

Boise Co-op Uncorked!

BOISE CO-OP WINE SHOP
NEWSLETTER

CORNER OF 8TH & FORT
BOISE, ID 83702

SEPTEMBER CLUB PICKS

Dolcetto: A Seasonal Approach —by Carl Dellabadia

It's no secret that our minds mirror nature, and that our attunement to sensual experience changes as the sun journeys further from our hemisphere. With less light in which to contemplate our existence, long held notions crumble like dried hydrangea's mandarin petals against trampled gardens, where the last heirloom tomatoes have been picked and only the squash persists.

If one could liken wine knowledge to seasons, the summer would be where everyone plays, where the standardized notions of how wine should be consumed swim in warm lakes. In the fall, said metaphorical waters cool, and only open minds swim where the current runs in opposition to what's comfortable, to what's established in the warmer months.



In the summer of my wine journey, I held firm to the idea that Dolcetto should only be consumed young, when the fruit is at the height of its vibrancy. In the fall of 2009, I was pushed into colder waters. A friend of mine opened a bottle of 2002 Giacosa Dolcetto D'Alba and the first thought that went through my sun-kissed mind was that we missed it, that we should have drank it when it was only two years old, or even four, but not seven. At the time, I didn't pay attention to the stature or capability of Bruno Giacosa as a producer, but then in the summer one is easily parried away from such considerations by the pleasurable experience of consumption.

When the wine poured out an almost inky black, and not the diaphanous ruby I expected, I knew seasons had changed. I

was in unfamiliar territory. What I knew at the time was that Dolcetto, loosely translated from the Italian as "little sweet one," was a lighter to medium bodied wine known for its combination of fresh fruit and great structure, making it an ideal food wine. No one, or at least no one I knew, had ever ventured to say that Dolcetto could be overtly complex. Everything I smelled swirling in my glass proved it could be. The fruit was still there but different, more like blueberries and plums than cherries and cranberries, and it was slathered in an earthiness that I find hard to describe except that it smelled like fall, like truffles, dead leaves, and potpourri. The density of it shocked me most. Even with the glass tilted on its side, I couldn't see through the liquid, and the voluptuousness of the texture far exceeded any previous Dolcetto experience I'd had.

Needless to say, I ran out that next day to look for another bottle. All I could find was an '08 and I bought it, naively thinking it would be the same. It wasn't even close. Not that it was bad, just so different, more like the classic Dolcetto interpretation: young fresh red fruits, vibrant acidity, a little licorice. I was left wondering in the cold streams of an unknown fall if it was the '02 vintage that produced such a stellar wine or the fact that it was seven years old? The duplicitous possibilities fascinated me. In my summer mind, I didn't think about vintage or producer, only taste. It wasn't until I was stimulated by an unorthodox experience that I was inspired to appreciate a fall mind, and all the ignorance it promised to soulfully destroy.

Currently, I'm trying to taste every Dolcetto we have at the Co-op. I've gone through quite a few and three have stood out above the rest.

In third place, and most summer-like both in its youth and presentation, was the **2010 G.D. Vajra Dolcetto D'Alba, \$17.99.** Correct and traditional, this wine

2010 Chapoutier Bila Haut White

2009 Purple Malbec

2009 Joseph Phelps
Sauvignon Blanc

2008 Chapoutier Bila Haut
Occultum Lipidem

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is a textbook example of how to showcase fruit and retain structure without having to be overly extracted.

In second, with notable transition toward the fall, was the **2007 Marcarini Dolcetto D'Alba, Boschi di Berri, \$28.00**. The grapes for this wine come from a century old vineyard that was saved from the phylloxera epidemic thanks to its partially sandy-soils and specific micro-climate, meaning the vines have never been grafted to American rootstock. The result is an exquisite wine that still shows a great deal of fresh fruit on first opening, but when it loosens up, particularly left overnight, its aromatics provide a more earthy, complex and sensual style.

But the best, was the **2007 Cappellano Dolcetto D'Alba Gabutti, \$24.00**. This soulful, mysterious, impeccably made wine transcends what I once thought possible in a Dolcetto. The balance is pristine, gliding effortlessly from tart cherry fruit to a long finish that rushes up like a fall wind, swirling a complicated mesh of fennel, celery, and an earthy menthol spice. To me it was more reminiscent of Barolo, validating that when made right, wine is more about place than anything else. My only hope is that I can hold on to one long enough to try when its seven years old.

Co-op Wine Shop Staff Picks for September



Barry's Pick: 2008 Castello Poggiarello Collerosso, \$22.00

This wine is a blend of 50% Cabernet Franc and 50% Merlot. The estate usually makes three different wines in any given year but, in 2008 due to difficulties in the vineyard, they chose to make only one wine. I applaud that decision because it has resulted in an outstandingly balanced and approachable wine that could also be aged for several more years. Get some before it's gone!

Bruce's Pick: 2009 Lenotti Valpolicella Classico, \$11.99

It's the perfect time of year for this lighter bodied red....perfect for patio-sipping, picnics, pizza and pasta. Light in tannins but full of plum and berry flavors, with a juicy finish. In a word: quaffable.

Dave's Pick: 2010 Rapahel Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi, \$9.99

The fifteen day forecast calls for summer like weather with temperatures in the 80s to lower 90s. This wine, with its lean but lively aromas of gooseberry and grapefruit that segue into crisp and refreshing citrus fruit flavors, is a perfect match for that last gasp of warm weather.

Divit's Pick: 2009 La Posta Malbec, \$14.99

If you know my taste in wine (I lean toward Burgundy and Rhônes—wines with an old world sense of style, restraint and balance) then my picking a New World Malbec might come as something of a surprise. The wine is reasonably priced, cleanly made and does not have any of the "funky side" of Malbec. On top of all that they went to screw caps with this vintage. Plenty of berries, not much tannin, soft enough for most people but enough complexity to hold my interest as well.

Kathy's Pick: 2008 Koyle Reserva Syrah, \$14.99

The Wine Crew tried this wine recently and we all agreed it was a great value. Having tried it again last evening, I was really impressed with the depth and complexity it has. Rich with concentrated flavors of blackberry, plum and toasted vanilla, balanced with nice bright cherry and acidity. Full-bodied and smooth, it drinks well on it's own or pair it with a big, meaty steak.

Leslie's Pick: 2008 Brian Carter Cellars, Oriana, \$20.00

Brian Carter has been making wine in Washington for over 20 years and his new collection is outstanding. I picked this white blend for September because of it's rich aromas and flavors of peach, melon and food friendly acidity. It is made with Viognier, Roussanne and a touch of Riesling and would pair easily with fish, pork, game hens and curries.

Michel Chapoutier Domaine de Bila-Haut

Two of this month's Wine Club selections come from Chapoutier's Bila-Haut estate in the Roussillon region. Michel Chapoutier is one of the most highly regarded winemakers in France. Since taking over his family firm in 1990 at age 26, he has transformed the winery into one of the leading Rhône Valley producers. He combines the modern and the traditional: crusading for biodynamic winemaking, while expanding operations around the globe and experimenting with cutting edge winemaking techniques. The Roussillon history is complex and compelling, and has at times been quite violent. Terraces are built on stony soil, with a rich geological background and a climate that man has adapted to for his crops. The Roussillon was bound to attract Michel Chapoutier's attention. He decided to locate his domain at Latour de France. The soil there is diverse consisting of black and brown schist to give the wine a solar touch, gneiss for minerality and freshness, and a combination of limestone and chalk for strength and balance. These are wines of impeccable quality and alluring style.

R & R Club

2010 Chapoutier Bila-Haut White

This lovely white is a blend of Grenache Blanc, Grenache Gris and Macabeau grown partly in vineyards with soils of limestone and clay in the Agly Valley, and partly in higher altitude vineyards (1500 feet) with granite soils. The result is a very fresh wine with lemon and grapefruit aromas and a touch of smoke. The palate is a mix of creamy citrus fruit with salty notes, a light minerality and remarkable length. Rated an impressive 90 points in Robert Parker's *Wine Advocate*, it's a great choice for cooler fall weather, and would go great with poached fish, roast chicken or lighter pasta dishes.

2009 Purple Malbec

A quick look at the label and you could assume that this was another Argentine Malbec. The words "Purple Malbec" dominate the space, but in much smaller print you'll discover "by Chateau Lagrezette." This is in fact a wine from the Cahors appellation of France where Malbec originated, and Lagrezette is considered one of the top properties of that region. With a history of vineyard cultivation that dates back to the 15th century, the estate has been owned by entrepreneur and contemporary art collector, Alain Dominique Perrin since 1980.

The Cahors appellation is approximately 150 miles east of the city of Bordeaux, and straddles the winding Lot River. The area is the frontier between two climate zones, with the influence of both the Atlantic and the Mediterranean affecting the region. The vineyards of Cahors, among the oldest in France, were much praised as early as the 7th century by the Bishop of Verdun. In the 13th century, the English, who were then powerful in the region, considered it very highly. Long-lived, powerful and generous, richly-endowed in tannins and aromas of anise and red fruits, the wine of Cahors has won back its rightful place among the great appellations of France.

This is a well-structured wine with an undeniable elegance and a restraint you don't often find in Malbecs from Argentina. It is fruit forward with plush dark berry flavors and smooth tannins. It's the perfect wine for your late summer barbecues.

Passport Club

2009 Joseph Phelps Sauvignon Blanc

In the late 60s, Joseph Phelps was running one of the largest construction companies in the U.S. when he won the bid to build Souverain Winery (now Rutherford Hill) located a few miles outside of St. Helena. Enamored with the beautiful Napa Valley and contemplating a career change, in 1973 he bought the 600-acre Connolly cattle ranch in Spring Valley, and began planting vineyards. The winery was completed in 1974, where the first grapes were crushed at the new facility and the first Insignia was produced. It was a period of unparalleled activity, creativity, ingenuity, entrepreneurship and risk-taking and it put Joe Phelps on the map of top Napa Valley wine producers.

Nearly four decades later, the flagship wine, Insignia, is recognized as one of the world's great wines. Though not as well known for his white wine, Phelps brings that same level of care and quality to this Sauvignon Blanc. This is an estate wine with 100 percent of the grapes coming from their Spring Valley vineyard outside St. Helena. The wine was barrel fermented with native yeast then aged nine months in a mix of new (16 percent) and one- to two- year old (84 percent) French oak. The result is a wine more akin to a white Bordeaux than a New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc. There's a light smokiness on the nose that is colored by sweet citrus and mango. The fruit is a creamy mix of peach, blood orange, sweet lemon and lime with a touch of vanilla. Would go great with oysters, other shellfish or most anything from the water.

2008 Chapoutier Bila-Haut Occultum Lipidem

This meaty red is made from a blend of Grenache, Syrah and old bush vine Carignan planted in a mixture of gneiss, schist and chalk. The hand harvested grapes were fermented in a fifty/fifty mix of barrels and stainless steel tanks. This wine opens with heady aromas of blackberry, herb and beef. Impeccably balanced in the mouth it is both rich and refreshing, offering dark fruits, ripe tannins that are smooth and refined, and an intriguing touch of sea brine. It would enjoy the company of a juicy steak or roast beef, with grilled portabella as a vegan choice. Would also go great with fresh tomatoes, lightly salted and drizzled with olive oil.



September 2011



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 organic based inks.

Wine Shop Hours!

10 am to 8 pm
 Monday
 through
 Saturday

10 am to 6 pm
 Sunday

Idaho Tasting

Friday, September 2, 4:30 to 6:30 pm

Saturday, September 3, 2:00 to 4:00 pm

The spotlight will be on some of the top new wineries on the local scene. If you haven't experienced Idaho wines recently, you are in for a real surprise. There has been a quantum leap in both variety and quality. We're definitely making some world class wines, as good as most any in the Northwest.

Sake Tasting

Saturday, September 10, 2:00 to 4:00 pm

Here's your chance to learn more about this unique rice wine from Japan. Lorelee Gray, from Idaho Sake will be on hand to pour free tastes while discussing the ins and outs of this many faceted beverage. And of course nothing goes better with sake than sushi, so our own Boise Co-op Sushi bar will be on hand with an array of fresh rolls.

Italian Wine Tasting at Café Vicino

Saturday, September 24, 2:00 to 4:00 pm

It's Italian reds and whites with the focus on the southern half of the country, and as always, Chef Richard will prepare small plates to pair with the wine. The price is \$30 and you can make reservations through Café Vicino at 472-1463, or you can drop by the Wine Shop and buy a ticket to the event. We'll be doing another tasting October 29 highlighting the wines of northern Italy. If you want to attend both events, you can buy the pair of tickets for \$50 (a savings of ten bucks).

Wine Deals of the Month



2006 Marquis Philips S² Cabernet Sauvignon

An incredible buy on a top Aussie red.

(reg. 32.00)

Member sale \$15.95

2009 Morgadio Albariño

Classic Spanish white wine at a great price.

(reg. \$18.99)

Member sale \$14.95

2008 Roger Lassarat Macon-Vergisson, La Roche

A beautiful Chardonnay from the Burgundy region of France.

(reg. \$22.00)

Member sale \$15.95

Featured Winery of the Month: Ken Wright Cellars

One of Oregon's top Pinot Noir producers.

This Month Only

Take 10% off on any of his 2009 Pinot Noirs

*Limited quantities available on some of these wines, so
 hurry in for the best selection.*