry Bernal. Thank you so much to our very gracious hosts and to Juanita Schmidt for helping organize a fun day! Congratulations to Deborah Welch and Jeff Canter for winning

won first place in the blind tasting for his fantastic Syrah Noir / Syrah blend from the Gomez Vineyard.

Our May monthly meeting was a big success. Everyone enjoyed Carl Hill's presentation from Costa Vineyards as well tasting some delicious wines. We look forward to purchasing some

Please join us June 4th at the shop for a presentation from Tuvurcio Botello from Hanna Instruments. He will be discussing the importance of pH and SO<sub>2</sub> monitoring in winemaking. There will also be a demonstration on the proper care of the pH monitor.

The wine theme is Viogner and the food theme is "skewered".

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the June meeting.

Jennifer Swank

President, Cellarmasters

## Photos from Derby Day 2015



Photo's by Suzy M., Dave L.,  
and Juanita S.

Derby Day fun at fantastic venues. Hat winner Jeff Canter. Top left. Dave Gomez, brunch at the Gomez's, tour at the Bernal's and Krystian's vineyard.



# CellarMastersLA monthly meeting notes 5/7/2015

by Al Gottlieb

Tony Costa and Carl Hill's gave a lengthy and very well received presentation, Q&A, and wine tasting of their Moorpark vineyard.

The 5 acre site has 2 acres planted about 13 years ago (1400 vines) on Grimes Canyon Road. Their sloped vineyard is planted to 7 (8?) varietals including Malbec, Cab, Cab Franc, Syrah, Merlot, Chardonnay, Sangiovese, and Sauvignon Blanc. They have the best luck with the Syrah. The Malbec was grafted onto existing Zinfandel stock that was not doing well. Their spacing is 4' x 8' and he uses a tractor. Tony is in the vineyard working every day. In addition to the vines are 150 persimmon trees.

Tony makes about 10 barrels per year for his personal use and for friends. He is willing to sell his grapes for \$1.25 per pound (picked) with a 100 pound minimum. He can also de-stem and crush if the timing works out. Tony measures the Brix and pH at harvest. They like to pick at 24-25 Brix and pH 3.4-3.5.

The vineyard has had some problems with sharpshooters, although only about 20% of this pest carries the Pierce disease virus. Initial signs are a yellowing and dropping of leaves. For powdery mildew he uses sulphur/copper sprays soon after

flowering and then a (license required) "Rally" synthetic fungicide every 21 days. He controls yellow jackets and bees by spraying early in the morning with Sevin which kills the wasps and discourages the bees from coming by later in the day.

Tony aims for low yield (high quality) by early heavy pruning to two buds, rather than by dropping fruit later on. He "tops" (hedges) his vines twice a year and spreads his bird netting all the way to the ground on the ends (and sides) of the vineyard but drapes the netting continuously from the top of the first row to the top of the last row, so that they can walk under the "tent" to continue to pull leaves, etc.

Their Merlot was 3.6pH and uses 36ppm free SO<sub>2</sub>. At crush they add 50ppm SO<sub>2</sub> and at racking 50 ppm. Harvest usually starts with Chardonnay in late August and they normally finish everything by-late September.

They irrigate on drip using city water (unfortunately higher mineral and salt content) which he stresses is not as good as natural rainfall. He waters once a week for 5-6 hours/day. His vineyard has a higher clay content at the top of the slope.

For fertilization, he uses a venturi type arrangement and

mixes his liquid water soluble fertilizer directly into the drip system beginning with a balanced N-P-K mix and later on stops the nitrogen to not promote further vegetative growth.

Tony/Carl ferment the reds 7-8 days and do secondary fermentation (MLF?) in stainless steel tanks for 2-4 weeks. They use oak barrels and rack twice and the wine spends 2-3 years in barrel. Most of his oak barrels are neutral. If he has a newer barrel he keeps the wine in it for 3-4 months and then switches to a neutral barrel for the remainder of time. When using all neutral barrels for their reds, they buy oak spirals from "The Barrel Mill" called a Bordeaux sample (light toast, medium, medium +, and heavy) and put one of each in.

They do no fining or filtering as they believe it can remove some of the favorable aspects of the wine. After any blending, they wait 2 months before bottling to let the wine stabilize.

Carl stated that most of what he has learned about wine making he credits to reading "Wine Business Monthly".

After a Q&A session, they presented several of their wines for tasting.

*"Tony makes about 10 barrels per year for his personal use."*

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# The Guide to Viognier by Enjoy

Viognier.com

## Food Pairing.

*You can drink it with many foods or none.*

*Try matching it with spicy Thai cuisine, Chinese take-aways, Mexican dishes, medium to strong and salty cheeses, strong flavoured fish dishes, pork and chicken and fresh fruit.*



In 1965 only a miserable eight hectares of Viognier (pronounced Vee-on-yay) grape existed in its Northern Rhône homeland appellation of Condrieu.

Amazing, since some believe the grape had grown here for at least 2000 years, possibly transported to the Rhône from its birthplace in Dalmatia by the Romans.

Since 1965 the grape and its wine has increased in popularity and in its price, which has risen to 'serious drinker' level.

At first the increase in planting was gradual with only 20 hectares recorded in 1986, 40 hectares in 1990, 80 hectares in 1995, but climbing to 108 hectares in 2000. But even today this is just over half of the 200 hectares permitted for cultivation.

Viognier is a remarkably difficult grape to grow. It is prone to mildew, produces notoriously low and unpredictable yields, and needs to be picked when fully ripe. If it is picked too early it fails to develop its classic aromas and rich tastes. But despite, or perhaps because of, this precariousness it has the most amazing clear,

golden colour and the aroma of flowers and fruits at their freshest. Many talk of being surprised by the taste; the colour and nose hinting at something sweeter but the actual taste being dry with a variety of nuances both on the tongue and afterwards.

It is best known for its apricot, peach and spice flavours, together with high alcohol (often over the 13% mark) and low acidity. As with many white wines it is generally best consumed young, although the classic Viogniers of the North Rhône (and increasingly wines from the oldest vines in California and Australia) can develop well for much longer.

Before thinking about plantings around the world, let's not ignore other parts of Europe. So far we have found Viogniers in Italy, Spain, Greece, Switzerland and Austria and we continue to search for others from non-traditional sources.

It is the rapid increase in Viognier plantings in California and Australia that has helped to push the wine onto the world stage. Before 1990 there were hardly any vines in California - today there are around 800 hectares devoted to the vine. The first vines were introduced in the early 1980's at Calera, but since 1990 have been planted widely due to the massive demand from Americans. It has been termed a cult wine in the US and accordingly has attracted relatively high prices well exceeding the quality of some of the wines. The Californians have experimented with combining Viognier with Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc and Colombards.

California is not the only State showing an interest in Viognier. Washington State now has over

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## Steak and Wine Pizza



This pizza is one of Rick's creations and a delicious one. Make the wine reduction sauce ahead of time, since it takes at least an hour to make. The wine reduction sauce will make the dough soggy, so it should be drizzled on right before cutting and eating.

1 Herb Pizza Dough  
1 Tablespoon Cornmeal

1 Tablespoon Olive Oil  
1/2 Cup Grilled Steak, Cut in Small Cubes  
3/4 Cup Onions, Sliced  
3/4 Cup Mushrooms (about 6 medium), Sliced  
1 Tablespoon Butter or Olive Oil (for sautéing)  
1/4 Cup Crumbled Blue Cheese  
1/4 Cup Wine Reduction Sauce (recipe below)  
Sauté onions and mushrooms in butter.  
Preheat pizza stone to 450 degrees.

Roll out the dough on a floured board.  
Sprinkle cornmeal on peel. Gently shake extra flour off dough and put on peel.

Brush dough with olive oil. Arrange steak, sautéed onions and mushrooms on pizza. Sprinkle crumbled blue cheese over the top.

Cook on 450 degree pizza stone until dough is done, about 5 minutes. Drizzle wine reduction sauce over the top after cooking. Slice and serve.

### Wine Reduction Sauce

1 Bottle Red Wine (Syrah, Zinfandel or ?)  
1/4 Cup Honey  
1/4 Cup Balsamic Vinegar  
1 Clove of Garlic, Lightly Crushed (But Still Whole)  
2 Tablespoons Butter or Olive Oil  
Sprig of Fresh Rosemary  
Dash of Worcestershire Sauce  
1/4 Teaspoon Pepper

Pair with Starr Ranch Terrestris, a spicy, dark and distinctive Bordeaux blend of mostly Cabernet Franc. website is [www.starr-ranch.com](http://www.starr-ranch.com).

By Gabriella Owens

## Viognier (cont.)

20 hectares planted and there are also plantings in Colorado, Georgia, New York State, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas and Virginia.

In Australia, it is probably the Yalumba Estate that is spearheading the growth and development of Viognier. There are over 200 hec-

tares grown in South Australia, which is 70% of the total Australian planting. Quality varies from good to poor - a critical factor is still related to calculating the correct time of picking. Alcohol content of Australian wines tends to be high - 13%+.

Other parts of the world demonstrating an interest are Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Mexico,





# 2015 Calendar



	Details	Date
Monthly Meeting	First Thursday of the Month. Wine theme is Viognier. The food theme is "skewered." We will have a presentation from Tuvurcio Botello from Hanna Instruments. He will be discussing the importance of pH and SO2 monitoring in winemaking. There will also be a demonstration on the	June 4 <b>No meeting in July due to the holiday.</b>
Wine Country Bus trip (Weekend Event)	<b>See April Newsletter for details. Contact Gregg Smith to see if there is still space.</b>	June 6 and 7th
Board/Planning Meetings	Second Thursday of the Month. Location TBD.	June 11 July 9th

## Dinner Meeting Protocol

**DUES:** Everyone attending should be a fully paid member of Cellar-Masters. 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 on-ly.

**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.



Steve Bernal in his winery/cellar. Derby Day 2015.



## 8th Annual Pebble Beach Food & Wine in April

My wife Carol and I joined our daughter Al-lee and son-in-law Charles for another fabulous time (number 6 so far). The PBF&W has been called by many "The Best of the Best"...

Three hundred world class wines (primarily Napa, French, Italian, Portuguese, Chilean), 100 or so celebrity chefs, 22 wine and spirit seminars, 8 cooking demonstrations and 2 Lexus Grand Tastings.

It all comes at a very steep price, which seems to escalate with each succeeding year. A la Carte events start at \$100 each, but the Opening (Thursday night 6-9pm) Reception at Spanish Bay we attended goes for \$250 per and sells out, and the Lexus Grand Tasting (Saturday or Sunday afternoon 12-3pm we lucked out and showed our VISA Signature card and got in 30 minutes early) sets you each back \$225. If your anticipated tax refund is substantial, an all-inclusive ticket goes in the \$7-9000 range. This includes all events including Celebrity Chefs dinners, seminars, demos, golf, lodging, and shuttle transportation. The Celebrity Chef/premium wine pairing dinners sell for \$500 each (maybe more, I can't fine the ticket prices now that the event is over).

In the past, I have been lucky enough to attend a private dinner hosted by Margrit Mondavi and her

winemaker, blending seminars for Chateau St. Jean (winemaker Margot), and a Joseph Phelps's blending. This year we only attended the Opening Night Reception, scored 6 comp after Party

feeling like a million bucks until three young ladies came up to my wife and I and proclaimed "You two are just ADORABLE"...OUCH!

Word of advice: always take taxis to and from events



tickets, and enjoyed the Saturday Grand Tasting.

As for the After Party— wow! No wine being poured but after sampling perhaps 20 world class wines at the Reception (did not see one person spitting but I did dump a little excess wine) and then a free bar (and more food) featuring vodka, rum, and tequila cocktails, I was finally loose enough to join my daughter and her girlfriend and my wife on the blaring DJ hosted dance floor. I was

(even though we were staying at the Portola Plaza in Monterey, a taxi for 4 runs only about \$25 + tip)...cheap insurance and much more convenient.

My overall impressions are that the event is fantastic but seems to cost more and offer less each year. The nice stemware is no longer etched with PBF&W and the year logos. Haven't seen Chefs Thomas Keller, Guy Fiere, or Emeril since about year 2 or

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*"Word of advice: always take taxis to and from events"*

## Poor-man's large format wine corker

For under \$50 you can put build your own corker for 3 - 6 liter bottles. Earlier this year, around the holidays, we were at a friend's birthday where someone brought a 5 liter bottle of a blend Cabernet Sauvignon and Sangiovese that was selling at a local discount club store for around \$50. The idea of aging in bigger volumes was interesting and intriguing.

After negotiating for the empty bottle and a few measurements, I needed a 33mm cork that would compress to about 24mm.

I have a bottle, a cork easily purchased for \$4.25 and some of my wine but no corker. The one I bought for my 750ml bottles is too small. Some models allow you to

remove the guts or use different sizes but I didn't want to buy another one not knowing for sure if it would work. More research led to the concept of hammering it down with a mallet. Utter failure. I found a corker for a couple thousand but my goal was a bottle a year. In desperation I called a fabrication shop and almost gave up.

In the end a piece of 1" Electrical PVC for under \$3 and an arbor press for around \$40 from your local tool/hardware store and a roll of quarters is all you need.

The 33mm Cork easily fits into the female end of the PVC, PVC is great because of the smoothness and taper to avoid wire being snagged. I had two choices in ar-

bor presses. A ½ ton would be perfect except the base opening might be too small depending on the unit. The 1 ton had an opening that would allow for a smooth transition to the bottle but the Rack (piston or hammer) was too big to go all the way through so quarters were used. Very simple and easy to figure out but keep your mallet, if like me once in the bottle you may have a small bit of cork protruding. In my case that ¼ inch was easily pounded into the bottle and made flush.

by Kevin Delson





## 8th Annual Pebble Beach Food & Wine (continued)



*(Continued from page 7)*

3, Caymus, Gaja, (or even Chateau St Jean) have stopped coming. No more Patron elevated stage bar that they featured last year.

Positive: Joseph Phelps was pouring Insignia (\$230 a bottle retail -the nicely suited rep stated



that they recently tasted all Insignia vintages from

1984 to present and they are still drinking well) - good news for my 2005-present vertical. Justin was pouring Isosceles, Penfolds had a decanter of Grange (only for Magnum and above ticket holders) but was serving 303, 404(?), and other selections. Their lovely rep told me to hold on to my 05 Bin 707 as they are not making any more. Grand Tasting Sponsor Lexus had a wonderful French Bistro themed area with cheeses, pastries, etc. and appropriately dressed servers.

The weather was ideal... in past years we've experienced extreme heat, cold, wind and rain. The events are spread out around the Monterey/Carmel/Pebble Beach venues which have some of the world's greatest views.

I recommend to put the PBF&W on your bucket list. For \$1000 you can take your spouse or significant other and enjoy Opening Night and either the Saturday or Sunday Grand Tasting. It seems much better than the Wine Spectator Grand Tastings (that I have not been to), but the pictures make it look more sterile with everyone sitting at long tables. PBF&W is a very friendly and inviting event that every wine lover should experience at least once. Wear comfortable shoes as there is minimal or no seating. Reserve your rooms early or take your RV or tent or crash with a friend. The hotels typically raise their prices by a factor of 2-3X. Prime hotels demand \$500-800 per night. Even Casa Munras was over \$400 last year. For those desiring to

*(Continued from page 3)*

On a side note:

Al Gottlieb stated that he has taken over the reins of the 20+ year former Conejo Wine Society group from Robin and Stephen Woodworth, who have moved to Scottsdale. The new group, called the Camarillo Wine Society, will

meet infrequently at a members home and invites one vineyard owner and/or winemaker to present a private tasting for 40-75 people.

Al will tentatively host at his home in Camarillo on Saturday July 18 from 3-5pm Wes Hagen of Clos Pepe (Santa Rita Hills AVA — think primarily Chardonnay and Pinot Noir to

taste and hopefully order at a one day only reduced price. Wes is a frequent WineMaker magazine contributor and wine educator and is quite a character. Al can be reached at [al.gottlieb@verizon.net](mailto:al.gottlieb@verizon.net) for more details.

### Visit the Home Beer Wine and Cheese Shop for your wine needs in 2015

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](http://www.HomeBeerWineCheese.com)

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

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

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.

## CellarMasters Membership and Paying your dues

Whether you're joining the club for the first time or renewing your membership please visit our web site where you can pay your dues online via a credit card or PayPal.

Our web site address is: <http://cellarmastersla.org/>

The link to paying for your membership via PayPal is <http://cellarmastersla.org/cellarmasters-membership/>

Dues are only \$30/year if you live in the state of California and \$20/year if you live out of state. And includes all these benefits:

- ◆ A yearly subscription to [Winemaker Magazine](#). A \$25 value!
- ◆ Our monthly club newsletter filled with details of club events, winemaking tips, and all sorts of wine related happenings.
- ◆ Invitations to club events and seminars, such as our judging clinic, vine pruning clinic, and home wine-makers' home cellar tour.
- ◆ Discounts on club sponsored wine tastings, wine country bus tours, winemaker-themed dinners, and other special events held throughout the year.
- ◆ Up to a 10% discount on supplies purchased from our

club sponsor, the [Home Wine, Beer, and Cheesemaking Shop](#) in Woodland Hills.

- ◆ And, though it hardly needs mentioning, personal help and advice from fellow Cellarmasters, many of them award-winning wine makers.

If you are adverse to paying on the web you may send a check to our treasure at:

Bruce Kasson  
11110 Zelzah Avenue  
Granada Hills, CA 91344

You can download the form and send in a check: <http://cellarmastersla.org/contact-us/>

