

## Important Dates

- Oct. 1, monthly meeting
- Oct 8, Board Meeting. Location TBD
- Nov. 5, Monthly Meeting
- November 21, Wine Competition
- Dec. 5, Holiday Party

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## President's Message

### Happy Harvesting!

Harvest is in full swing. Although the original plan to make a club wine with Tempranillo grapes did not work out, I think the club wine made from Merlot grapes is going to be fantastic. Gregg Smith and his son, Carl, picked up grapes from Paso Robles last Wednesday and several members met at Matt Lester's home to pick up the crushed grapes and start fermentation. Fermentation has been going well and pressing is imminent.

### Our next

meeting is coming up quickly on October 1st. We will be discussing secondary fermentation, Malolactic Fermentation (MLF), testing for MLF, aging and oak additions. The theme is Oktoberfest and the wine theme is Merlot.

Mark your calendars; the **Cellarmasters of Los Angeles Wine Competition is coming up on November 21st. Wines will be accepted October 1st through November 10th for the competition.**

Sensory evaluation and judging seminars are being scheduled for the end of October and beginning of November. Please let me know if you are interested in judging in the competition or volunteering to be a wine steward, or want to volunteer to be in charge of the breakfast, lunch or the Post Judging Celebration. It is always a great event so let me know if you want to participate in the fun.

Jennifer Swank

Cellarmasters of Los Angeles, President, 2015



# Merlot



The grape of the month is Merlot and some of us are now in the process of fermenting our Merlot grapes for the club wine project.



Matt, Kris, and Ross discussing a tote of Merlot must.

## Taste

Red fruits, easy tannins and a soft finish are the characteristics of Merlot wine. But there's more to Merlot than being smooth. It's actually a bit of a chameleon, partly because of how Merlot is vinified and mostly because of where it's grown. Take a look at the range of Merlot wine taste based on region (cool climate vs. warm climate).

**Cool climate** Merlot is more structured with a higher presence of tannins and earthy flavors like tobacco and tar. Some cool climate Merlot are mistaken as Cabernet Sauvignon.

France, Italy, Chile

A classic example of cool climate Merlot wine is Right Bank Bordeaux, such as St. Emilion, Pomerol and the earthy Fronsac.

**Warm climate** Merlot wine is more fruit-forward and tannin is less prevalent. Some producers use judicious oak-treatment of up to 24 months to give their Merlot wine more structure.

California, Australia, Argentina

A classic example of hot climate Merlot is California Merlot, such as Paso Robles and Napa Valley.

***Note:** The Stemmy Taste In Some Merlot happens during grape ripening and is because of vigorous leafy vine canopies. Pruning helps but causes thin-skinned Merlot grapes to shatter in the sun!*

## Merlot Food Pairing

Merlot wine matches with a wide variety of foods because of its position in the middle of the red wine spectrum. In general Merlot pairs well with chicken and other light meats as well as lightly-spiced dark meats. With medi-

*(Continued on page 3)*

Merlot is a very food friendly grape and will also go well with our food theme, Octoberfest foods.

## Profile

**MAJOR REGIONS:** ~600,000 acres worldwide.

France (~280,000+ acres) Bordeaux, Languedoc-Roussillon

Italy (~93,000+ acres) Toscana, Campania

United States (~55,000+ acres) California, Washington

Australia (~39,000 acres) South Australia

Chile (~25,000 acres) | Argentina (~13,000 acres)

## Primary Characteristics

**FRUIT:** Black Cherry, Raspberry, Plum

**OTHER:** Graphite, Cedar, Tobacco, Vanilla, Clove, Mocha

**OAK:** Yes. Usually medium oak aging (8-12 months)

**TANNIN:** Medium

**ACIDITY:** Medium

**ABV:** 12-15%

*"Approximately 600,000 acres worldwide."*

## The Making of Rosé



The four approaches to making rosé wines are bleeding, pressing, limited maceration, and runoff.

A rosé (from French rosé; also known as Rosado in Portugal and Spanish-speaking countries and rosato in Italy) is a type of wine

that incorporates some of the color from the grape skins, but not enough to qualify it as a red wine.

Saignée or bleeding is used to make the best quality rosés. Juice is obtained by stacking up the wine grapes in a tank and letting the grapes' weight do the crushing. Since the juice is in contact with the grape skins only for a very short time, the rosé wine obtained through this technique has a very pale color - e.g. Gris de Bourgogne, a rosé wine from the Loire Valley. Rosé wines made through bleeding are rich, fruity and have great freshness.

### Pressé

is the technique of pressing the red grapes until the juice has the desired color. Once the desired color has been attained, the winemaker stops pressing. Only the pressed juice is used to make the rosé wine.

Limited maceration is the most commonly used technique for making rosé wines. The grapes or, to be more precise, the skins are left in contact with the juice until the winemaker decides that he is happy with its color. The "wine" (or the juice) minus the skins is then transferred to another tank to finish the fermentation process. The "sit" time is between 6 hrs. and 12 hrs... that's up to the winemaker.

Run off is the process involved when the winemaker removes juice from

the tank of fermenting red wine; this juice is used to  
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um tannin and not too much acidity you'll find Merlot pairs well with many foods.

**Merlot Food Pairing Don'ts** Merlot doesn't pair well with fish or leafy green vegetables unless they are braised or cooked a certain way. Also, spicy food will most likely overwhelm Merlot's nuanced flavors.

### Fun Facts About Merlot Wine

#### The Most Planted Variety in France

Forget acclaimed Cabernet Sauvignon grapes of Bordeaux and high-priced Pinot Noir of Burgundy, Merlot wine is currently the most planted grape variety in France.

**Who's Your Daddy?** Merlot is the offspring of Cabernet Franc (the father) and Magdeleine Noire des Charentes (the mother).

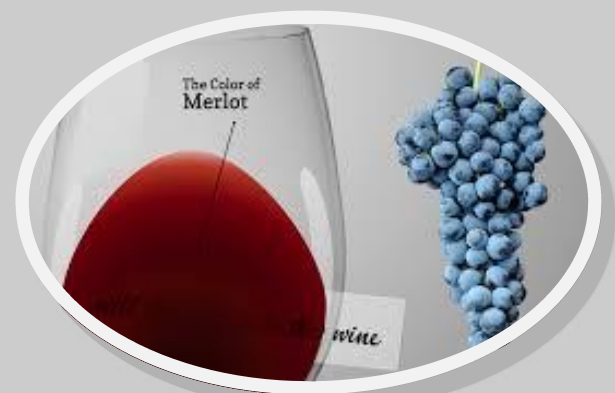
**Harder to Grow Than Cabernet!** Merlot is a thin-skinned grape that is very sensitive to its environment. Merlot grapes do have one benefit over Caber-

net: they ripen up to 2 weeks earlier. On a rainy harvest, one week can make a big difference!

**Major Player in Italy.** Merlot is Italy's 5th most planted grape. Merlot is popular in the IGT wines of Toscana commonly referred to as "Super Tuscans"

**The Blind Tasting Tell on Merlot.** Because Merlot wine is so sensitive to light, Merlot based wines tinge orange on the rim. The orange rim is the telltale sign of Merlot vs. Cabernet Sauvignon.

Sources: Winefolly.com





# Board Meeting Minutes— 9/10/2015



Notes taken by Mimi Roberts

**Location:** Jennifer's House

**In attendance:**

Jennifer, Rich, Gregg O, Tom, Nancy, Dave, DeeDee and Bruce, Dan, Mike H., Mimi, Pete and Jean.

In order discussed:

20 people in attendance at meeting on 9/2/2015

## **Treasurer's Report**

- Paso Bus Trip club expense: \$100 (Derby Day and June 2014 Wine Tasting had club expenses as well)
- Will charge more or Derby Day next year as we had a loss doing this event.

## **Newsletter Report**

Articles due by 9/20 to Juanita for September newsletter

## **Membership**

- Dave needs to get membership roster out to management committee.
- New members signing up or renewing late for membership after March 1 can't get Winemaker Magazine for that year.
- Motion passed to raise club dues to \$35 so that

Winemaker Magazine can be offered both digitally and in print

## **Club Wine**

- Possible to get a Merlot from Paso Robles

## **Wine Competition**

- Julie is the head steward this year
- Gregg O to set up tables
- Jill willing to host after-party
- Discussion regarding option of having after-party at Custom Crush instead of a home
- Need volunteers for specific jobs
- Glasses are ordered
- Mimi to revise Competition flyer - date changes
- \$10 per entry
- **Final Entry Date: November 10, 2015**
- Competition Date: November 21, 2015
- Need to order medals
- Lunch: Sandwiches and salads from Wildflower Bakery

## **Holiday Party**

- Date December 5, 2015

- Tom to find out about when tree is up at Topanga Community Center
- Dan to have the after-party

- Consider less harsh lighting options
- \$20 per person for Holiday party

## **Miscellaneous**

- Testing Clinic - date to be determined
- Check with Matt regarding faults test components left
- SO2 Clinic at Dec. meeting
- Testing for Malo at Oct., Nov., and Dec. Cellarmasters meeting
- November 1 - date for Faults Clinic (check with Matt to confirm)
- November 7 or 15 - Judging Clinic
- La Canada Flintridge - 3-6 wines for donations on October 4, Sunday, 3-6pm - Mike Holland to send article to Juanita
- Wine donations for Oct. 24 Center for the Study of Political Graphics

## A 2015 Home-Winemaker's Harvest



One of the best things about being a Cellarmaster member is see the diversity in our membership. We have a club where some members have no vines to others who have more than a thousand. So here is my backyard home winemakers harvest 2015 story.

After being away all summer I was looking forward to seeing our small vineyard. We planted mostly Merlot and Syrah. We have a small vineyard of 60 vines. Every year since 2006, Suzy and I have look forward to seeing what our vineyard will produce. Every year is different. Only 25 of our vines are

very productive. This year's harvest was a low yield due to the drought and I think we'll be able to produce three gallons which seems really low but has been about the norm since 2011 when we had the great bunch rot/ mold / powdery mildew issue. We did have a good year in 2012 and were going to produce about 5 gal until the handles from the fermenter broke off sending juice and must to the floor of our gar-



age. Ah the heartache of 2012.

I was surprised at how early the 2015 harvest was going to be since we never harvested in August before. But the numbers were averaging 23 brix and it was trending toward cold days. In hindsight I could have gone another 2 weeks. We usually harvest in the middle of September.

Not sure how 2015 will match up to our other harvest, but time will tell. We look forward to sharing our 2015 vintage in 2017. Enjoy the illustrations Suzy made, I know I do.

Cheers to a great future harvest in 2016. by Jeff Canter, Illustrations by Suzy Mandel

## Sweet and Sour Meatballs

Winning recipe - September meeting.

Two bags of party meatballs (I like Trader Joe's)

1 can tomato paste

1/2 cup brown sugar

1 cup sugar

2 tablespoons vinegar

1/4 cup Dijon mustard

Put meatballs in a crock pot. Combine all other ingredients in a sauce pan and heat till the sugar is incorporated. Pour over meatballs. Heat until meatballs are hot

Yum!! :)

Bevin S. Abbe



## Bordeaux Trip - April 2015

Julie and I traveled to Bordeaux this past April. Our first mistake was to not get GPS in our car. Of course our phones did not have GPS being we are in France, so we negotiated our way to the wineries by map. I'm happy to say, we are still married. After arriving 30 minutes past our appointment, we were greeted by the owner (Jean Charles Cazes), and the director of Lynch Bages. Lynch Bages is on the left bank of Bordeaux in the Pauillac appellation. They were very accommodating and gave us the tour of the winery. They must have thought I was a big shot at Disney, hee hee. At the end of the tour, we tasted both of their wines. The first was their 2007 Bordeaux and their "second" Bordeaux of the same year. I just looked up the price of the 2010 vintage and its \$299.99 on special with a Robert Parker Score of 96, and a 1990 for \$379 with a score of 99. The reason they said they gave us the 2007 was that it takes at least 7 years before you should drink any of their wines, because the tannins are so high and it takes time for them to soften.

The next stop was at Chateau Branaire Ducru in St Julien, which was 10 minutes down the road. They gave us a wonderful tour of their vineyard and winery, and again we tasted wine that was at least 7 years old.

Next stop was Chateau Pontet-Canet back in Pauillac. Here they let us drink with the investors and Sommeliers the

2014 vintage. It was really tannic!!!! But I loved it. Julie, not so much.

The next day we visited the Area of St Emillion. This area is considered the "right bank" of Bordeaux. Unlike the left bank which has a Cabernet Sauvignon base, this region was Merlot based. Some of the wineries we visited were at least 90% merlot. The wineries in this area were more "relaxed" and did not participate in the Premier week and were closer in style to the wineries we are accustomed to in California where we can taste and buy at the tasting room.

The third day we drove around St Emillion and ran into a building that just happened to have about 80 wines from the region the East called Cotes de Castillon. It was a gold mine. We tasted a bit of at least 30 wines. We tasted with the investors and Soms. They were slurping and making all kinds of noises while they drank.

As most of you know, I'm not a shy guy and I will ask questions as long as they continue to answer them. Here is what I learned.

- Most of the wineries in Bordeaux have two wines. Their "Grand Cru Classe" which is a mixture of 60 to 70 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 0 to 10 percent Cab Franc, 0-20 percent Merlot, 0-10 percent Petite Verdot and 0-10 percent Malbec. Most of the wineries on the left bank don't have much, if any,

Malbec in their wines since it does not grow that well there. The only difference between this wine and the second label wine is that the vines are 15 to 80 years old.

- The second label is called "Echo de Lynch-Bages". Made from 3 to 15 year old vines.
- The wine tasting in France is basically a tour of the winery and vineyard. Compared to California where we want to taste all the different wines.
- Our visit to France was during their "Premier week", when all the investors and wine analysts visit the top wineries and decide what they want to buy and how good the current vintage tastes. Since the tannins are so high with the young wine, it's hard to tell how good they will be. However, we did taste the 2014 vintage at Chateau Pontet-Canet.
- The top wineries typically go through fermentation in large Stainless steel tanks and then Malo as well. This typically takes about 3 months (three weeks for the fermentation), then they pump (or gravity flow) into French oak barrels for the next 21 months. Pontet-Canet was using "state of the art" concrete tanks for some of the aging. They were also going through



*"Some of the wineries we visited were at least 90% merlot."*

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## Read about Michael Holland in the L.A. Times

Link to story in L.A. Times.



Follow this link to a chapter on the Mission grape down on Olvera street.

<http://www.latimes.com/food/drinks/la-fo-0919-pueblo-20150919-story.html>

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make the rosé wine. The run off process results in a darker/more intense red wine (the wine left in the fermentation vat)

In all cases it should be treated like a white wine during fermentation...

...slow and cool fermentation in a carboy

for us mortals.

Cheers !!!

Jon Umhey

Sources: "borrowed" from various sources including Wiki and Winevibe and The UM

# MALIBU FAMILY WINES

**MALIBU FAMILY WINES  
PRESENTS  
THE ART OF  
SAUL MANDEL**

**OCTOBER 10, 2015  
1-4pm  
MALIBU  
TASTING ROOM  
31740 MULHOLLAND HWY  
MALIBU, CA 90265**

**OCTOBER 11, 2015  
1-4pm  
LOS OLIVOS  
TASTING ROOM  
2363 ALAMO PINTADO AVE  
LOS OLIVOS, CA 93441**

**21 and over**

[theartofsaulmandel.com](http://theartofsaulmandel.com)



Saul Mandel



# 2015 Calendar

Event	Details	Date
Monthly Meeting will back at the Wine, Beer and Cheese shop in Woodland Hills.	Topics are secondary fermentation, Malolactic Fermentation (MLF), testing for MLF, aging and oak additions. The theme is Oktoberfest and the wine theme is Merlot. Bring a bottle of Merlot to share.	October 1
Board/Planning Meetings	Second Thursday of the Month. Location TBD.	October 8
Sensory/Fault Evaluation Seminar	Scheduled for October 24. Matt Lester is the instructor. More information on location and time will be sent out to membership soon.	October 24
Judging Seminar	Scheduled November 15. Dave Lustig is the instructor. More information on location and time will be sent out to membership soon..	November 15
Cellarmasters of Los Angeles Wine Competition at Custom Crush in Camarillo	Wines will be accepted October 1st through November 10th for the competition. Go to <a href="http://www.cellarmastersla.org">www.cellarmastersla.org</a> for entry details. Fees are \$10 a bottle.	November 21

## 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.





## Bordeaux Trip



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Malolactic fermentation in barrels using an upside down glass bung on the top of the bung hole that allowed air to go out but not go in. Then they invert the glass bung when Malo is complete to keep it air tight. They racked about 6 times during the length of the time in the barrels. They fine with 5 to 6 egg whites per barrel that get mixed to a frothy mix and get added to the barrels 5 weeks before they bottle.

- The vines in this region are no more than 3 foot tall, and in rows at 4 foot on center and about 3 foot between the vines. It looks like a miniature vineyard. I am told that because they do not enough sun, this maximizes the sun exposure.
- Speaking of sun, they typically have to add sugar (Chaptalization) to their grapes so they can get 13%

alcohol wine. But, it's up to the "European Union Wine Regulators" each year who have the say on what they can and can't do.

- I learned that there are over 6000 wineries in the "Bordeaux region" as compared to 3900 in California, and the next biggest state, Washington with 704.

The Chateau's were unbelievably beautiful perched on top of the hills with fantastic views.

Overall, the wineries in Bordeaux are much different than California. Many of them sell all their wine to "investors" and don't sell their wine in the wineries. Therefore you don't see any "bachelorette parties" or limo's with "wine party drinkers" zipping around town.

By Dave Hines

## 7th Annual Southern California Pinot Days

My name is Rusty Sly and I have been a Maltose Falcon for many years. I also share a passion for wine and have a website called [slystateofwine.com](http://slystateofwine.com). I am writing this to you to share an opportunity that was given to me by the Producer (Steve Rigisich) of the **7th Annual Southern California Pinot Days being held Nov 21 at the Skirball Center**. There will be over 80 vintners present pouring their wines. Steve, the Event Producer has offered a 33 % discount (Promo Code: RSLYSC15) on all events for my readers and friends. The website is <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/7th-annual-southern-california-pinot-days-tickets-17499913713?aff=erelexporg>. I have not missed this event in 4 years. This is the ultimate Pinot Noir flight where you can discover the beauty and elegance, not to mention the wide diversity that this unique grape has to offer. And for the price is unbelievable. There are pictures in my website gallery of the last 2 years of this event if you are curious. I shared this with your group last year and thought it may interest some of your members this year.

Cheers, Rusty Sly  
[slystateofwine.com](http://slystateofwine.com)

33% Promo Code

## 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/membership-form/>

