

What's Going On?

Robinson, Michael. "Grape Expectations: What's Going On?" *The Royal Gazette* [BDA] 03.7.2020 Print



July 4th An American Celebration

This week I have had a chat with two of the staff at our store on Harbour Road in Paget as I wanted to get a feel for any changes in wine buying patterns. One of them told me that Chardonnay has been more in demand, starting about six months ago. The other stated the rather obvious, and that is that folks are now also including more of what I would refer to as "restaurant wines" in their selections. I think it fair to say that "home wines" are often in the slightly less or slightly more than \$20.00 range, but as restaurants are frequently used for weekend and special day events, and of course business entertainment, the wines tend to be costlier. As this is also the weekend that many of our American residents celebrate their independence I will suggest a few of our fine wines from that country.



Schramsberg Blanc de Blancs

Why not start with a toast to new and better times and with a classic bubbler? **Schramsberg Blanc de Blancs 2015** was the first sparkling wine that they produced back in 1965 and it was America's first commercially produced Chardonnay-based brut sparkling wine. Schramsberg Blanc de Blancs gained international recognition in 1972 when then President Nixon served the wine at the historic "Toast to Peace" in Beijing, China.

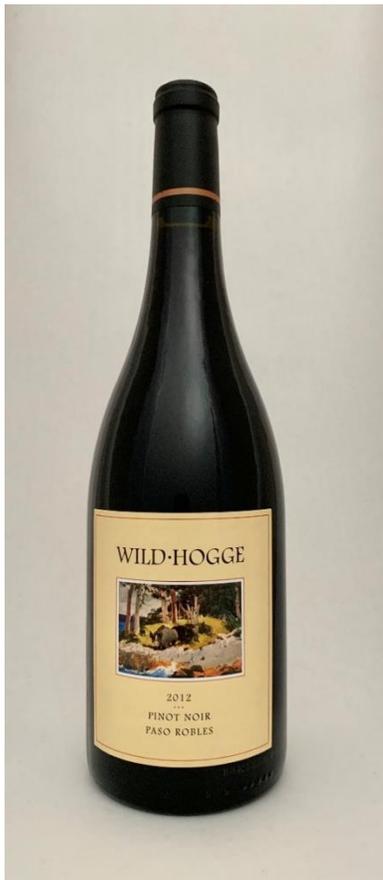
The Schramsberg style of Blanc de Blancs is dry and crisp. The wine is aged on the yeast lees in the bottle for over two years prior to disgorgement. With its vibrant, fruitful and crisp nature, this sparkling wine will maintain its freshness, structure and refined finish for many years, even decades following its initial release. The Wine Spectator calls it "polished and precise with sleek lemon and lime flavours". \$35.95. Our stock number for this wine made in true Champagne fashion is 7023.

Beringer's 2017 Napa Valley Chardonnay is a vibrant, contemporary version of this much loved varietal, crafted to serve well as an aperitif on its own or as a faithful companion to a wide variety of foods - maybe you are lucky enough to have some fresh rockfish?. Carefully selected lots from several of Napa's coolest growing regions are blended to offer a wonderful expression of Napa Valley.

Surprisingly plush and creamy, aromas and flavours of tart citrus lead with hints of white pear, delicious apple and a bit of lemon meringue and toasted almonds. Balanced, with moderate acidity, the brightness of the Chardonnay fruit shines through. James Suckling rates it a fine 92/100 and writes, "orange blossom, nectarines, daffodils and clementine. Medium to full body, a really attractive texture and succulent finish". Stock #6273. \$35.85.



Beringer's Napa Valley Chardonnay



Wild Hogge Pinot Noir

Why not enjoy a team effort of the best of **Paso Robles** in California and the talents of Huw and Dale Morris who lived here for many years, and open a bottle of their **Wild Hogge 2012 Pinot Noir**? They make wonderful wines and the Wine Enthusiast magazine rated this 93/100 and commented in this way, "Sichuan pepper and sultry mulberry aromas meet with seaweed and iodine aromas on the nose of this bottling. Deep strawberry fruit melds with black sage, licorice, mint, and slate-like minerality on the palate". I cannot think of a better partner for salmon, tuna or most poultry. Stock #5966. \$39.95



Hope Family Treana

If you just want to enjoy all the sunshine and enthusiasm of California then let's stay in Paso Robles and discuss the **Hope Family 2015 Treana** that is a blend of 75% Cabernet Sauvignon and 25% Syrah that the winemaker describes in this way. "A deeply coloured wine with a purple-black core that fades to a ruby rim. Intense aromas of freshly picked blackberries, muddled black and red currants, along with dried cranberries give way to underlying tones of dried rose petals, violets, potpourri and clove, while caramelized oak notes are spiced by a hint of cinnamon. A velvety rush of ripe blackberries and pomegranate fruits envelop the palate, while subtle nuances of baking spices, cocoa powder and dried vanilla beans add to the wine's complexity. Full bodied and rich with a beautifully balanced acidity, Treana Red will age gracefully for 10 -15 years". If you are having ribs or beef-steak on the grill this would be so good to enjoy with either. Stock #8030. \$45.50

The 46,000 acres of vineyards in "the Valley of Plenty", as the indigenous word "Napa" is translated, only account for 4% of Californian wine production and .4% of our world's, but we cannot leave without including one of their classic Cabernet Sauvignons. We started with a Chardonnay from a historic winery in the Valley founded by two German brothers in the 1800's and so let's finish with a monumental one from Beringer. This what Robert Parker had to say in 2016.

"One of the great efforts of recent years, and not surprisingly so, is the **Beringer 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon Private Reserve**, a blend of 81% from Howell Mountain, 11% from St. Helena and the rest Calistoga and Mount Veeder. It is a blend of 96% Cabernet Sauvignon 3% Cabernet Franc and 1% Petit Verdot aged 20 months in 84% new French oak. At 15.2% natural alcohol, this is a big boy, but also classic Napa Cabernet Sauvignon with crème de cassis, graphite, licorice, and a touch of spicy oak. Winemaker Laurie Hook, who has since departed as winemaker, really hit a home run with this beauty. The wine could benefit from 7-10 years cellaring and probably last 30 to 40. When all is said and done, this is an instant classic, the wine full-bodied with oodles of crème de cassis, pen ink, graphite and baking spices. It is multi-dimensional, layered, and one of the all-time great **Beringer Private Reserves** - and there have been many". Parker gives this a close to perfect 97/100 and we sell this stock #6305 for \$182.45. He rates the 2012 96/100 and it is the same price. We actually list stocks going back to 1990. Great American vinous treats!



Beringer Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

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