

Summer 2015

GRAPE PRESS

"In wine there is truth." – Roman Proverb



Welcome to our 21st year, and to the first all-digital issue of The Grape Press. As you see, we've kept the familiar design format, and we hope that what we have to say will remain informative and entertaining. If you know wine lovers who would be interested in reading The Grape Press, please forward this link to them, or ask them to sign-up for the newsletter at www.thewinesellersmichigan.com/.

TOP 50 A PRELUDE TO A BEAUTIFUL SUMMER

Like the first day at the beach, The Wine Sellers' Top 50 Tasting announces the beginning of summer, glorious summer. This year's Top 50 wines were actually 65 wines, curated by Jacqui Schiewe to delight you with a fabulous selection representing tastes, zones, countries and winemakers. Summer wines are in full bloom.

The event was a sell-out, and as the afternoon came to a close, no one wanted to go! In addition to the classy selection of wines, the Top 50 (and Bacchus) are a step above other tastings thanks to the presence of our wonderful distributor representatives. The reps are the life of the party as they host their product lines with expertise and enthusiasm. We are honored to have them participate.



While attendees received significant event-only discounts on their purchases (a perk to remember for our upcoming Bacchus Fest), the wines now in the shop still represent excellent value. For reference, the Top 50 book is available on our website, www.thewinesellersmichigan.com/. Or stop in any time and ask us to match a Top 50 or two with your summer plans. Although we had sales on every wine chosen for Top 50 2015, on the following pages were the crowd pleasing sales leaders.

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The crowd pleasing sales leaders:

Cantina Santa Maria La Palma 2013 Aragosta

100% vermentino that is grown on the northwestern corner of Sardinia near Alghero. Traditionally served with sumptuous plates of seafood. This wine has lovely fresh aromas of peach, lemon and almond. Pleasant, crisp and light on the palate with green apple and lime, it is also well structured with a fresh and smooth finish. Perfect as an aperitif or drink with Asparagus Risotto, salads and of course, seafood.

\$14.95

Dôme Mireille Et Vincent 2011 Côtes-du-Rhône Rouge

The average age of vines is 35 making the vineyards almost entirely old vines. The blend is 75% grenache, 15% carignan, 5% each syrah and cinsault. A nice bit of earth and leathery notes on the nose greet you. Juicy and rich with good berry fruit, some spice and a great mouthfeel. Lots of bang for the buck!

\$14.95

Steele 2013 Chardonnay, "Steele Cuvée"

This well-crafted wine exhibits excellent depth of flavor, wonderful acidity and complex aromas of tropical fruits with a bit of apple notes as well. On the palate, nice citrus character, creamy notes and good acidity shines. Fermentation takes place in French oak barrels (20% are new) and the wine remains in barrel for eight months, lees are stirred regularly, and the wine finishes malolactic fermentation.

\$24.00

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Enjoying the Wealth of Rosé

After preaching the good word about rosé for so many years, it is gratifying to see that it has gone big time. Airy light and refreshing, perfect for picnics and parties, beautiful for beach bumming, fantastic for foodies, rosé is summer goodness in a glass.

We are plump with rosé this season. Many were hits at our Top 50 Tasting. Most are from France, with wonderful alternatives from Iberia to South Africa. Although rosé is recognized primarily as a summer delight, a worthy few can still grace at your table long after Labor Day (Thanksgiving, for example).

But for the moment, let's think summer and enjoy rosé. Here are some favorites in the shop:

Commanderie De La Bargemone 2014 Coteaux d'Aix en Provence

The Commanderie is a benchmark producer of the delicious, dry rosé for which Provence is famous. The blend is 36% grenache, 26% cinsault, 21% syrah, 10% cabernet sauvignon, 7% rolle. The wine offers classic aromas of wild strawberries, red currants and melon, with a light, floral character and a crisp, bone-dry palate. This rosé can be enjoyed year-round on its own or with a wide range of lighter fare and Provence-inspired cuisine.

\$21.00

Villa Des Anges 2014 Old Vines Rosé

A stand-by for the Wine Sellers. Unusual, because it is 100% old-vine Cinsault from the Languedoc in southwestern France. Light-bodied, intensely crisp and vividly fresh, offering complex aromas of strawberries and red currants, with a hint of quince. It is great as an aperitif and a perfect warm weather gulper. It pairs well with a wide range of salads, seafood, lighter dishes and grilled white meats and poultry.

\$13.95

Château De Fontenille 2013 La Belle Rosée

A delicate colored, 100% cabernet franc rosé from Bordeaux. Very fresh and dry with a fine nose, showing aromas and flavors of raspberry and white grapefruit mingling with delicate floral scents. It's got a bit of mineral flintiness and is well balanced, finishing with pleasant citrus fruit aromas.

\$16.95

Guado al Tasso 2014 Scalabrone Rosato

From the Maremma area of Tuscany, and named after a local Robin Hood type character, this is a blend of 40% cabernet sauvignon, 30% each merlot and syrah. Brilliant, light, peony pink in color. The wine shows rich and intense aromas of fruit: cherries, berries and floral notes. The palate is fresh, elegant, dry and well balanced with raspberry and a bit of rose petal. Has a nice long finish. A great Tuscan treasure, a little bigger than some and can easily stand up to heartier fare!

\$22.00

Domaine Canto Perdrix 2014 Tavel

The best Tavel we've seen in a long time. This outstanding Rhone expression of rosé is 60% grenache, 20% cinsault, 20% blend of clairette, carignan, picpoul and syrah. Medium to full bodied, vibrant raspberry with peppery flavors. Refreshing, with enough intensity to match hearty fare.

\$21.00

Continued from p. 2

The crowd pleasing sales leaders:

Terra Sigialata 2011 Jilón

100% garnacha that begins with a very pleasant aroma of menthol, black cherry, herbs and a bit of smoke. The wine tastes smooth, supple and harmonious. The dark, rich cherry fruit, cola, spice and mineral notes just flow together perfectly. The savory flavors continue on the long finish and are joined by some nice spicy mineral notes and a hint of smoke that lingers in the mouth for a good time. From Calatayud, Spain. 91 Points/Tanzer
\$13.99

Stratton Lummis NV The Riddler

This red blend is a riddle of grapes for you to solve. 100% from Napa's best sub-appellations, the label is based on the painting "The Riddler" by winemaker Richard de los Reyes. Richard and the winery love Napa grapes made in an Old World Style, and not too many are crafting wines in this fashion. Riddler has all the varieties you would expect in a Napa Red. Our riddle for you is what are they? Tasting notes: Hints of bright wild raspberries mix with fresh plums and violets. Good density/mouthfeel, along with some leather and smoke to make this wine even more interesting. Red fruit flavors linger endlessly on your palette.
\$25.00

Scagliola 2012 Barbera D'Asti Superiore La Faia

This barbera has bright fleshy fruit on entry. Nicely textured with a bit of leather and smoke, and medium weight and finish. Recognized regularly by Gambero Rosso, Wine Spectator and Parker, Scagliola is truly a hidden gem in the heart of Piedmont. Well priced.
\$21.00

IN THE SHOP: MEET THE SEXY ITALIAN

One of our customers regularly asks for the "sexy Italian" that he likes to give as an exclusive gift. It's a fitting pet name – Ferghettina Milledì 2010 has sex appeal inside and out.

Outside, its special bottle has a square base, rising pyramid-like with flat interior sides, so that during the Milledì's three years (!) on the lees, the yeasts of second fermentation have two-and-a-half times greater contact with the wine compared with traditional, round-based bottles.

Inside, this vintage Brut is 100% Chardonnay. The bottle's design leads to great finesse, with aromas of citrus, minerals and brioche. The mouth is rich and full; the flavors echo the nose with a nice weight and good doughy notes. A spectacular and yes, sexy offering. Priced at \$74 per bottle.



Premiere Insight

The Premiere Napa Valley (PNV) barrel tasting and auction was an extraordinary experience. As usual. The 19th annual auction raised a record \$6 million for the Napa Valley Vintners Association, with the proceeds supporting the nonprofit trade association's mission to promote and enhance the Napa Valley appellation. The 225 lots of wine were created for and sold exclusively at the event.

For Jacqui, "Premiere Week," the wealth of events and professional tastings hosted throughout Napa Valley in association with PNV, meant irreplaceable opportunities for comparing notes with peers, tasting vintage overviews, and meeting with winemakers.

Highlights: we attended a private tasting with Kirk Venge of Venge Vineyards, visited Alpha Omega, and sampled the wines of Miner Family Wines in one of their wine caves. We have carried Miner's fine wines over the years.

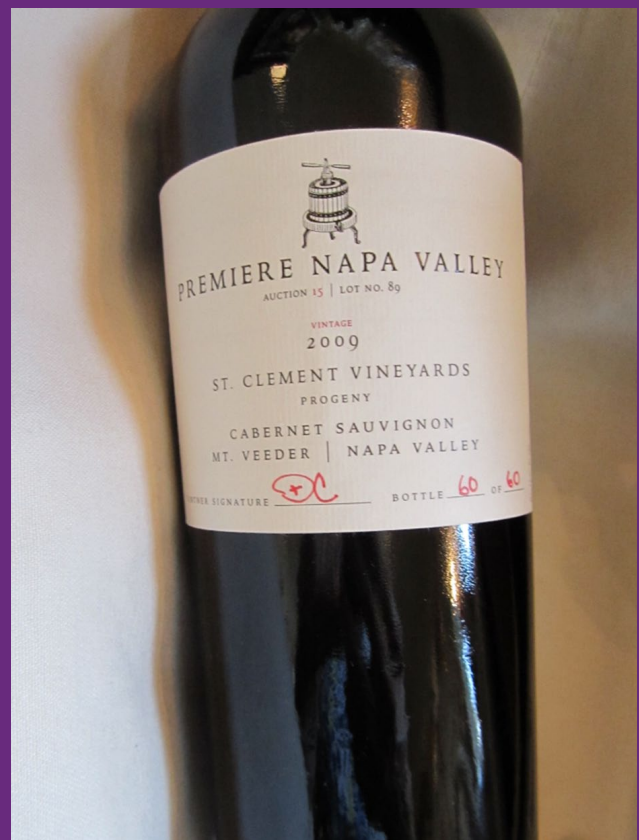
We returned with insight that will benefit you our customers, and even greater respect for the winemakers of Napa. They demonstrated their magic by taking what is considered a weak vintage (2011) and crafting a number of elegant wines. Jacqui was enchanted with the 2011 Whitehall Lane Cabernet Sauvignon (\$44). Decanter Magazine highly recommends (90+) it for its "concentrated palate of dense black fruits and considerable power and spice." With a bit of bottle age, this is a wonderful wine.

Meanwhile, 2012 and 2013 are superb vintages. We are happy to have found affordable treasures that a Napa fan will surely adore, such as the Textbook 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$29). It's absolutely terrific, and has received many prominent accolades. The 2013 will arrive before year's end.

PREMIERE WINE PREMIERES AT BACCHUS

Our latest Premiere Napa Valley acquisition (in 2011), St. Clement Vineyards 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon Progeny, is ready for its coming-out party. It will have a starring role at our annual Bacchus Fest on October 9.

This unique Bordeaux styled wine has a brilliant future ahead. Our tasting notes are almost too simple: a distinct mineral nose; displays black currant, black plum, lavender and espresso notes; silky soft tannins. But words alone don't do justice to this brilliant creation of winemaker Danielle Cyrot. Join us at Bacchus to experience St. Clement. You won't find it anywhere else but The Wine Sellers.



FROM THE PORTFOLIO

Tastings are opportunities for The Wine Sellers to discover new wines that our customers would love to try (lately, we've been focusing on wines for our Bacchus Fest). One particular type of tasting is the portfolio tasting, in which an importer or négociant presents their library of wines for sampling. One benefit is the rare privilege of tasting older wines – which we did at a recent portfolio tasting in Grand Rapids. The 2000 Riesling Pflaenzerreben de Rorschwihr (\$72) proved to be amazing! The classic nose of petrol with a clean, rich entry and mid-palate, leads to an aromatic profile of honeyed white fruits, minerals and honeysuckle blossoms. With its well-concentrated, medium-bodied character, this is a treasure that will stand the test of time.

IN THE NEWS

On July 4, 2015, the 39th Assembly of UNESCO designated Burgundy as a World Heritage Site, for its climats and terroirs. More than 1,000 years ago, the Cistercian monks began to understand the differences between neighboring vineyards, laying the groundwork for the intricate tapestry that is Burgundy today.

WINES TO WATCH

Rustenberg 2013 "Established White"

This estate is one of South Africa's oldest: over 400 years old! A charming and unusual blend of sauvignon blanc, chardonnay and viognier. Aromas of ripe melon greet you, followed by plump and mouth filling flavors of passion fruit, peaches and white grapefruit on the palate. A gently creamy texture and fine balance.

\$17.95

Buehler Vineyards

2012 Napa Valley Zinfandel

From Napa. Aromas of a briar patch on a hot summer day carry over to the palate. A small amount of petite sirah is used, which contributes pepper, color and tannin structure to the wine. Shows a black cherry, vanilla, spice and toasty oak character in a juicy, flavorful package. Drink now through 2019.

\$24.00

Tenuta Rapitalà 2013 Piano Maltese

Spectacular white wine born on gentle hills above Sicily of mostly indigenous grillo and cataratto grapes. Rich, good weight, with notes of tropical fruits and smoky hints. Fresh Mediterranean scents and a savory, elegant flavor with a typical hint of bitter almonds.

\$15.95

Antico Colle 2013 Chianti Colli Senesi

The region is one of the eight sub-regions in chianti and is often referred to as the "la femminina" expression of chianti. The blend is mostly sangiovese with a bit of merlot and cabernet sauvignon. It shows lots of nice dark fruit, with licorice/fennel notes and a bit of spice. Maintains a nice richness throughout and finishes with a nuance of dry cedar. Priced right!

\$15.95



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(even mix
or match),
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The Wine Sellers is open Wednesday through Saturday from noon until 6:00 p.m., Sundays from 1:00 until 4:00 p.m. through Labor Day, fewer days afterwards by chance or appointment. Just to make sure, phone first at 888-824-WINE.

We accept American Express, VISA, Mastercard, Discover and Diners Club.

The Wine Sellers is wheelchair accessible.