

Boise Co-op Uncorked!

BOISE CO-OP WINE SHOP
NEWSLETTER

CORNER OF 8TH & FORT
BOISE, ID 83702

SEPTEMBER CLUB PICKS

Argiolas Costamolino 2006

St. Hallett Poacher's Blend 2006

Fattoria di Lucignano Chianti 2005

Bleasdale Cabernet Sauvignon 2003

Devevey Bourgogne Blanc 2006

Maréchal Bourgogne Rouge 2005

Javillier Bourgogne Blanc 2005

Sarrazin Givry Sous la Roche 2005

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Christian Muses on Malbec

I tried a really nice Malbec at the Idaho Wine Festival a week or so ago. It led me to write a prediction in my blog (www.boisecoopwineshop.com) recently that would have made Nostradamus blush, that Idaho is the next Argentina. I got a few replies to the contrary; Malbec will never achieve greatness in Idaho. Who knows, but it did open up some interesting dialogue.

Malbec- What It Is

A thin-skinned, red grape thought to have come from France, it was planted widely across Europe and was known globally by over 200 synonyms. Introduced to Argentina in 1868 by Michel Pouget, a French agricultural engineer, it once blanketed the hills and fields of Mendoza with over 50,000 hectares at its peak. A government "pull out" of vines reduced the area planted to under 10,000 by the year 1980. What survived are the old vines that make the rich opulent age worthy reds the Americas consume in such copious quantities.

Argentina seems to be the only place in the world that has nailed the style and complexity of pure Malbec. France in contrast, in its most regulated Malbec growing region of Cohors, allows for a minimum of 70% Malbec in the final cuvee. Produced in the Loire Valley for centuries it is a racier, medium-bodied blending agent as well for Pinot Noir and Cabernet Franc. It is only in the Swartland of South Africa where it has shown any Argentine character. The fullness and richness of Malbec is attained in Swartland by head pruning old, low yielding vines. These vines are cultivated much like our ancient bush-vine Zinfandel in California and yield less than six tons per hectare (2.5 acres).

But lets get back to the uniqueness of Argentina's style. Argentine Malbec shows rich, lush, dark fruit with lots of obvious

plum, boysenberry and blackberry. The richness, attained by hot temperatures raising sugar levels in the grape, can stand some new oak to add an element of structure. The suppleness of a smooth, fleshed-out almost Merlot-like quality comes to mind. But

age worthiness is probably the defining element that makes the Argentine style so different from anywhere else. This is a result of a

physiologically ripe grape that the unique climate of Mendoza and the surrounding valleys can produce.

Argentina's Mendoza and Uco Valleys lie directly under the east side of the highest point in the Americas, Mt. Aconcagua (22,841 ft). The foothills of these mountains are where the vineyards lie, with altitudes reaching over 4,000 feet, giving it the bragging rights for some of the world's highest vineyards. Malbec needs hotter temperatures and more sun than Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot, enabling it to thrive in the desert on the eastern slopes of the Andes. Malbec of Argentina really gets its biggest advantage from the diurnal temperature variation of this region. The temperature usually ranges from day to night a minimum of 27 degrees in the summer, allowing conditions for this early ripening varietal to retain ripe acidity levels as well as ample sugar levels. So all of the above factors seem to be pointing towards an obvious fit for greatness in a place like

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Robin Tastes Australia

Earlier this month, I had the good fortune of attending the Southern Starz Australian New Release Tasting in Las Vegas, Nevada. This exclusive event hosts 23 Australian winemakers, showcasing their most current vintage releases. The tasting is unique in that it is the first opportunity to sample these wines in the U.S. It began in Washington D.C., where highly regarded wine critics such as Steven Tanzer and Robert Parker had an opportunity to sample and critique the wines. The Las Vegas branch of the tasting was identical in format, simply offered for the convenience of those industry professionals residing on the west coast. Most winemakers showcased 5-6 wines, with many offering barrel samples. Here are some of the stand-out Australian wines to be on the lookout for:

2006 Oliverhill, McLaren Vale

The 2005 Jimmy Section Shiraz was highly coveted, scoring 96 points by Robert Parker. The 2006 vintage does not fail to impress, with these wines achieving an elegance and subtlety rare to Australia. Characterized by spruce, cherry, eucalyptus and mushroom, these earthy, herbaceous wines are drinking well now, but will be spectacular with a few more years of ageing. Look for both the Clarendon and Jimmy Section Shiraz. These wines were the standouts of the entire tasting and our limited allocation will sell out quickly!

Picks From the Idaho Wine Festival by Christian Robertson

There were many great wines poured at the Idaho Wine Festival this in August, too many to list here. I am so excited about the wine industry in Idaho. The talent pool is getting bigger and the fruit supply is just getting better. The following is a short list of some impressive efforts by some of Idaho's star producers:

2005 Indian Creek Malbec

Hold on to you hats Malbec lovers, here's the wine I was talking about in my article on Malbec. This offering from one of Idaho's oldest and most beloved wineries is everything you want from the grape. Dark rich boysenberry and blackberry undertones with some nice firm oak structure create a well-balanced wine that gives Argentina a run for its money. Although not currently available at the Co-op, we should be getting some in very soon.

2004 Pend d'Oreille Merlot

The black sheep of the group being Washington fruit, but truly this is what Merlot from the Northwest should taste like. Owner/winemaker Steve Meyer has again nailed a wonderful style of Merlot. Fans of his wine will remember past achievements with the same varietal, even some pretty hefty scores from the *Wine Spectator*.

2006 Tait Ballbuster, Barossa Valley

I was fortunate to barrel sample the 2006 Ballbuster with winemaker Bruno Tait. The 2005 vintage was an exciting wine, but the 2006 is even better. Wow, what an outstanding wine! The standout characteristic is its creamy, pure caramel on both nose and body. It could pair with so many foods, and even be a perfect companion to chocolate desserts. One of the best wines for the price.



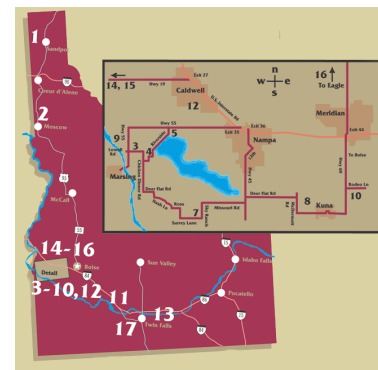
2005 Ross Estate, Lynedoch, Barossa Valley

This red blend is sourced from the southern Barossa Valley, which experiences a cooler climate. That's apparent in the strong herb qualities and minerality achieved in this wine, uncommon to the ripe fruit typical of Barossa. This wine has lots of ageing potential, and is a fantastic representation of the austere minerality, earthiness, and elegance attainable from this *terroir*.

More and more, the best wines from Australian are venturing away from bold, jammy, ripe fruit in favor of more refined, earthy, mineral based wines. This new direction of production has outstanding depth and complexity, and better potential for ageing. These wines will be highly allocated, so get them while you can!

2005 Sawtooth Reserve Chardonnay

Oh man this stuff was good! A truly brilliant effort by owner/winemaker Brad Pintler and his assistant Mike Crowley. Well balanced, the right touch of oak, bright apple and pear with great structure and richness. Chardonnay has been well established by some Idaho winemakers for a number of years now, but we may start seeing a few true benchmarks being produced in the next few years. This wine will definitely be on that list.



2005 Ste. Chapelle Ice Riesling and Ice Sauvignon Blanc

From Idaho's biggest and probably most renowned winery come some truly wonderful sweet wines that are really

Idaho wine continued on back page....

Wine Club Selections

Cru Classe Club

2005 Javillier Bourgogne Blanc

“Cuvée des Forgets”

The “Imported by North Berkeley” stamp is a guarantee that you’re in for a Burgundy treat, and this wine is not the exception to the rule. David Hinkle says it best, “If you want mind-blowing white Burgundy (and who doesn’t?) then this is your wine. Cuvée des Forgets piles on the minerals and pears and wraps it all up in a tantalizingly ripe, wonderfully balanced package that will live for a decade or more. Ripples of white fruit and satin from nose to palate; one of the finest quality/price deals in Bourgogne Blanc. **Rosemary*

2005 Sarrazin Givry Sous la Roche

The Sarrazin brothers make very fine Burgundy from the higher-altitude hills of Jambles in Givry. Working with North Berkeley Imports to create magnificent unfiltered Pinot Noir this is a darker and more complex Givry than most. Black cherry, dust, nutmeg and even a little of that rubber tire thing. This wine is structured and, I think, currently in a reduction stage. Crack the bottle in 5-10 (or more) years and your jaw will drop. **Rosemary*

R & R Whites: Argiolas & St Hallett R & R Reds: Lucignano & Bleasdale

2006 Argiolas Costamolino Vermentino

The island of Sardegna (aka Sardinia) is the most isolated of Italy’s wine regions. Despite its proximity to the Italian coast the country that has exerted the most influence over this mountainous environment is Spain. Thus the importance of the Spanish variety Vermentino. Antonio Argiolas, with the help of his twin sons, crafts some of the finest examples of wine from Sardegna. Their Costamolino manages to combine an appealing richness while remaining utterly refreshing. It offers floral aromas of currant, gooseberry and spice. Ripe and creamy fruit flavors dominate the palate with apricot and mango backed by vanilla and spice. Bright citrus comes through to keep things in balance and the smooth finish lingers on and on. This one is a real crowd pleaser. **David*

2006 St Hallett Poacher’s Blend White

This traditional Bordeaux blend of Semillon (80 %) and Sauvignon Blanc (20 %), comes from Australia’s Barossa Valley. Established in 1944, St Hallett didn’t shift to premium wines until 1988. Before then they specialized in the fortified wines so popular in Australia at that time. Their Poacher’s Blend opens with gooseberry and white pepper aromas that lead into rich tropical fruit flavors—papaya, mango, lime and pineapple. Spicy lemon comes through on the finish. Rich enough in texture to serve as a nice fall transition white, but with enough crisp acidity to pair well with a variety of foods. **David*

Passport Club

2005 Maréchal Bourgogne Rouge

Part of the Louis/Dressner portfolio, the Claude Maréchal makes wines in the Cote de Beaune. He refrains from using herbicides in the vineyard and keeps yields low with severe pruning. The wine ferments in open wood vats without adding any yeast, but letting the yeast naturally on the grapes do the job. There are some new barrels added each year, but not many as Maréchal’s style leans toward less oak and more pure terroir-driven fruit. With up front raspberry fruit and a sturdy tannin structure this is a Bourgogne with a serious side. Drink now with a decant or stash away some bottles for short term cellaring. **Rosemary*

2005 Devevey Bourgogne Blanc

This is one of my favorite choices for affordable white burgundy. The 2003 was a little on the voluptuous side, the 2004 was a little on the svelte side and the 2005 is right in the middle. Tropical flavors, lemon tones and a deft touch on the oak there is nothing not to like about his wine. Drink plenty now with something like chicken and polenta. **Rosemary*

2005 Fattoria di Lucignano Chianti

The hilly sub region of Collio Fiorentini in Chianti competes well with the best of the Classico sites, while providing great value. Lucignano produces one of the consistently finest, relying on low yields and traditional techniques. Their 2005 is a well structured, beautifully balanced wine with charming berry and cherry fruit flavors. The soft tannins and bracing acidity beg to be paired with food. **David*

2003 Bleasdale Mulberry Tree Cabernet Sauvignon, Langhorne Creek

Established in 1850 by Frank Potts, this winery boasts five generations of family-run winemaking, making Bleasdale the second oldest continuously operated family winery, second only to Barossa’s Yalumba estate. Frank Potts was one of the original settlers of South Australia. This region of the Fleurieu Peninsula experiences a cool maritime climate, lending fruit of a more herbaceous nature than those of warmer regions. The grapes are often sourced to Barossa Valley producers to soften their riper, more fruit forward production. The 2003 Mulberry Tree Cabernet is a perfect example of the complex wine style common to Fleurieu. A nose of spice, fresh pepper, oregano and menthol opens to a body of nuts, dark fruit, eucalyptus and dark chocolate, with a smooth caramel finish. This is a hearty wine that would pair well with roasted meat and herb-laden foods.! **Robin*



Grand Opening of Our New Wine Shop

Saturday, September 8 & Sunday, September 9

Wine Tasting from Noon to 6 pm (ID required)

Meet and Greet the Winemakers

Special Pricing, Prizes and Giveaways!

Join us just across the parking lot from the Co-op

A splendid time is Guaranteed for all!

SEPTEMBER 2007



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Wine Shop Hours!

10 am to 8 pm
Mon thru Thurs

10 am to 9 pm
Friday

9 am to 9 pm
Saturday

10 am to 6 pm
Sunday

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Idaho, right? Well that is where the similarities between Mendoza and Marsing end.

Idaho is so far inland that it gets cold, and for those long time residents, you know it can get bloody cold. Minus 20 degrees is not uncommon. Well, Malbec doesn't take to the cold so well. In fact it really would like to keep things above 32 degrees. Mendoza is at the same altitude as Marsing, but it lies at about 34 degrees south latitude. Marsing is at 43 degrees north and, being about 400 miles inland, is on the transitional frontier of a temperate/coastal to a continental climate. Mendoza is only about 100 miles inland and while the Andes create a real barrier from the coastal climate, Mendoza is still more temperate.

However, Idaho is beginning to source fruit from better microclimates and hopefully some areas will continue to be discovered that are a bit more appropriate for healthy Malbec vines. Of course if global warming catches up with us my prediction will be realized, but for now some experimentation in different areas of the Snake River AVA would be a great investment in our states viticultural future.

Want to know more about that Malbec I tasted that got me started on this topic? Read my article on the Idaho Wine festival in this issue

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showing what our state can do. True ice wines harvested after the first frost are a joy at the dinner table. Paired with the right desert, or even alone as desert, both

of these wines are sensual and delicious. The perfect acid balance in the Sauvignon Blanc brings a nice grip to the heady sugar levels, while the Riesling is impeccably balanced and at a price that should make some of its counterparts from Germany a little nervous.

Other Notables

2006 Holesinky Riesling

Newcomers to the Idaho scene, these animated winemakers from Buhl should be proud of their two time Peoples Choice Award for an organic Idaho Riesling. A nice, sweeter style Riesling that really shows off what this variety can do here in Idaho.

2006 Fraser Viognier

Winemaker Bill Fraser has a bright future with his vineyard just outside of Homeedale on the Snake River. While Viognier has been brought to the attention of winemakers in this state for a couple of vintages now, Fraser has the right touch with this beautifully aromatic variety. A wonderful, dryer style of Viognier.

2004 Williamson

Cabernet Sauvignon

There seem to be a few producers in Idaho who consistently prove this writer's opinion wrong about Cabernet and its place in Idaho. Williamson Vineyards is making marvelous Cabernet with depth, structure and good tannic backbone.

2005 Koenig Syrah

Koenig came through with style in this new release. Syrah definitely has a future in Idaho's Snake River AVA and Koenig is showing everybody how it is done. Deep red fruit and spice to this dark rich Syrah. Don't miss it.