

# Boise Co-op Uncorked!

WINE DEPARTMENT  
NEWSLETTER

888 W FORT STREET  
BOISE, ID 83702

## Robert Kacher Selections Are Here!

—*Rosemary S Gray*

This past January I trekked off to France with a pithy amount of French in my head and a plethora of butterflies in stomach. It was my first trip to Europe. After landing, it took me a couple hours to find my way out of Charles de Gaulle Airport (hell on earth by the way) and over to the Gard du Lyon. There I met my fellow travelers who would soon become close friends as we began our two-week adventure on the Robert Kacher Selections Tour.

We spent the next two weeks in a big, yellow bus touring three regions of France: Costières de Nimes, the Rhone Valley and Burgundy. We spent approximately 8 hours a day tasting, and the rest eating, traveling and drinking on a miniscule amount of sleep. In total I probably tasted over 300 wines and worked my body to a level of exhaustion that may beat out my college days of finals week. I assure you, it was some of the most fun I've ever had, and the hardest work I've ever done.

Part of my duty was to assess the new vintage in order to determine what we should bring into the store. Well, I'm happy to say our first container arrived this past Saturday. Over 700 cases of RKS wines arrived and the best part is all of them are affordable (maxing out around 12.99) and all of them are delicious!

The container included our seasonal favorites: Domaine de Pouy and nine dif-

ferent dry roses (see 'Think Pink' box below). All of these wines are staple bottles for the wine department staff, and we look forward to their arrival every year. We all agree every fridge should have a bottle of Pouy and a bottle of rosé *at all times* during the summer.

We also got in new vintages of wines you've come to know as Co-op exclusives: Valcombe Traditon, Mad de Guiot Rouge, Chateau Montroche Rouge, Gournier Viognier and Grenache, Grange Roquette Marsanne-Viognier, and Corbillières Touraine Sauvignon.

We also brought in three new wines this year — all at my beckoning since I tasted and loved them in France. The first is a Clairette from the Mas Carlot estate. Made from 60-year-old vines, Clairette is an opulent grape; this wine is a very pretty patio sipper that has a striking aroma of orange zest. The palate is mix of tangerine and tropical flavors with a long pleasurable finish. We also brought in a Cab Franc from Corbillières, it's got a blueberry quality shadowed by a rustic charm. The third is a very unique wine from the Minervois region. The blend is mostly Carignan with Syrah and Grenache. It is wildly herbal on the nose with strong flavors of blackcurrant and a wafting essence of Turkish delight. It's highly recommended for those who love big reds but want to try something totally unique. Enjoy the wines as much as we do!

### JUNE CLUB PICKS

Southern Right Sauv Blanc 05

Werheim Weissburgunder 04

Menguante Tempranillo 05

Ch. des Tourettes Trilogue 04

Monchiero Carbone Regret 04

Summerer Gruner Veltliner 05

Dureuil Rully *Maizières* 05

Quinta do Alqueve Syrah 03



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- *Rosemary wrestles over organic or not organic*
- *We got ourselves a fancy new website!*
- *June Wine Club Picks*

Our favorite rosés come to dock strikes in France expected, but they came just

**THINK PINK!**

from importer Robert Kacher. Do they arrived a little later than we in time to cut the summer heat.

There are nine different ones each with their own style — try all of them this summer! Around \$10-12 they're a total steal! **Chateau Guiot:** raspberry with a long sweet finish, always perfect! **Domaine de Saint-Antoine:** pure fruit concentrate, very forward **Grande Cassagne:** fruity and round, a plush rosé **Fayel:** a twinge of sweetness is balanced by a dusty, herbal quality **Petite Cassagne:** a more serious rosé; the Cinsault makes it elegant the Syrah gives it a fruit push **L'Instant Fondreche:** Lean and elegant with light, tart strawberry **Mas des Bressades:** delicate freshness creamy berry fruit, a staff favorite **Mas Carlot:** a little more nerve & acidity on this one, perfect for food **Corbillières:** the only rosé not from Nimes, this is Pinot Noir from Touraine, and is a very pretty, pale strawberry delight!

## Is Organic Better? Rosemary Chases Her Philosophical Tail

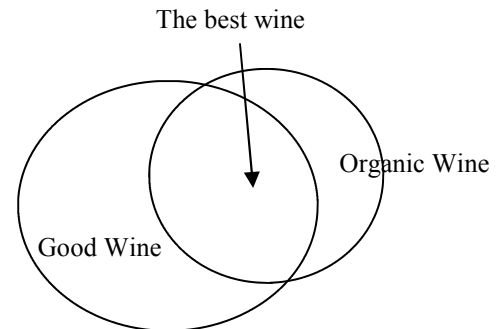
—Rosemary S. Gray

I've been puzzling all month over how to tackle the issue of organic viticulture and viniculture methods. I started out wanting to write an article that adumbrated the reasons why wine connoisseurs should prefer organic. However, sitting down to write it turned out to be a reality-stick to the head (when will my writing efforts stop being so damn humbling?). It's not that research resulted in a different conclusion; it's that attempting to write forced me to admit I lack first-hand knowledge of what I'm writing about. I'm not in the vineyards or tank rooms, I haven't talked extensively with growers or vintners or importers or flying winemakers. Not being one to hold to an uninvestigated opinion, I must now confess I only have an embryonic argument. My hunch is that it's true organic (which may include various methods, but is reliant on universal principles) is preferable, but I realize I am at the very beginning of my inquiries to test that hypothesis and no where near a proof that will make me sure in my principles. The foggy beacons I have so far are winemaker and grower explanations, my own consumption experience and a common sense notion of 'health.'

First, during my trip to France with Robert Kacher Selections, I heard grower after grower talk about sustainable, organic and biodynamic methods, even if they didn't use our exact terminology or certificational definitions. Divit has had the same experience on his recent trips, most notably in the Loire, where he claims the vitality of the organic Bourgueil vineyards was outstanding when compared to their very sickly agrochemically-doctored neighbors. Christian said with certainty one day that Champagne was too harsh a region to accommodate organic methods and yet Pascal and Laure Doquet personally showed me beautiful pictures of their biodynamically-mothered vineyards with lush flowering cover crops (not to mention their great dance moves on the floor of the discothèque in Beaune). If so many talented and dedicated grower-producers are practicing the principles of organic... isn't that a smoking gun that this organic thing is not just bourgeoisie bohemian marketing fluff, but actually makes better wine?

Bringing me to my second lighthouse of evidence, my taste tells me this is better wine. Now, I haven't been collecting hard data on this. But my experience has been that when I am impressed or very impressed with a wine, in follow up research, I find that the grapes come from organically-managed vineyards and the winemaker is keeping the viniculture process as natural as possible. However, I will admit that I have tasted plenty of organic wines that have not impressed me, and (again no hard data) in those cases it has often been that they are wines made on a more industrial level, without estate fruit and without appreciation for terroir. Thus, my experience based on the sense of

my tastings is that not all organic wine is good, there is good non-organic wine, but the best wine is organic. Here it is in a philosophical diagram:



This also leads me into my third point, which is that because the principle of organic is healthy, when it is used in conjunction with methods that make good wine, it makes better wine simply because it is common sense to say that which is healthy is better.

Okay here it is in logic (not broken down into symbols, I will not torture you by regressing to sophomore college Intro to Logic, but P=premise and C=conclusion)

P1. health = life

P3. kill = no life

P4. suffix "cide" = killer

P5. insecticide, herbicide, pesticide = killers

P6. I want to live = not being killed

P7. not being killed = preferable

C: insecticide, herbicide, pesticide = not preferable

The simple "proof" opens a can of worms. Clearly it's unhealthy for insects, weeds, and pests to consume their respective "cides," but is it unhealthy for me? Is it unhealthy for the soil, water, and vines? If it is, then we can logically follow organic is preferable. And the big question is better wine *by definition* healthy? My inclination is to say that practices that aid in the health of soil, water, vines and generally sustain the vitality of living things is good. And because of that, these methods should, on principle, be used in the making of good wine, and good wine made from these methods is ultimately better.

This discussion does not even attempt to discuss the particulars of organic methods, for instance some countries okay sulfur as a naturally occurring substance and others don't allow it. Or whether or not certified organic makes any difference at all. Those questions are one I hope to investigate the more time I spend closer to the source — in vineyards and tank rooms.

Also this article doesn't begin to attempt to show the correlation between organic and terroir, or terroir and

**Organic continued on page 4...**

## Wine Club Selections

### Cru Classe Club

*\*This month Christian picks Cru Classe*

#### 2003 Quinta do Alqueve Touriga Nacional Syrah

Touriga Nacional is not the battle cry for the feisty and menacing Tourigans. Although “Viva la Touriga Nacional” was what skirted Mel Gibson meant to say as his rallying call. It is actually one of the most highly regarded and unique grapes planted in Portugal. Notably a key ingredient in Port, it has recently found wide spread acclaim in the still wines of Portugal on its own and blended. This particular blend brings together the French Rhone Valley grape, Syrah, with its smooth tannins and ripe rich berry flavors and pairs it with the Touriga Nacional whose meaty structure and deep blue hue create a unique and powerful wine tasting experience. Pair it with BBQ meats or strong salty cheeses to enjoy this wine to its fullest.

#### 2005 Vincent Dureuil Rully “Maizières” Blanc

*“Young Vincent Dureuil must rate as one of Burgundy’s great overachievers, demonstrating the quality that is possible in the Côte Chalonnaise...”*—The Wine Advocate

This is what Chardonnay should taste like. And for that matter what it should cost. As the rest of Burgundy prices itself well out of my budget, the Côte Chalonnaise is promising great things as this young wine-maker can prove. The 2005



*Dureuil in the barrel room*

is admittedly one of the finest white burgundy vintages to date, but it is a rarity to find this kind of quality in such an unproven location. Its obvious peach and pear flavors mingle nicely around a rich core giving some body to the wine. The acidity is bright and charming offering great balance to an exceptional southern Burgundy Chardonnay.

### Passport Club

*\*This month Rosemary picks Passport Club*

#### 2004 Monchiero Carbone Regret Nebbiolo

The Regret is 100% Nebbiolo, the grape of the esteemed Barolo. The grapes are fermented using traditional Piemontese practice with maceration on the skins for at least 2 weeks. The wine is then drawn off into small oak barrels where it undergoes malolactic fermentation, followed by six months of barrel age.

The nose is flowery and fruit driven and its flavors are ample but well-balanced. This is how good young Nebbiolo can be.

#### 2005 Summerer Gruner Veltliner Steinhaus

I hope you all aren’t sick of Gruner Veltliner, one of our chosen wines didn’t arrive, so this is an unplanned selection. I brought in a case to the shop just because I found it so pleasing and classy. On the surface this is a high quality Kamptal GV -- clean and clear with a strong presence of mineral with snap pea freshness. It’s style is sleek and refined but has just the perfect twinge of amusing raciness as if it is getting away with something in spite of (because of?) it’s ever so classy character. Don’t serve it refrigerator temperature, as the excess cold will mute the beautiful aromatics of this wine, just a slight chill will do.

As it ages the briefest sense of the white pepper of it’s youth will likely become more pronounced making this wine all the more enticing for wine collectors.

### R & R Club

#### 2005 Southern Right Sauvignon Blanc

A joint collaboration between Anthony Hamilton-Russell of Hamilton Russell Vineyards and winemaker Kevin Grant, Southern Right Cellars specializes in Sauvignon Blanc and Pinotage production. Located near Hermanus, at the tip of Southern Africa flanked by Walker Bay, the vineyard site was chosen for its local soil rich in clay and shale. The resulting grapes produce highly expressive and bold wines. The 2005 Southern Right Sauvignon Blanc is a fantastic representation of South African wine in its earthy, grassy, bold personality. A bright nose of lemon cream and rose petal is furthered by a complex body characterized by rose, wet straw, lemon grass, and gooseberry. Backed by fairly high acidity and spice, this wine is an enjoyable and drinkable conversation piece that one can also feel good about, as a portion of the proceeds for each bottle sold go toward conserving the rare Southern Right whales inhabiting Walker Bay. An admirable combination of viticultural art and philanthropy!

*\*Southern Right picked by Robin*

**R & R continued on page 4 ...**

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### ...Organic continued from page 4

better wines, or organic and authentic, or authentic and better, or authentic and terroir. Or throw in the verbal bombs 'natural' and 'artisanal' and the questions multiply exponentially.

And I guess that's the point of all this, why I've been puzzling over this all month. These are the Manichaeian debates in the wine industry: organic v. agrochemical; natural v. industrial; artisan v. brand; terroir v. recipes. I find myself preferring one side over the other, but when I try to investigate if those preferences are in fact qualities of *better* wine the questions become more numerous than the answers and criterion for better wine becomes elusive.

Humorous philosophical diagrams and proofs aside, should I just say bottoms up and enjoy good wine regardless? Maybe this makes me bad company, but honestly, I can't shake the question of what makes better wine better. And if it's only sometimes organic, than what are the other factors? And if I can't nail down one of the most tangible factors — organic, how can I nail down the intangible ones, like terroir? So what makes better wine better? Maybe that is what keeps me returning to the glass. If I taste enough of them I might just find out.

## The Boise Co-op Wine Shop... on the web!

- Coming June, 2007

This month we'll be coming out and making a web-presence for ourselves. Your favorite Northwest wine shop is now also located in .com-land complete with on-line inventory, a calendar of events, photo gallery, and our own Blog — which promises to be an ever-entertaining dialogue of current releases, Divit ramblings, Bruce selections, Christian diatribes, and Rosemary raving about the brilliance of Austrian wines! We even promise to throw in some interesting and helpful wine education!

At the moment, **the site is under construction**, but check back mid-June for the official launch and plan to stop by often... just like you do the wine shop!

Also debuting is our new **e-newsletter**. There are three ways to sign up: Stop by the wine department, send an email to newsletter@boisecoopwineshop.com or visit our web-site in mid-June to register.

[www.boisecoopwineshop.com](http://www.boisecoopwineshop.com)

### *...Wine Club Selections continued*

#### **04 Werhreim Weissburgunder**

This wine is a great pleasure. The label is not very sexy, but what's in the bottle is absolutely splendid. There is a floral character reminiscent of dry Riesling. The mouthfeel is creamy and the flavor profile, especially on the finish, is something like salt water taffy and a lemon drop in dry white wine form. This wine is grown up candy. I'll be stashing quite a few bottles for my summer drinking.

I had a tough time finding facts or press on this producer. I was told Dr. Werhreim is the Pinot Blanc specialist, which is rare. But it's clear from the wine that he knows how to get something head turning out of a grape that rarely turns heads.

*\*Werhreim picked by Rosemary*

#### **2005 Vinedos Y Bodegas Pablo Menguante Tempranillo**

The Vinedos y Bodegas Pablo estate is cutting edge in its use of biodynamic farming practices and promotion of native varieties. Founded in 1760, the Spanish vineyards are maintained by the Pablo family in Aragon's Carinena, the Denominacion de Origen and one of Spain's earliest demarcated regions. The grape variety was named in its honor, with variation "Carignan" in France. The extreme care

given to the vineyards comes through in the wines produced. The 2005 Menguante Tempranillo is a classic representation of the varietal, characterized by its earthiness and ripe berry backed by raw vanilla. With a nose of creamy vanilla, cherry and almond, this wine reveals a bright body modulating between sweet and tart berry combined with vanilla and floral notes, backed by medium tannin. A fantastic everyday food wine.

*\*Menguante picked by Robin*

#### **2004 Chateau des Tourettes 2004 "Trilogie" Cotes du Luberon Rhône**

Sourced from vineyards in the small town of Apt in France's Southern Rhone appellation, Chateau des Tourettes 2004 Trilogie maintains the classic Rhone style while surprising the palate with an uncommon vibrancy and clarity. Jean-Marie Guffens, one of the most well known and well regarded Macon Chardonnay producers, has now placed his stamp on Southern Rhone wine. With estate fruit sourced from high-altitude Luberon vineyards, Chateau des Tourettes is differentiated by its bold, earthy nose and its body of pure raspberry and strawberry extract, chocolate, and hints of licorice. Backed by light to medium tannin, this wine is truly outstanding in its clarity and focus. A rare find for a bargain price.

*\*Tourettes picked by Robin*