

Boise Co-op Uncorked!

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BOISE, ID 83702

Wine to Pair With Food and Thanksgiving

—*Rosemary Gray*

When summer rolled around I was joyous about the coming days of patio evenings of laughter with endless glasses of rose, Riesling, and Vouvray. I was relieved to wear tank-tops and t-shirts first thing out the door — no more layering on the way out and delayering once in. I thought I'd never want to see the colder seasons again.

But autumn came and I was once again pleasantly surprised by the joy of the transitional seasonal months. I love the in-between months when our atmosphere changes from one thing to something absolutely opposite. Last year I was in southern California during fall, and so the turning this year was a particularly blissful reunion to my normal seasonal cycle.

This last weekend the time changed and the temperature dropped (they said it will get to 20 tonight!), so now we face the close of fall and preparation for the long months of winter beginning with the bluster of the holiday season.

Most of the people I know, including myself, are ambivalent about Christmas. It taps into a habitual, childish glee, while also rearing the adult fears of overspending, taking time off, and a strange anticlimactic let down after it's all over.

But before all that is Thanksgiving, which is my favorite holiday. It is the only event my mother's side of the family habitually unites for (we do our own nuclear-family things for Christmas). For us, it is day just about good food (everyone has their specialty dish), good booze and good family conversation (okay maybe it veers into debate by the end of the night). We generally start together at 10 am with mimosas, and throughout the day we enjoy our tradition of hot ciders, beers, wines, and by the end, my stepfather's special hot buttered rum.

Family drink traditions aside, there are a couple of qualities that make for a good



Thanksgiving wine. First, the wine has to go with a lot of different types of food. Both reds and whites have to go with any snack or appetizer from fruit to meats & cheese to salty crackers and pigs-in-a-blanket. Dinner wines have to be compatible with veggies, squash, turkey, potatoes. For the Thanksgiving meal the focus is on the food, and the special effort our family members have put into cooking. The wines are there to complement food, and to pleurably and gluttonously wash down that brilliant home-cooked meal.

Second, the wine should be something everyone can enjoy. It should be accessible for those who don't drink wine often and those who like good wine and food. It can't be unapproachable, esoteric or domineering, but it also can't be noxious, consumable slug that clashes with the food and gives everyone a hangover the next day.

This month's wine club selections were chosen with Thanksgiving in mind. Beaujolais is inexpensive, delicious and the #1 food match for the table. Muscadet and Gewurztraminer are whites that are enjoyable as starter wines, but are also food-friendly for the table. The biggest reds (Januik and Green & Red) still have enough finesse for dinner, but will pair brilliantly with after dinner conversation. And it's always fun to have a sweet desert wine to finish the special occasion. Happy Thanksgiving!

WINE CLUB PICKS

Marc Portaz les Apremont Sovaie 2005
Domaine de la Fessardiere Muscat 2004
Joseph Drouhin Brouilly 2005
Januik Red Wine 2004
2004 Andrew Mann Gewurztraminer
Michel Rey Julineas Tre Vielille Vigne 2005
Regis Cruchet Moelleux Vouvray 1990
Green & Red Chiles Mill Zinfandel 2004



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- *Send a request to wineclub@boisecoop.com*

Domaine de la Fessardière Muscadet

Made near Nantes on the western end of the Loire, Muscadet is the most produced white wine of the Loire Valley. It is made from the grape known as Melon de Bourgogne, also simply referred to as melon. As its name suggests, the grape originated in Burgundy and was grown there until its destruction was ordered in the early 18th century. As white French wine goes, Muscadet is generally underrated, which means good ones are deliciously inexpensive.

This wine is pale yellow with a luminous aroma of fresh grape, accompanied by a discrete flavor of flint, and a slight vanilla tinge from ageing in oak barrels.

This wine can be kept for up to 3 years (even up to 10 years for fanatics), and the winery recommends uncorking an hour before serving. My experience confirms this. I believe it is because this organic, no-sulfur estate, may use CO2 to preserve the wine which can need some time to blow off. **Rosemary*

Marc Portaz Les Apremont Savie 2005

Wines from the craggy, mountainous region of Savoie along France's border with Switzerland are mostly white, made from the native Jacquère grape. Guarded by imposing mountains, it's easy to see why Savoie has so many secrets. While there is so little wine produced in Savoie (only 2% of the region's agricultural land is planted to vines) what is made seems to stay close to home.

Domaine Marc Portaz balances both tradition and modern technology to produce wines from native varietals that could only be crafted in such a pure climate and rocky terroir. Rigorous selection in the vineyards and a respect for the "voice" of each plot results in "tête de cuvée" wines that are aromatic, pure and always refreshing.

The "Apremont" (meaning rough mountain) smells of lime and honeysuckle. A subtle complex mouth of lime and minerality lingers on the palate for quite some time. It is not that his wine is outlandishly complex, but it is refreshing, interesting and simply tasty. **Rosemary*

Januik 2004 Red Wine

Mike Januik is one of the most famous wine producers in the Columbia Valley. Having achieved his fame as the past head winemaker for Chateau Ste. Michelle, Januik strives to reveal Washington as one of the world's top wine producing regions. His success extends beyond Chateau Ste. Michelle to his current personal venture, Januik winery.



These very limited production wines are a great representation of what the Northwest has to offer. The 2004 red wine showcases a Bordeaux style blend of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot that is extremely well rounded and vibrant. A nose of vanilla and oak opens to a body of bright red fruit backed by creamy vanilla and strawberry with subtle tannin and a beautiful lingering finish. This is a joyous wine with lots of personality and would be a perfect accompaniment to a holiday dinner, particularly pairing well with roasted nuts and white meats. **Robin*



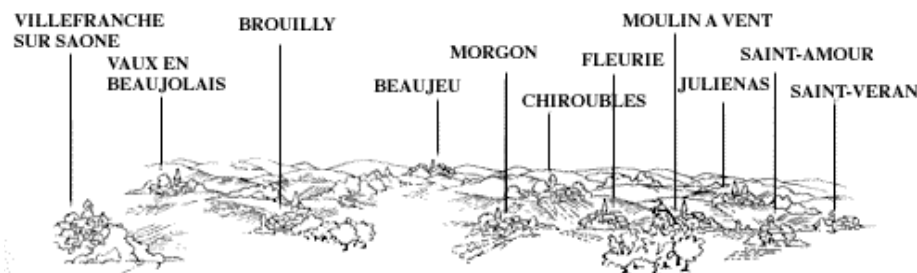
The holidays are a time for cheerful toasts and great bubbly. As a wine club member we invite you to enjoy your sparklers in the fine Schott Zwiesel stemware. Made of crystal infused with titanium they are the strongest flutes on the market, and beautifully shaped with an effervescence point to perfectly preserve the carbonation. Cheers!
Stop by the Wine Department and get a set of 6 flutes for 10% off the retail price.

Drouhin Brouilly 2005

Beaujolais is the perfect thanksgiving wine. It goes with all sorts of food and pleases everyone at the table from novice wine drinkers to connoisseurs.

Brouilly is one of the most famous Crus of Beaujolais and the most Southern one. Mont Brouilly, the hill where the vines grow, is shaped like the cone of a volcano, with a small church on the top. The slopes are steep and criss-crossed by small, narrow roads. The soil is made of pink and black granite: an excellent terroir for the Gamay grape.

The Drouhin Brouilly is outrageously fruity and incredibly persistent, the very alive '05 breaks out of the glass like a bunch of wild grapes needing a release. The bouquet reveals aromas of violet, and lilac. The tannins are soft and the flavors are long lasting on the palate. I found it to benefit from decanting. Serve slightly chilled. **Rosemary*



Cru Beaujolais Vineyards

Michel Rey Juliéas Tre Vieilles Vignes

People are raving about the 2005 Beaujolais. It's not just that these wines are good now with abundant aromatics, sweet flesh and freshness that speaks of the region's terroir; it's also that they have the acidity to promise more ageability than past vintages, especially the much lauded 2003.

We had a bunch of the 2003 Rey Julienas in the Wine Department late last winter, and it proved to be wildly popular amongst staff and customers. Now we are on to 2005 which has a gorgeous nose of lavender and juicy cherries and a delicious mouth of black and red fruits with elegant Burgundian flesh. I enjoyed a glass of it, then dumped it into a decanter for an overnight sit, and found it more approachable and delicious the next day. The finish goes on for ever; overall this wine is rich with bright minerals and sultry spice and perfect for the Thanksgiving feast.

Beaujolais from the Juliéas vineyard generally combines the meaty structure you find in Moulin-à-Vent, but with the delicious complexity of a Morgon and the flowery fruit of a Fleurie. Rey's vines are said to be at least 90 years old, and many are older, which makes for great, mineral-driven fruit. Oh, Beaujolais! Always a pleasant, fruity treat. **Rosemary*

Albert Mann Gewürztraminer 2004

Alsace is a prolific wine producing region on the eastern border of France known for its elegant, exotic white wine. Over 90 percent of all Alsatian production is white wine, highly regarded in France and growing in popularity worldwide.



It is hard not to fall in love with the Alsatian wines. Maintaining a transparency and exoticness unique to the region, these wines are truly transporting in their ever-changing flavor and structure. Albert Mann's 2004 Gewürztraminer is one of the finest representations of Alsatian white wine. The winery owned by the two Barthelme brothers, procured through marriage, offers some of the most renowned white wine in the world. This 2004 gewürztraminer is no exception. With a nose of vibrant pear and mandarin orange, the wine reveals a lush palate of pear, pineapple, vanilla and lemon that is complex in flavor but pristine and light in body. A truly opulent wine to enjoy now. **Robin*



Green & Red Chiles Mill Zinfandel 04

It isn't just that I found a Zinfandel I can tolerate, I've found one I *really* like. I had only tasted Green & Red Zin once a year ago, and was then pleased that it wasn't over-the-top jammy. The other day, when checking for corkage, I tasted this wine again and in just a small sip was overwhelmed by its delicious dark berry flavor and chocolate elegance. I had to have a bottle, and I had to share it with the wine club. The texture has a pleasant subtle grittiness that demands the attention of your palate while still maintaining a rich and silky sensation. I know that's a contradiction, but this wine pulls off both textures and has a lengthy finish to boot.



Green & Red Vineyards

The Green & Red Winery was founded in 1977, and named for its red iron soils veined with green serpentine. The Chiles Mill Vineyard is located at elevations from 1000 to 1700 feet on the steep eastern hills of Napa Valley overlooking Chiles Canyon and the remnant wall of the gristmill built by pioneer J.B. Chiles. **Rosemary*

Regis Cruchet Moelleux Vouvray 1990

If you ask any wine lover in the Loire which varietal is the best—Chenin Blanc or Sauvignon Blanc—they undoubtedly will pick Chenin. It's always the clear winner, for both its complexity of flavors and longevity. While sweet cuveés, like this one, can age up to 100 years, Vouvray Sec (dry) can also age astonishingly well.



Régis Cruchet is a brutal master of Chenin Blanc, with more than 30% of the harvest not making the cut each vintage. He hand harvests his clay-limestone vineyards that boast older vines, most of which are 40 years old.

This is a sweet, wine with a good dose of the richness of botrytis. Divit recently tasted it and comments, "MMMMMMM 1990 Regis Cruchet Moelleux, for \$39 has to be the best dessert wine buy in the store. With 16 years of bottle age this is still a youthful wine with sweet honey and melon flavors and a hint of apricot to boot. Lush in the mouth, sweet without being cloying and long on the finish. It would not surprise me if this wine still drank well for another 20 years!" I myself have a bottle stashed away for the future. **Rosemary*



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Dave's Raves! Winter Brews!

—Dave Kirkpatrick

It may still be autumn, but that hasn't stopped most breweries from releasing their winter offerings. I have to confess, I'm not usually a fan of the typical winter beer style. They seem to lean toward an anti-freeze approach—big rich malt-driven brews, thick as molasses or overloaded with spice as if designed to insulate against the cold. A few sips and I'm sated. But the current crop is across-the-board the best I have ever tasted. More reserved in their approach but with enough stuffing to work with the winter weather.

This year's **Snow Cap** from Portland's **Pyramid Breweries** continues last season's trend with its spicy malt aromas and lightly sweet but nicely balanced flavors. There's a pleasant hit of espresso and toasted malt up front that gives way to a smooth finish with touches of caramel. **Deschutes Brewery** in Bend, Oregon offers up their **Jubelale**, a chestnut colored brew with a persistent creme colored froth. Nice mocha aromas are matched by bitter almond with toasted malt flavors playing against the hop bite. A spot of creamy citrus at the center adds interest along with a subtle bit of earth on the rich finish.

Wee Heavy is an apt description for Seattle based **Hale's Ales** winter offering, an almost opaque ebony hued brew with dark toasted malt aromas. The flavors are rich with big, but not overly sweet malt, and a nice kick of hops on the finish to even things out. With its layers of nutty caramel, fresh bread dough and light citrus, this is one of my favorites.

Folks who live in Missoula, Montana know something about cold weather and **Big Sky Brewing** has hit the mark this year with their **Powderhound Winter Ale**. Bright copper in color with malty hazelnut and wheat aromas this ale is rich and round with dark toasty malt and roasted grain flavors. It has a nice hop bite and an off dry finish that's very clean with a touch of citrus. The folks in our fiftieth state also know a little about the cold, but with its spruce infusion the **Alaskan Winter Ale** is usually not one of my favorites. This year is different. It opens with enticing aromas of fresh cut



pine boughs and fresh baked bread. Light caramel and mocha flavors are backed by very soft hops, spicy cherries and orange fruit and just a reserved touch of spruce. A real winner and the best Alaskan Winter Ale ever.

Dark walnut in color with sweet apple and candied nut aromas, the **Ebenezer** from **Bridgeport Brewing** is more reserved on the palate. It's a soft and subtle brew with lightly sweet malt, hints of banana and just the barest kiss of hops on the ethereal finish. Equally reserved, **Full Sail's Wassail** is a ruby hued effort with sweet malt aromas. It offers an interesting if understated array of flavors including coffee, lightly sour mash, soft malt and very light hops. All the components are there, but they don't quite come together to my taste.

New Belgium Brewing in Fort Collins, Colorado is best known for their Fat Tire and their bigger, richer Belgian style ales. With its golden hue and soft wheat and spice aromas, their winter entry, **2 Below** strikes a happy medium between the two. Very clean with soft cherry flavors and creamy malt this one is an easy but interesting quaff. Light dry hops round things out on the finish. And last but far from least—**Celebration Ale** from Chico, California's **Sierra Nevada**. I recently opened a bottle of their 1999 version and it was drinking beautifully. Not sure this one will last that long. It's a bit lighter in color and even more of a hop driven brew (like a cold weather IPA). Creamy citrus up front with smooth malt in the background and a silky finish make this is my perennial favorite winter brew.