

AMERICAN WINE SOCIETY

a non-profit corporation

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June 2006 ROCHESTER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER Volume 32, No. 6 www.awsrochester.org

Boutique California Syrah June 3, 2006

For those members that missed this tasting, it was an excellent tasting with excellent wines!!

The committee opened with a definition of what generally makes a "boutique" winery. Usually it makes less than 500 cases of a particular wine in any year, the grapes are hand picked, and usually the wine comes from a single vineyard. The wines are generally difficult to find, and in some cases can only be found by being on the winery's mailing list. The committee chose Syrah for this tasting because of the growth of Syrah in California. The acreage is increasing rapidly, and is expected to rival that of Cabernet Sauvignon by the year 2010. The higher elevations and limestone soils are well suited to the Syrah grape.

	#	Year	Wine	Price	Votes	Foods	Comments
Flight	E	2004	Pax Rose	\$18	1	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grapes were very ripe, and this is much heartier than a typical Rose • 40% Grenache, 60 % Syrah, 14.8% Alc.
	ONE	1	2003	Palm Cellars Paso Robles	\$29	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italian Bread • Campo De Mantalban Cheese, from Spain • Fiscalini San Jorquin Cheese
2		2002	Spencer Roloson La Herradura Vineyard Napa	\$35	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st vintage of a 2 person operation • 100 % Syrah, but fermented with Viognier pumice • 15% Alc. – 624 cases made 	
TWO	3	2002	Alban Central Coast	\$35	14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner one of the founders of Rhone style wines in California • This is their entry level wine • Much discussion on the complexities of the nose – cabbage, green, asphalt, tar
	4	2003	J C Cellars Caldwell Napa	\$47	8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15.7% Alc – 337 cases made • Three different lots of Syrah • Area gets cooling breezes • Much care is taken with the grapes
THREE	5	2003	Stolpman Hilltop Estate Santa Ynez	\$34	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiche (description listed below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.8% Alc. – 118 cases made of this wine, the winery produces a total of 6000 cases of all their wines • Rich, concentrated blackberries
	6	2002	Lagier Meredith Mount Veeder	\$44	12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14.7% Alc. – 550 cases made • High elevation, for cooler climate • Unfiltered, elegant • This was the favorite of the committee

	#	Year	Wine	Price	Votes	Foods	Comments
FOUR	7	2000	Ojai Roll Ranch Vineyard	\$43	24		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This winery makes 15 styles of Syrah – generally releases 2-3 years after the harvest • Buys the grapes, their vineyards were lost in mud slides(?). • 14.5% Alc. – 600 cases made • Winery makes a total of 4000 cases per year
	8	2003	Pax Obsidian Knights Valley	\$70	14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their fourth vintage – they make 12-15 cuvees • Difficult to find – have to go to specialized stores • Located in Knights Valley, where the soil is volcanic • Wine is made with 70 % of whole clusters of fruit • 483 cases made • Deep flavors, powerful

Angel Nardone brought the quiche. She said the recipe came from "Wine and Dine" by Ron Breitstein and Hendrick Van Leuven, which is a compilation of recipes from various wineries. This particular recipe comes from Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, and is suggested as a pairing with Syrah or Petite Syrah. The description suggests that "the wines pleasantness will be increased lovingly when matched with this quiche. The goat cheese, red peppers, green onions with garlic will confront the spiciness in the fruit of the wines and both will come away improved by their encounter. The flavor, including the flash of gaminess in the wine, will mesh well and create a full-bodied engagement." Enough said.

Membership List

A listing of the current membership of the Rochester Chapter is also going out with these notes. Please review it for accuracy and completeness. In some cases we do not have an address. Even though you provided this to National, it is sometimes difficult to access the records. Please send a note to jbacilek@rochester.rr.com, or call at 227-2080 with additions, corrections, or deletions.