

August 10, 2009

The Sommelier Says....

Hello and welcome to the newsletter for <http://www.wine-sommelier.com/>

Riesling

Tell a wine lover that you enjoy Riesling, and they look at you like you just punched their cat. They immediately think of you as a newbie in the wine world. But let me stand up now and proclaim to all of you, "I Love Riesling".

Riesling has arrived. The grape's versatility and its many variations in style—from steely, dry, and intense to unctuously sweet and decadent—have finally given it the broad audience it deserves. Its expressive, aromatic, generally lower-alcohol, fruit-driven profile marries perfectly with the current trends in food, especially the growing popularity of Asian cuisine. Combine that with the public's appetite for less oaky, alcohol-laden wines, and you have the beginnings of a renaissance. No longer the "sommelier's secret," Riesling has become the fastest-growing varietal of all white wines on the market, and it shows no signs of slowing down. *(When I took the Sommelier training program, I asked the Master Sommeliers what wine the nine of them would order and all nine said Riesling from Germany).*

Riesling stands alongside Nebbiolo and Pinot Noir as one of the most transparent grapes in the world. From the beautiful balancing act of sweetness and acidity in Germany, to the lime-kissed, firm, and delicately mineral-scented wines of the Clare Valley in Australia, Riesling is not only unmistakably Riesling, but it is also undeniably the product of its environment.

Germany marries that perfect tension between acidity and sweetness, although Trocken ("dry") styles are becoming increasingly popular in both the United States and Europe; its wines show a floral, lime, and stone-fruit character, along with a high-toned minerality.

The warmer Alsace region demonstrates a drier, more powerful, fuller-bodied side of the grape, with apple and stone fruits wrapped around an earthen framework. Austria, especially the Wachau, shows Riesling's structural elements, with firm stone fruits and a slightly spicy edge to an almost granitic minerality: think of the raciness of Germany meeting the power of Alsace.

Australian Riesling, while generally not as complex as its Old World counterparts, gives us the lime-scented side of the grape—especially in the Clare Valley—bringing understated minerality, great length, and often a whiff of petrol, even in a wine's youth.

The key to making great Riesling is a cool climate and a long growing season, both of which are provided by all these regions.

What Rieslings do you enjoy and why? Send me your reviews on the various Rieslings you have had, and win a bottle of wine from my personal wine cellar! Send them to me at tim@wine-sommelier.com. Entries must be received by August 30, 2009.

The Judgement of Paris... In Oxnard

On Wednesday night August 5, Ranch Ventavo held a class in their wine appreciation series called The Judgment of Paris- redux. During the class the 30 participants blind tasted 8 different wines, 4 Chardonnays and 4 Cabernets. The wines included 4 from France and 4 from California. I am pleased to say that, just like in 1976 in Paris, California wines prevailed. With Rancho Ventavo's own 2005, Cabernet Sauvignon taking top honors that night, which included two perfect scores!

New Wine TV program comes to PBS in September!

The Wine makers

Twelve men and women compete for a chance to create and launch their own wine label nationwide. In each episode they will face challenges on every aspect of wine making from viticulture and enology to sales and marketing, but in the end only one contestant will win the title of Wine Maker.

The Wine Makers will begin airing nationwide on PBS in September 2009 during California Wine Month.

<http://thewinemakers.tv/>

Rancho Ventavo Wine Classes!

Address: 741 South "A" Street, Oxnard CA 93030

Telephone (805) 483-8084.

I am teaching a series of Wine Appreciation Classes at Rancho Ventavo Cellars. Contact Rancho Ventavo to signup and additional details.

Looking ahead

- *- August 12- The Art of Wine Tasting- Rancho Ventavo Cellars**
- *- August 18- Wine 101 – Herzog Winery**
- *- August 19- Wine Regions of California- Rancho Ventavo Cellars**
- *- October 30- Nov 1- Wine tour to Willamette Valley Oregon (Date change)**
**(Airline- Alaska \$300 pp, Hotel Best Western Woodburn \$90 night-
Approx cost per couple \$1000- plus wine purchases and tasting fees) If you
are interested, please contact me ASAP and I will send you the details.**

Cheers-

Tim

If you would like to be removed from this list, please reply to me at tim@wine-sommelier.com and request removal from this list.
If you know someone that wants this list, please have him or her send me an email requesting to be included too!