

“We could in the United States make as great a variety of wines as are made in Europe, not exactly of the same kinds, but doubtless as good.” --- Thomas Jefferson in the year 1808

The rise in European imports: How do American wines compete?

By: Hannah Dunton, Assistant Wine Club Manager

A stroll down the aisles of a local wine shop will take you to different worlds. The shelves, abundant with imported wines, offer you a Sangiovese from Italy, a Burgundy from France and a Gewürztraminer from Germany. Even with the number of American wineries growing every year, some wine consumers still have faith in an implied notion that European wines are superior to those of America. Believing that European wine is the purebred form of authentic wine, these consumers will buy an American wine only for the less expensive price tag. However, the decreasing price of European and other imported wine is evident within the United States market, as is the widespread distribution of these wines. This proposes questions feared by many United States wine enthusiasts: Why buy a Refosco from California when it is just as easy to buy one imported from Italy? If a Syrah from France is less expensive than one from California, shouldn't the former be the obvious choice? In order to answer these questions, we must examine three common myths prevalent in the world of wines.

The first myth is the fact that because most recognizable grape varieties are indigenous to Europe, America lacks the ability to naturally grow adequate fruit. While this myth may have been moderately convincing during the original experimental days of winemaking, American winegrowers have become masters of finding the preferred terroir for different grape varieties. European grapes do flourish in their countries of origin, providing wonderful fruit to with which to work; however, this should not dismiss the proven results of the excellent growing conditions in various parts of America. California's Mediterranean climate is not only comparable to

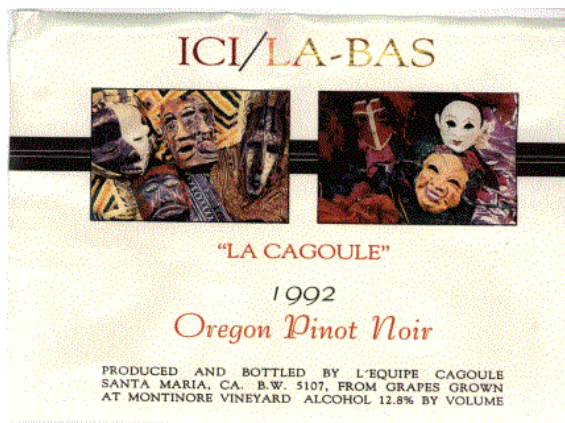
many parts of France and Italy; but the coastal breezes, along with the abundance of sun, prove to be the ideal terroir to grow many grapes. In addition, as a result of the repeatedly submerged land throughout the prehistoric days of California, the soil was graced with rich organic soil components and layers of sediment. Not only in California, but many wineries on the east coast are finding what their climate has to offer through the production of fine ice wines and other varieties. These excellent growing conditions found throughout America have proven themselves to have the ability to produce good fruit.

The second misconception when comparing European and American wines lies in the process of winemaking. Because many countries have been making wine for thousands of years, some argue that America has a long way to go before it develops the expertise of winemaking. However, not only are American winemakers blessed with traditional knowledge without the trial and error process, their foundation in winemaking stems from a different angle. Lacking a long tradition of winemaking, America focuses on the science of growing grapes and making wines led by the Department of Viticulture and Enology at University of California at Davis and Fresno State University. Incorporating the latest developments in winemaking with the learned traditions from their European forefathers, American winemakers quickly make up for lost time.

The third myth is the implicit notion that the marketing of imported goods does not cloud our judgment of them. The word "imported" carries a clout that often takes superiority over the word "domestic." Whether the subject is cheese,

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chocolate, cigars, rugs or wine, the consensus remains that the word “imported” usually implies a delicacy and a high price tag. Realizing this, some American wineries go to the lengths of giving their wine labels an imported appearance. For example, the 1992 Oregon Pinot Noir from Ici/La-Bas features the words “La Cagoule” (French for Here and There). Most American wine consumers do not understand the translation of this word; however, its European mystique provides for consumer intrigue. The same can be said of Sonoma Valley’s Gundlach Bundschu 1995 Zinfandel label, depicting a Romanesque loin-clothed white man carrying a wreath. This symbol clearly evokes more similarities to the Romans and Greeks and very little to American history. Although there are an infinite number of American products crafted and perfected by artistry, these wineries (and many others) realize the American interest in imported products and use this as a marketing strategy to market their products.



An Oregon Pinot Noir from Ici/La-bas exemplifies an American marketing trend by creating a European mystique on their product.

For those who still have some faith in any of these myths, let us recall an event in history which single handedly put American wines on the map:

The year is 1976, and Englishman Steven Spurrier is the owner of the Les Caves de la Madeleine wine shop in the center of Paris. Out of sheer curiosity, the Englishman seeks to compare French and California wines in the most unbiased way possible...a blind tasting. Organizing a panel of well respected French wine judges, Spurrier presents six Chardonnays and six Cabernets from California with four White Burgundies and four Bourdeaux from France. As the wines are

revealed, the judges are both baffled and horrified to discover that the awards for both the best red and white wines are given to California wines. Making headlines around the world, “The Judgment of Paris” demands respect for the winemaking abilities of New World winemakers while recognizing the potential of outstanding growing conditions.

Did the Judgment of Paris prove once and for all that American wines are better than French? Most would say no. In fact, many believe that comparing French to American wines is similar to comparing apples and oranges. However, it gave us faith that while European wines carry an Old World intrigue, the United States has proven to possess a growing talent for winemaking and potential for outstanding wines. The notion that European wines are superior to those of America is merely a combination of the three completely outdated myths.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the year French wines fell to California. Since the 1976 Judgment of Paris, California has become a mecca of winemaking. The number of wineries in the United States has multiplied, and the technology used within the wine industry has been revolutionized twice over. On May 24, 2006, Paris will be “re-judged” when French and Californian wines will repeat that fateful blind tasting. Although the winner is yet to be determined, one thing is for sure. American wines have proven to hold their own. Long live American wines!

Sources:

MacNeil, Karen "The Wine Bible" New York, NY 2001
 Spurrier, Steve "California versus France, 20 Years On" Decanter Magazine; August 1996 Volume 21 No 12
 Taber, George "Judgment of Paris" New York, NY 2005

Your March release consists of two bottles of BARGETTO’s 2003 Monterey County San Bernabe Syrah. Syrah, a grape variety native to the Rhone Valley in France and introduced to California in 1971, thrives in cool growing conditions. Monterey County proves to have excellent growing conditions for Syrah, with generous rainfall and coastal fog. Winemaker Michael Sones and Assistant Winemaker Eleni Papadakis have produced a wine that would make both California and France proud!

Current Release

2003 Monterey County San Bernabe Syrah

The grapes for this wine come from the largest single vineyard in the USA; San Bernabe which is owned by Delicato. The vineyard is located just south of King City and grows a diverse selection of grape varieties. The Syrah is dark with flavor of violets and dark berry fruit. The structure is present but the tannins are soft.

-Michael Sones, Winemaker

Harvest

Grapes: 95.7% Syrah; 4.3% other

Vineyards: 75.9% San Bernabe in Monterey; 24.1% San Felipe in Santa Clara

Average Date: 10/28/03

Brix: 28.2°

Wine

Alcohol: 15.3%

Total Acidity: 0.645 grams/100ml
pH: 3.71

Length of Barrel Aging: 21 months in French & American Oak

Malolactic: 100%

Cases Produced: 488

Total cost for 2 bottle release

CA UPS Direct Members \$36.65

Out-of-State UPS Direct Members \$34.60

Pick Up Members \$27.65

Price reflects 20% Wine Club discount. ND, NH, NY, TX, VA add applicable tax.

(Retail price for this release is \$16 btl.)

Next Release

2004 Lodi Zinfandel

Playful blackberry with undertones of smoke and pepper greet one in the glass. Black cherry and jam are complemented by hints of violet and oak. This wine offers rounded tannins and a medium structure that will lend itself nicely to anything from wild boar to pasta ziti.

-Michael Sones, Winemaker

Harvest

Grapes: 100% Zinfandel

Vineyards: 41.7% Schmierer Vineyard, 35.4% Mohr Fry Vineyard, 22.9% Rauser Vineyard

Average Date: 8/23/04-8/31/04

Brix: 25.6°

Wine

Alcohol: 14.6%

Total Acidity: 0.65grams/100ml
pH: 3.67

Length of Barrel Aging: 11 months in French and American Oak

Malolactic: 100%

Cases Produced: 1103

Total cost for 2 bottle release

CA UPS Direct Members \$33.19

Out-of-State UPS Direct Members \$31.40

Pick Up Members \$24.19

Price reflects 20% Wine Club discount. ND, NH, NY, TX, VA add applicable tax.

(Retail price for this release is \$14 btl.)

Vintage Sale

Save 25% off the
2003 Santa Clara County Syrah
when you order 6 or more bottles.

\$72 per half case

\$144 per case

That's only \$12 per bottle!
Retail price is \$16 per bottle.

Offer valid April 1 to
April 30, 2006.

Call, fax, email or order online.

1-888-400-9463

831-475-2664

wineclub@bargetto.com

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Vintage Notes

Stock up and save on your current release!
Buy 6 or more bottles of the
2003 Monterey County San Bernabe Syrah
and save 25%.

\$72 per half case

\$144 per case

That's only \$12 per bottle!
Retail price is \$16 per bottle.

Offer ends 5/15/06.

Phone.....888-400-9463

Fax.....831-475-2664

Email.....wineclub@bargetto.com

Website.....www.bargetto.com

Club Corner

Wine Club Events

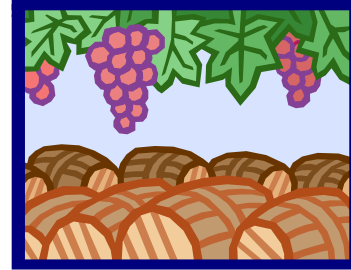
Sunset Sail on the Chardonnay II

Santa Cruz Harbor
Sunday, May 7, 2006
5:30 PM to 8:00 PM
Cost: \$40

A sunset sail in the Monterey Bay paired with BARGETTO wine. What a nice way to end the day. A light snack will also be provided. Make your reservations today because space is limited. Call 1-888-400-9463 or email us at wineclub@bargetto.com.

Pick Up and Pairing Nights
Soquel and Monterey Tasting Rooms
Friday, July 28, 2006 &
Friday, September 29, 2006
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

We have extended our normal tasting room hours for our Wine Club Members on Friday, July 28th and Friday, September 29th. Pick up and taste your current releases and enjoy complimentary hors d'oeuvres. Mark your calendar and stop by the Soquel and Monterey Tasting Rooms.



Wine Club Harvest Party
BARGETTO WINERY
Saturday, September 16, 2006
4:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Come celebrate the 2006 harvest with us. We promise you will have a good time.

Art in the Cellars
BARGETTO WINERY
Saturday, December 2, 2006
5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Listen to music, view local art and enjoy some wine and hors d'oeuvres in our cellars.

Epicurean Notes



Pork Tenderloin Stuffed with Pancetta and Dried Cherries

Ingredients:

For Stuffing:

1/2 c. BARGETTO Syrah
1/2 c. dried cherries
1 t. shallot, minced
1 T. sugar
1/2 c. pancetta (cut in 1/4 in. pieces)
1/4 c. canola oil
8 ea. twine (approx. 4in., for trussing)
2 T. additional canola oil

For Tenderloins:

2 16oz. pork tenderloins
1/2 c. sugar
1/2 c. salt
1 T. black pepper
1 t. garlic, minced
6 c. cold water
2 T. crushed Juniper berries (optional)

For more recipes check out
www.bargetto.com

Directions:

For Tenderloins: Combine all ingredients, except for tenderloins. Stir until sugar and salt dissolve. Add tenderloins and brine for 1 hour.

For Stuffing: In medium sauce pan add BARGETTO Syrah, dried cherries, shallots and sugar. Cook over medium high heat for five minutes or until wine has absorbed into cherries. Place cherries on plate and cool at room temperature. In separate medium sauce pan add canola oil and pancetta. Cook over medium high heat for ten minutes or until pancetta is crispy. Remove pancetta from oil and cool at room temperature.

Stuffing the Tenderloins: Butterfly tenderloins by cutting them lengthwise, 3/4 inch deep. In food processor pulse cherries and pancetta until a light paste is formed. Place cherry mixture in middle of each tenderloin. Tie each piece closed with four pieces of twine.

Cooking the Tenderloins: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In medium sauce pan over medium high heat add 2 T. canola oil and brown all four sides of tenderloins. Place in oven for 12 minutes. Remove twine from each tenderloin and slice into 1/4 inch pieces. Serve with mashed potatoes and sautéed green beans.
Serves 4

By: Greg Flores

Greg Flores studied culinary arts at The California Culinary Academy in San Francisco. Upon graduation, Greg worked his way up from Extern to Sous Chef at Café Marcella, a four star restaurant in Los Gatos, California. After a brief time as Executive Chef at Bethany College, Greg is now back in Los Gatos as one of the chefs at Three Degrees in The Toll House Hotel. Greg is very familiar with BARGETTO wines and cooks with them often.

Have questions or comments for Greg? Email him at gpflores1@hotmail.com.
(Put BARGETTO in the subject line.)

