

# Boise Co-op Uncorked!

888 W FORT ST.

BOISE, ID 83702

## On Location in the Loire: Christian Corresponds

— *Christian Robertson*

Vouvray, the famous region of France, first cultivated to vineyards by the Romans, exemplifies the ever-changing ebb and flow of fashion in the wine world. Highly sought after one generation then passed off as cheap plonk the next. Vouvray is the story of ancient history, death and rebirth (the Romans, the occupation, and the *sec tendre* movement).

For me, Vouvray is a memory of big town yard sale where my friend Conchita and I unloaded all of our crap from our apartment in Paris. We rolled in to town early on a Sunday morning, set up our wares in the space next to the antique furniture dealer, and made a killing. Those country bumpkins didn't know what hit 'em. Priced to sell we wheeled and dealed; bargained and bartered. Seems as though those "not from the city" have a little bit to learn in the art of yard selling. With a total of four yard sales under my belt, and Conchita's expertise in display, we sold everything from the cat couch to old Johnny Halliday records to Grandma's beach chair. Our neighbors across the way just stared in awe at our success. Vouvray, we thought, would never be the same.

The French have a reputation of being cold and snobby. I subscribed to this opinion last winter after living in Paris for five months and coping with bad service, bad drivers and generally bad attitudes directed specifically at me for being a foreigner. Smartly, I hope, I giving France another chance. I have arrived in Loire country amongst true French citizens. I say true because I think country folk are a bit more representative of a country's culture. Are New Yorkers a good representation of American culture? Probably not. Put a person in an environment with healthy air, a few goats and more trees than humans and most folks tend to loosen up a bit.

So here I am, in Amboise, France, very much "la campagne". Right in the heart of



*Amboise Chateaux*

the "Valley of Kings". As a younger I read stories of knights, castles and kings, and conjuring up images of a chateaux that only the wealthiest of only Counts could afford — well this is the real thing. It's that with rolling hills abruptly punctuated with dense forests, and meandering rivers with stone arch bridges. Fortresses and drawbridges, luxurious gardens, fountains, cathedrals with spires, ancient stone walls along carriage paths are all here. Somehow I found my self a gig working in the middle of it with a bunch of folks that don't speak my language and sure as hell have never heard of where I come from.

Here in the countryside it's definitely fall, the leaves of the forest are just about to catch fire with color and there is sharpness to the air. The heron I pass every morning on my commute to work looks a little less enthusiastic about diving in after a fish as the water gets colder.

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### WINE CLUB PICKS

Söllner Danubio Gruner Veltliner 2005
Bernard Fouquet Sparkling Vouvray Brut
Alois Lageder Alto Adige Lagrein 2003
La Posta del Vinatero Bonada 2003
Bremerton Tamblyn Red Blend 2003
Devi-Pax Renski Rizling 'E' 2005
Chanson Pernand-Verglesses Les Caradeux 1er Cru 2004
Andrew Will Cuvee Lucia Sangiovese 2004



### INSIDE . . .

- Ask A Wine Guy talks about that sulfite thing
- Fall favorites: (cheap) Nimes and Rhone wines
- Reviews of October's Wine Club selections
- Divit Recipe for tasty modern Seafood Paella
- Want to be on the email list for the Boise Co-op Uncorked!? Send a request to wineclub@boisecoop.com

## Southern France's Fall Treasures

—*Divit Cardoza*

When October rolls around I look forward to shifting my wine gears from the light whites and rosés of summer to light-medium bodied reds like Beaujolais, Pinot Noir and the Rhone wines made from Grenache and Syrah.

One of the best buy regions is the Costieres de Nîmes. This region in the south of France is often called the western Rhone because of its geographic location and use of the same grape varieties as the Rhone, mainly Grenache and Syrah. We have a good selection of these wines, most of which sell for less than \$10.

**2005 CHATEAU GRANDE CASSAGNE G. S. \$9.99**

A blend of 65% Grenache / 35% Syrah with aromas of black raspberry and white pepper. Vibrant berry flavors, full fruit in the mouth, with dusty tannins in the finish. This wine should improve with 1-3 years in the bottle.

**2005 CHATEAU VALCOMBE TRADITION \$9.99**

This 300-year-old estate makes wines of great depth and quality for the price. This blend of 60% Syrah and 40% Grenache shows a perfumed nose full of raspberry fruit, lilacs and hints of loganberry. Full flavored and bold now, this will benefit from 6-12 months in the cellar and will compliment rich pasta dishes well.

**2004 CHATEAU GUIOT \$9.99**

The petite Silvia Cornut is a soft spoken woman but her wines are certainly not shy. The big Syrah nose of berry and spice opens up to smoky blueberries in the mouth. Charming, rich and ready to drink now. A blend of 60% Syrah and 40% Grenache.

**2004 CHATEAU MONTROCHE \$9.99**

This wine is a 50/50 blend of Grenache and Syrah and boasts a round berry nose with a hint of game. This is beginning to soften nicely and drinks well with food.

**2003 CHATEAU PETITE CASSAGNE \$10.99**

Predominately Syrah and Grenache with a touch of Mourvedre, this wine is pleasingly dry with incredible aromas of violets, blueberries and a chocolate richness. We've had this wine since the spring, but now it's beginning to open up, and is in a class beyond it's price.

**SPECIAL PURCHASE**

**2004 CLOS DU CAILLOU COTES DU RHONE V. V. reg. \$17.99 now \$15.99**

Situated between Chateau Beaucastel and Chateau Rayas in Chateauneuf du Pape, this is one of the best vineyard sites for Cotes du Rhone we have ever seen. This wine shows an elegant nose of dusty raspberry, with ripe berry and real depth in the mouth. This wine drinks well now but will age for 3-5 years beautifully.

**FRIDAY TASTINGS**

Join us Fridays from 4:30 till 6:30 for a free tasting in the Wine Department. We will feature Pinot Noir during the month of October!

## Wine Question? Ask a Wine Guy!

**I often get headaches from red wine. A friend told me it is because of sulfites, should I try sulfite free wine?**

—*Erin Lee*

Sulfites or sulfur dioxide is a preservative often used in wines and other foods, particularly dried fruits. Sulfur dioxide is also produced by the human body at the level of about 1000 milligrams per day, and naturally occurs in wine as a product of the fermentation process.

The reason why US law requires that wine must have "contains sulfites" on the label is because some people are deficient in the natural enzyme that breaks down sulfites. These people have reactions to sulfites that are allergic or asthmatic in nature, and can sometimes be life threatening depending on the severity of the case. If wine has more than 10mg/liter of sulfites it must carry the information "contains sulfites" on the label regardless of where the wine is made. It is a common misconception that wines made in Italy or France do not contain sulfites; they do, it is just that the bottle you bought in Venice isn't required to state it on the label.

Medical literature has virtually no reports on sulfites inducing headache. Generally, you can test your reaction to sulfites by eating some orange-colored dried apricots. They have more sulfites than wine, and reveal if you have a true affliction from sulfites. Also, white wines tend to have more sulfites than red; and yet more headache concerns are directed at red wine consumption, indicating sulfites are not likely the culprit.

It does seem that for some people wine does induce headaches and migraines, but there is not much consensus on the reason why. Recently the Sacramento Bee published an article claiming that headaches were caused by a chemical, amines, which results from the secondary fermentation process when malic acid is converted to lactic acid in the wine. Apparently University of British Columbia Professor Hennie van Vuuren has created a genetically modified yeast that condenses the fermentation process and prevents amines from occurring, but this yeast has only begun to be available to winemakers, and not much evidence for its effectiveness is available.

Generally, I find that good common sense rules apply to prevention of headaches: drink quality wines (not necessarily expensive, but well made, without additives—unfortunately not said on the label.), drink with food, and always drink plenty of water when consuming alcohol.

Article Sources: Andrew Waterhouse, UC Davis  
<http://waterhouse.ucdavis.edu/winecomp/so2.htm>  
 Sacramento Bee [www.sacbee.com](http://www.sacbee.com)

**Wanna Ask a Wine Guy? Forward your question to [wineclub@boisecoop.com](mailto:wineclub@boisecoop.com)**

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Clouds hang amongst the tree tops until about noon when the sun finally wins the duel and the warmth breaks through. The chill in the morning air, I'm sure, is mostly due to a humidity I'm not used to. If I didn't know better, I'd swear I was close to the beach, but the map says it's at least 100 miles. When the sun does come out, the light is brilliant, and as I come to the top of another rise overlooking one of the many rivers, I can see for miles. Green vineyards, yellow wheat fields, gray stone farmhouses, and the bare white calcareous soil.

It is the soil that now makes the Loire valley famous. In this region of France the soils are so full of limestone, tufa, chalk and what the French call "silex," that it produces some of the most unique and unrivalled wines in the world. This is the same soil that for centuries has been dug out of cliff sides to create thousands of kilometers of caves. Amongst the caves are stories of hidden passages that saved paintings, treasures and lives during the occupation in WWII. Those same passages now perfectly age sparkling and still wines, ensure a constant



*Vineyards with a view of the Loire River*

land and a lot in South Africa), but no other country can claim to produce wines from Chenin Blanc of the caliber found in the Loire. These wines can age for 50+ years, and they come in styles from bone dry to excruciatingly sweet, textures from still, to semi-sparkling to sparkling; and more than any grape, except possibly Riesling, express terroir to even the most amateur of tasters.

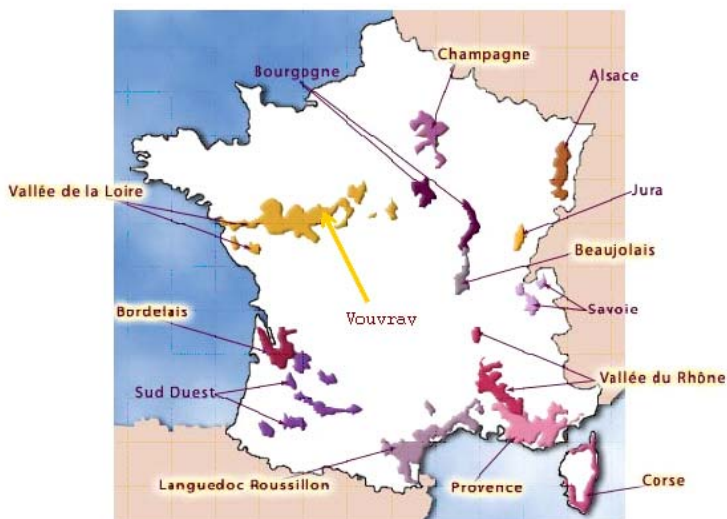
As well as Chenin Blanc, the Loire is known for its Sauvignon Blanc. Loire Sauvignon Blancs, particularly from Pouilly Fumé and Sancerre are the benchmark for all others. Try a Sancerre next to your favorite New Zealand and you will be hooked. Crisp and minerally, yet also rich and complex, Sauvignon Blancs from the Loire are like no other.

The reds are probably the most overlooked wines of the Loire. They are not taken for granted in France though. In every bistro and brasserie in Paris you can find a wonderful Chinon (Cabernet Franc), that is versatile with all kinds of food. Others such as Saumur Champigny (normally a blend of Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon), Bourgueil (Cabernet Franc), Cheverny Rouge (Gamay, Pinot Noir and Malbec) are wonderful wines that go almost entirely unnoticed on the shelves of American wine shops; yet, tasting them with the culinary delights of France one has to wonder why. These wines are elegant,

meticulously balanced (I really like the intriguing qualities of Cheverny with its bright raspberry from the Gamay, graceful body from the Pinot Noir, and amped tannic quality with the Cab Franc) and unlike any wines I've tasted.

Here I am, and here I will be for the next four months working for a winery that strategically owns or manages properties in all the important, and even some of the more obscure, wine regions of the Loire. I have been given a little truck in which to explore, an apartment in which to sleep, and a bit of money every month to feed my addiction to French pastries and cheese, not to mention purchase a few wines here and there. Keep grabbing the Boise Coop's Uncorked! Newsletter, for the updates on how harvest is progressing and how the wines are tasting.

À bientôt, Christian



environment for mushroom production, and still to this day make for excellent dwellings or "troglodyte" houses. Some of the houses are unreal; simple little stone entrances with a few windows and perhaps a terrace outside, but inside huge cathedral size rooms complete with vaulted ceilings and skylights. These places are normal listings at the real estate offices and upon living in one you could answer "Yes, I have been living in a cave for the past 10 years!"

So this unique soil is one of the reasons I came to the Loire. I wanted to see why this place and no where else on earth, can produce world class Chenin Blanc, as well as other completely underrated wines. Chenin Blanc is produced in other regions of the world (a tiny bit in Washington and Oregon, a bit in Australia and New Zea-



**CO-OP WINE CLUB  
MEMBER BENEFITS:**

- Two to four exceptional bottles the first of the month. With the option to choose from three different price tiers & themes
  - Tasting notes, recipes, and food pairing tips
  - Exclusive 10% discount on Wine Club selections for the featured month
  - Priority invitations to tastings and wine education events
  - Special offers on stemware, accessories, meals at the Flipside and other neat stuff
  - Blossoming of expertise, and a refined palate (well that's really up to you)
- email [wineclub@boisecoop.com](mailto:wineclub@boisecoop.com)  
and find out how to join!



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for information to:

[wineclub@boisecoop.com](mailto:wineclub@boisecoop.com)

**THE FLIPSIDE CAFE**

**Sunday  
Oct. 15th**

**Presents**

**Flavors of Fall  
Wine Dinner**

**Featuring the wines  
of Austria &  
local produce from Peaceful Belly Farms  
and other local growers.**

**Ticket \$60 per person**

**Limited seating so get your tickets @ the Flipside Cafe**

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## A Divit Recipe!

### Paella, Blue Jeans and Bullfighting

The town of Nîmes is famous for blue jeans (denim is short hand for “de nimes” where the fabric was invented) and for its Spanish-influenced cuisine. The center of town boasts an ancient bull fighting ring that is still used today. Although, unlike the Spanish, the French bullfight ends when the bullfighter removes a ribbon from the bull’s horn, and the bull walks away to fight another day.

Every time I have been in Nîmes, I’ve had the pleasure of feasting from a giant pan of Paella. Traditional Paella did not contain seafood, but rather chicken, rabbit, sausage and vegetables. This recipe is more like the modern version we are used to seeing now. You can use your creativity and add fresh peas, beans or other quick cooking veggies the last 5 minutes.

Cut and season 3-4 lbs Chicken. In a flat, large, deep (3-4 inches) skillet sauté chicken pieces in a mix of ¼ c. olive oil & ¼ cup butter until chicken is browned. Remove chicken pieces and add one diced onion, and 2-4 cloves of chopped garlic.

Add 4 cup chicken broth, 2 cups of rice and stir. Then add 1 tsp crushed saffron threads, salt and pepper. Cut up one chorizo and add. You can also add diced tomatoes and /or roasted red peppers. Let mixture simmer for 20 minutes.

When the rice is almost done add a dozen whole shrimp and 16-18 whole cleaned mussels in the shell. Add a little more stock if necessary, cover & cook for 10 more minutes or until shellfish is done.

Enjoy with dry rosé or red wines from Costieres de Nîmes!