

December 22, 2009

The Sommelier Says....

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

Fish and Wines...

With the Family Kitchen going out of business only after a few months, the locals here in Simi Valley are looking for anything in the way of another wine tasting watering hole. And along comes the local fish market with an answer. Ocean Fresh has partnered with an entrepreneur with wine experience to offer wine tasting at Ocean Fresh every Friday night from 5-10.

Frank, the owner of Ocean Fresh, asked me to come on by and check them out, so Bev and I did. When I walked in I saw a local wine rep pouring wines, and in the back a tall attractive woman, surrounded by cases of wine, whose brainchild this was to rent some space in Ocean Fresh, get an ABC license and have wine tasting on Friday nights. I talked at length with Kimberly about this idea and find out how things were going; while we were standing there (there isn't much room to sit down) I noticed many familiar faces, which was nice to see. Kimberly has really hit upon something here, and I have to say the bottle prices that she is selling the wines for cannot be beat anywhere! Her mark up is extremely low because she really has no overhead.

There is limited seating, a few tables are outside, and if you don't mind the scent of fish while wine tasting, then I suggest you give Ocean Fresh and their Friday Night wine tasting a try. I do suggest you buy a few bottles of wine while you are there as well, to take home- the prices are amazing. For example- Justin Isosceles, Justin club member price per bottle \$47 each, at Green Acres \$75, at Ocean Fresh- \$48.75.

Ocean Fresh even has a few menu items for sale that you can have while enjoying your wine selections. The wine flight the night I went was only \$10 and it included about 8 different wines! A great deal and a great time! Go and enjoy.

Ocean Fresh- 2810 East Los Angeles Avenue, Simi Valley, CA

More Nice Wineries in the Los Olivios area!

To be honest with all of you, I had gotten bored wine tasting in the Santa Ynez area. Yes I have my favorites Zaca Mesa, Dan Gehrs, but beyond those, I had been finding the wines and the wineries boring and lacking character. That was until a few weeks ago when a few of us traveled up to the area to 'pick up some Port at Gehrs', that was the goal of the day.

We did head to Dan Gehrs first and we did pick up some wonderful ports, but a few doors away from Dan's was a tasting room that HAD character and style and

best of all... it had cup cakes! Yes located in the tasting room of [Saarloos & sons](#) is a small cup cake company called [Enjoy Cupcakes](#).

First the wines at Saarloos & sons, The tasting room was built in 1886, and fully restored by the Saarloos family. The Labels and Wines you find from Saarloos & sons are extremely low production. In each wine you will find a reason behind each element that represents every bottle of their wine - from the Name to the Colors to the photo even so far as the percentages in the blends. Saarloos & sons is a labor of love Four Generations in the making.

Their tasting list had 4 wines, mostly reds and one Chardonnay. The wines I enjoyed and bought were the Purple Heart (Syrah- \$50) and the 194Five The Union, (Syrah/Cab blend- \$38). Both of these wines showed very well and had nice finishes. It is tough competition in the Santa Ynez Valley for Syrah, there are quite a few nice ones in the area, and I believe these two wines are worth the price!

Located in the tasting room is Enjoy Cupcakes.... Now if you have ever wanted to pair wine and cupcakes, now is your chance. This small company sells cupcakes in two sizes the small size is about an inch in diameter and they run for about \$2 each, then the normal size cupcakes are about \$3.75 each.

My favorites were **Chocolate Blackberry Syrah** *signature treat*-Chocolate, syrah infused cake, filled with dark chocolate belgium fudge, topped with blackberry frosting and a wine soaked blackberry that's rolled in sugar crystals
Raspberry Chardonnay-Chardonnay cake, filled with organic raspberry preserves, topped with raspberry frosting
Caramel Creme Brulee-Vanilla bean cake with a creme brulee filling, topped with caramel frosting and caramelized sugar chunks

They even offer a flight of cupcakes for \$10 and they are paired with the wines... you need to stop here on your next visit to the Santa Ynez Valley.

Saarloos and Sons and Enjoy Cupcakes: 2971 Grand Ave. Los Olivos, Ca 93441

Following our wine and cupcakes experience we traveled to Zaca Mesa, where we once again enjoyed the wines there. (Alas, no cupcakes there). But while in the members' only tasting room the person working there, Chris along with his wife told our group about a new winery that we must try, so off we went to head to [Demetria Estates](#). Now to get to Demetria Estate, you need to pass through two combination gates, the combinations are not posted and you need to know them.... Well, I know them and if you want to go drop me a note and I will send it to you!

Passing through the gate and driving past tennis courts you come to the old Andrew Murray estate. We walked through the door and were greeted by Lee,

who I think works part time at the comedy club. He sat us down around a table and brought us our wines each was wonderful. I really enjoyed the Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir, which I bought a few bottles of including a Magnum.

One thing that really makes Demetria Estates different is that they are a Biodynamic winery. Biodynamic wineries use agriculture originated out of the spiritual scientific research of the Austrian scientist and philosopher Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Anthroposophy and Waldorf education.

Another very unique process used here is the aging process, most wineries age their wines in oak or stainless steel barrels, and Demetria uses concrete tanks! You can actually see one of these here.



The wines are mostly in the ever popular Rhone style, with Syrah, Mourvedre, Grenache, Viognier, Roussanne, Marsanne and Grenache Blanc.

I do suggest you try these 'new' wineries in the Santa Ynez area, I do not think you will be disappointed!

What wine is this?

Last Issues answer: Sancerre from France

Upcoming Events:

March 6/7- 32nd annual Barrel Tasting along the Wine Road! 100+ Wineries! To taste at any of the participating wineries these weekends, you will need to purchase the Barrel Tasting ticket (\$20 available online on January 18). <http://www.wineroad.com/annualevents/3>

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!**