



Wenatchee
Valley
Enological
Society

President's Corner

What Is?

Joanne's Picks

Join/Renew/Reserve

Spring Picnic ~ Reserve today!

June 13th- Rio Vista Wines - Spring Picnic

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Location: Rio Vista Wines, 24415 SR 97, Chelan, WA - [Click here for directions](#) -

Come join us for our annual picnic at this wonderful winery located on the shore of the Columbia River. Rio Vista is the only winery on the river in North Central Washington where you can arrive by car, by boat or float plane! They don't have a dock, but there is a long stretch of sandy beach with a shade hut, floats, or trees to tie up to. Besides the wonderful food and company, you're able to enjoy a tour of the riverside vineyards, the park-like country setting, a walk on the sandy beach, a visit with the Ducks and Chickens, or simply sip the fantastic reds and whites on the covered deck of the tasting room while lingering in the golden glow of the river.

Price - \$5.00 members

Non-members - \$6.50

What to bring: table, chairs, place setting, and a potluck dish to share

Reservations: 12796 Cemetery Road

Leavenworth, WA 98826

We will be tasting:

Chardonnay – Estate wine. This naked beauty needs no oak to enhance the tantalizing flavors of pineapple and peach.

Riesling – Estate wine. This off-dry noble white is refreshing yet seductive, rich with hints of apricot and tropical fruits

Rose' – You'll be excited to find this excellent Rose'! A blend of 50% Rose' Merlot and 50% Rose' Pinot Noir, with a subtle taste of strawberries.

Loony Red – Estate wine. Our most popular red is winemaker John Little's unsurpassed blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.

Cabernet Franc – Our most sophisticated wine is bursting with rich plum and hints of melted dark chocolate

And of course people may purchase a bottle while they are there to sip on if they'd like. 😊

For more information, please contact Kathy Campbell (katink221@hotmail.com).

President's Corner

Lake Chelan AVA

We are very fortunate to have an area in our own back yard that has just been awarded its own AVA, which stands for American Viticulture Area. There were 193 AVAs as of February, 2009 and the Lake Chelan AVA is the 11th in the State of Washington and the State's second in 2009. Prior to the installation of the AVA system, wine appellations of origin in the United States were designated based on state or county boundaries. An American Viticulture Area (AVA) is a federally recognized grape growing area, historically recognized and having soil and growing conditions unique to the surrounding area. Sometimes it is also called an "Appellation", a term which can also be used for other agricultural designations as well.

Unlike most European wine appellations of origin, an AVA specifies only a geographical location from which at least 85% of the grapes used to make a wine must have been grown. American Viticultural Area designations do not limit the type of grapes grown, the method of vinification, or the crop yield. When a US winery wants to tell you the geographic pedigree of its wine, it uses a tag on its label called an Appellation of Origin.

Current regulations impose the following additional requirements on an AVA:

- * Evidence that the name of the proposed new AVA is locally or nationally known as referring to the area;
- * Historical or current evidence that the boundaries are legitimate;
- * Evidence that growing conditions such as climate, soil, elevation, and physical features are distinctive;

Grapes have been grown in the Lake Chelan area since 1891. The first commercial wine grapes were planted in the Chelan Valley in 1998. Since those '98 grapes were planted, the dream and goal was to be recognized as an American Viticulture Area by the Federal Government.

The 24,040-acre AVA is entirely within the Columbia Valley. It is home to 15 wineries and 260 acres of vineyards. Lake Chelan is the third deepest lake in the nation at 1,486 feet and has a cooling effect upon the surrounding area that contributes to the area's distinctive growing characteristics. At present the grapes planted are predominately Syrah, Merlot, Malbec, Riesling, Pinot Gris, Gewurztraminer, Chardonnay, and Pinot Noir, although there is experimentation with many other varieties in the area.

One of the unique characteristics is Lake Chelan's higher elevation and more temperate climate than the more southern AVAs also contained within the Columbia Valley. Because of the ice age glaciers which formed Lake Chelan, the soil surrounding it has distinctive properties such as coarse, sandy sediment with notable amounts of quartz and mica, which results in grapes with discernable textures, minerals, and nutrients. The AVA is also distinguished by a significant

“lake effect” which creates mild and favorable temperatures for surrounding areas, resulting in a longer growing season and a reduced risk of frost. Since the vineyards are cooler than much of the rest of the Columbia Valley, the bud break is later, and the more moderate temperatures caused by Lake Chelan results in even ripening conditions later in the year. This translates into intense fruit flavors and a high acidity.

It will be exciting to watch the development of this area, and to experience the taste of the wines of Lake Chelan as the local wineries continue to experiment with various grape varieties in order to determine a notoriety of their own for specific varietals, as Oregon has with its Pinot Noir.

Bruce Campbell

Joanne's Picks

I thought spring was late up here this year, but now we have suddenly jumped into summer! What a year.

It's been a big year in the local wine industry. Lake Chelan just got its AVA designation and the wineries are celebrating this weekend, up there in the lake country. I want to get back to Chelangr'la and see if the Pinot Noir is as good as I remember. Benson Estate Winery is a fun stop, as the family is so friendly and welcoming and all the wines are excellent. Each winery has a specialty we look forward to.

Not long ago when we went to Chelan for the day we either took a lunch or got a quick sandwich at Safeway. They do make excellent sandwiches there. Now,

however, new eating places seem to be popping up all over. Some are not new, as is the very popular Lake Chelan Winery and the charming Vin du Lac. I enjoy the way Vin du Lac lets you taste their wines as you eat their delicious food. Now Tsillan Cellars has Sorrento. What atmosphere that has! And KarMa, with its ambiance, also has excellent food and service. All that wine tasting makes us hungry.

Some new wineries have appeared in our NCW area and more are coming. The June 13 picnic at Rio Vista Winery, just north of Chelan, should be a lot of fun. The setting is lovely, with the river nearby, and the beautiful grounds. The wine is very good, too.

Ryan Patrick Winery has just released its 2007 Rock Island Red. I haven't seen it at Costco yet, but can't imagine it will be long before it shows up there. They still have the Naked Chardonnay, an excellent wine for all the hot-weather foods we'll be having as summer comes along. It's hard to beat a wine like this for \$6.49. You'll also find the Saint Laurent 2006 Merlot for only \$9.99.

Good old G.O. is expecting some new wines so we'll stop there and see what we find.

Nebbiolo is making an appearance in our area. It's already being produced in other areas in our state. Other varietals are getting more and more attention as we go beyond Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio/Gris and other usual and familiar wines.

The Enological Society board is working at presenting new events which will help us all to learn more about the wine industry. We'll be comparing some French wines with their local counterparts, exploring Petite Syrah, and trying the popular Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre blend as made here and in other areas and countries. If helping with an event sounds like fun (and it is), please let us know. You don't have to take on the full responsibility for it, but you might learn enough and enjoy it enough to want to do it again. You might even want to join the Board. We'd love to have you.

Note: The popular and familiar Waterbrook Winery in Walla Walla underwent a change of ownership in 2006. Rick Steigmeyer of the Wenatchee World wrote an interesting and very informative article about the grand new winery and the changes made there.

<http://blogs.wenatcheeworld.com/rsteigmeyer/2009/05/28/waterbrooks-new-winery-now-open/>

Joanne

What is Hot Wine?

That Wine is Hot!

What exactly is 'hot' when you talk about wines? Is hot a cool thing? Do winemakers strive to make 'hot' wines?

Let's take the questions in a mixed sequence. First, no. Hot is not Cool?

Winemakers don't want to hear that comment about their wines. Hot is a specific reference to the alcohol level in the finished product, and when critics or wine writers label a wine as 'hot' they are referring to the 'burn' on the palate that high alcohol levels can create. That level varies by individual.

Where does the alcohol come from?

Fermentation is the chemical reaction that occurs when yeasts consume the sugar (measured in Brix levels) in the grape juice creating the by products of alcohol and carbon dioxide (among other things).

The alcohol by volume (ABV) level of a finished wine can reasonably be calculated by dividing the Brix, of the grape juice by 2, so 26 Brix equates to 13% alcohol by volume.

Hot, dry climates such as in CA, OR & WA

The New world growers, Argentina, Australia, America, Chile, don't have that problem which Burgundy, and occasionally Bordeaux, have of bringing grape Brix levels to 26. It's a simple matter of temperature in the vineyards. Growers in CA, OR & WA don't have the same lack of heat in the vineyards to cope with. In fact, their problem is exactly opposite, Brix at the 28 to 30% levels before entering the "Late Harvest" state is normal. Literally translated, that means it is possible to ferment wines from these states with a 14% to 15% ABV level, perhaps even higher.

One interesting side bar is the issue of adding sugar to the juice to increase the alcohol level. This is often done with the great red wines of Burgundy, although it is glossed over and frequently denied, because in that region it is often very difficult to get the brix levels up to that 26% number.

It's that difficulty that may in fact be the reason why that number is deemed ideal.

Is Twenty-Six Brix and 13 % ABV an Ideal or Merely an Achievable?

The French in both Bordeaux and in Burgundy have on occasion had difficulty harvesting grapes at the 26 brix levels. Warmer climates don't have this problem. WA does not have this problem.

But there is a second issue: acids. Hot climate grapes, which have no trouble reaching the magic brix number, are typically lower in acids. Acids are the 'bones' that give wine its ability to age; acids give wine a quality referred to as the structure, the skeletal features upon which all the component tastes and aromatic elements rely for delivery in the glass.

The problem of low acids in hotter climate grapes is corrected by the addition of acids, usually tartaric acid. If you accept that the solution to the low brix problem is to add sugar during fermentation in colder climates or at least colder years, it should not be a stretch to accept that adding acids for high brix juices in hotter climates is the equivalent.

But What is Hot?

In the old French wine world, where growers had difficulty achieving 26 brix, 13.0 ABV was the ideal, and 27 brix, 13.5% ABV was on occasion achievable. Those numbers representing the ideal dominated the wine world for centuries..

Is wine with an ABV of 14, 15, 16% ABV hot?

Only you can answer that question. I suggest you do this: Ignore the label; pour the wine in your glass without reading the label. Sip it, swish it around in your mouth and swallow it.

If you feel that ‘burn’ on the sides of your tongue and at the back of your throat after you have swallowed, then that wine, for you, is hot. That burn for some might happen even at the magic number, 13.5% ABV. When you’ve finished, look at the label to identify the alcohol level. Whatever the number is, that for you is your “Hot” tolerance level, and you should look for wines with a slightly lower ABV to avoid the ‘burn’ in your palate in the future.

~Alex Saliby, contributing editor



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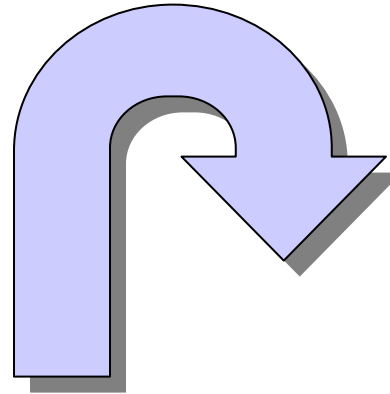
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Michelle Jeffers, Editor

**Reserve
your
space
for
Spring Picnic 2009!**



Membership Coupon

Please use this coupon to renew your membership, sign up a new member, record an address change

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone: Day _____ Night _____
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MONTH	SINGLE	COUPLE
June	\$ 13.75	\$ 27.50

Please clip coupon and send payment with coupon to:

Enological Society Memberships
 1255 Mountain Vista Drive
 Wenatchee, WA 98801

Spring Picnic – Rio Vista Winery

Saturday, June 13, 1 p.m.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone: Day _____ Night _____
 Email _____

Number of Members ____ x \$ 5.00 = \$ _____

Number of Guests ____ x \$ 6.50 = \$ _____

Guest Name(s) _____

RESERVATIONS ARE NON-TRANSFERABLE
 Advance reservations and payment for the June Event to be received **no later than** Wednesday, June 10.

Please clip coupon and send payment with coupon to:

Enological Society Reservations
 12796 Cemetery Road
 Leavenworth WA 98826
www.wenwine.org
 CANCELLATIONS call 509-548-6056