

Bridge Street Social

Jan '23 WINE FAM

Happy New Year fam!

I'm so thankful to all of you for completing our 2nd year of the BSS Wine Fam! I can't believe how fast 2 years can fly by. Hopefully everyone's holidays were more than delightful. And I also hope your 4-pack of wine lasted more than one week, unlike mine. Don't you wish there were more? Well, based on your asking, there will be. More on this at the bottom.

I'm titling this month's installment; 'Complexity with Age'. The grape varietals and wine styles presented here are at their peak of aging, and with that come somewhat richer flavors and deeper complexities you can't get with freshly bottled wine. I believe this to be the perfect time to release these to you, during the colder weather months. I wouldn't age these any longer, (except for maybe the German Pinot Noir) and they'll still drink wonderfully through the spring, (if you can wait that long).

I promised to be more active on our private Facebook group page ('*BSS Wine Fam*') and I believe I made good on my word. Even in the heat of the holiday hecticness, I managed to log a couple reviews. Which makes me curious to ask, what were your favs? If you're a Facebooker, please click the 'Request To Join' button, and I'll accept your request that day, (or by the next morning). It's fun to see pics of your wine, food, tablesapes, along with your feedback of the particular wine you're drinking. Feel comforted knowing it's just us in the group, no lurkers. I really want to see some pics of the magnum of Baron Fuente Champagne :)

I was able to buy a little extra of the wines in this current 4-pack, so please let me know if you're interested in purchasing an extra bottle or two, (along with a few selections from past installments). Contact me at: info@bss517.com, knowing that stock is extremely limited! So, with all that said, let's pop a bottle!

Cheers!

Joe Todd
general manager
certified somm - cms

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August Kessler – Rheingau, Germany Pinot Noir, 2014

Voted Editor's Choice by nationally acclaimed Wine Enthusiast in December, 2020. They went on to rave, "...deeply concentrated black cherry and plum flavors. Its wild berry perfume and delicate tannin structure make it irresistibly hedonistic. It's still plenty youthful and should continue to improve through at least 2030." We were excited to buy the remaining bottles of this vintage from one of our stellar distributors back in September, but wanted to save it for 2023. Well, here it is. And I'm sure you'll agree it's pretty special.

Our executive chef/owner, Mike Luther, reviewed the 2013 vintage about 4 months ago, and I believe he hit the nail on the head with his thoughts: "Bold, ripe black-cherry and berry flavors come through the core of the amazing Spatburgunder (ie, late Burgundy). It's a densely concentrated, full-bodied wine, but neatly integrated, nuanced by subtle shades of spice, dark toast and bramble. Crisp cranberry acidity freshens the finish."

My take on this 2014 echoes Mike's reflections, along with being blown-away by the stoney minerality that underpins all of the glorious acid in this wine. This is the definition of an all-around food wine. Not leaning too far one way or the other, but with more than enough character to stand on its own.

August Kessler's vineyards total just over 80 acres, with less than 15 acres dedicated to pinot noir, (the majority of the vineyards produce Riesling). Their vineyards face south/southwest, and west, with slopes ranging from 45° to 60°. These STEEP vineyards are renowned for their heat-storing and sparse slate soil. You won't find any automation or machinery to speak of on these dangerous slopes, just skilled and brave humans tethered to the earth. Gives a whole new appreciation for literal hands-on winemaking.

This wine will complement roasted pork, chicken, grilled fleshy fish, mushroom dominant dishes, and a vast array of charcuterie boards, among other things.

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Château La Tour de Béraud, Costières de Nîmes, Southern Rhône Valley, France
Heritage, 2015

La Tour de Béraud refers to a fire tower from the 14th century (depicted on the front label) that stands fiercely at the top of the estate, shoulder-to-shoulder with the vines. These ancient vines stay healthy and balanced with clear skies and dry weather, thanks to the Mistral wind from the north during the day, and the cool and moist Mediterranean Sea breeze at night. This producer is proud of its 100% biodynamic production methods.

The 30 acres of vineyards are planted on an elegant gradient of terraced slopes, with clay and pebble soils which were deposited in the area as glaciers moved through the continent during the ice age, (about 2.6 million years ago). This specific soil/environment, (ie, Terroir. You remember this word, right?) gives freshness and balance to the wines while the sunny Rhone Valley climate ripens the grapes to perfection. Traditional aging in tanks preserves the natural fruitiness and fine, pure finish.

What does this all mean to you? A frickin' delicious wine! Again, I was able to purchase this soon-to-be extinct 2015 vintage through a long-standing relationship with one of our distributors, with a couple left over for whomever wants to purchase any. It's a blend of Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvedre. This 2015 has a rich inky color with a ruby hue. Aromas of raspberries, cherry compote, with an underlying floral scent. Flavors of raspberry cordial, juicy red cherries, baking spices, tilled earth, and forest floor ('organic earth'). There's also a hint of licorice and a tangy finish with lively acidity. There's a lot going on here, and that's why I chose it.

Pair this with the richest of red meat dishes, wild game, hearty red sauces, and strong cheeses.

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Pecchenino – Dogliani, Piedmont, Italy Dolcetto (2019)

Ah, what is it with BSS and Piedmont, Italy? If you were to ask us what geographical wine region we would be content to eat/drink from for the rest of our lives, I'd safely say half of our staff would choose Piedmont. Why? The wine from this region is never less than lovely, and almost always stellar. And this grape, Dolcetto, holds a dear spot on our hearts. Seriously, ask any of my staff.

First, the producer, Pecchenino ('peck-uh-nino'). World-class, no butts about it. Their philosophy: The winegrower is first and foremost the guardian of the territory. This is why they safeguard and enhance it with their tireless work. Through their wines they tell their family history, traditions, and the beauty of their vineyards. In one of our first wine fam releases, we were elated to offer Pecchinino's 'Psea', a phenomenal white sparkling wine (made from Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes) that could, and CAN rival some of the best French Champagne.

This wine, san Luigi Dolgliani, Dolectto, comes from where their historical winery is located. The Dolcetto grape is the dominant variety in this region. 'Dolcetto' can be translated as 'little sweet one'. The wine is not sweet, but rather lower in acid. Which is a deep contrast to the other grapes in Piedmont, predominantly the Nebbiolo grape, which has one of the highest levels of acid of any red grape on the planet. The Dolcetto grape produces more soft and fruity wines. This particular wine is that, having dominant flavors of red & blue fruits, mixed with floral violets and soft minerality. Definitely a light-hearted wine that plays well with all types of appetizers, PIZZA, grilled chicken dinner salads, roasted beet salad, and a host of mild/medium strength cheeses. We call this a 'Tuesday night wine.'

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Adelsheim - Willamette Valley, Oregon Chardonnay (2019)

Hailing from one of the most popular wine regions in the states, Adelsheim ('Add-ul-sime', or 'Add-ul-zime') is one of Willamette Valley's cornerstone wineries. They're known for high quality and consistent juice year in and year out. Adelsheim just celebrated their 50th anniversary in 2021, and they show no signs of stopping. And I'm proud to offer their 2019 Chardonnay, at its peak of flavor.

First, I'd like to loosely lay out two different styles of Chardonnay which most people are familiar with. There are many in-between types that derive from these main two, of which I won't be discussing here. These main two types are, 1) buttery & oaky and 2) crisp and lean. The first type can be widely called 'Cali Chard'. I like to call it Orange County Housewives Chard. Butter and oak are the dominant flavors for sure. The mouthfeel/body is rich and flabby. Many wine nerds detest this style. I'm personally okay with it, given the right food pairing, (huge seared scallops with butter are one of my favs). The other style, crisp and lean, is known to be made in Burgundy, France, (and also Chablis, France). This type is basically zippy and acidic, with lots of minerality, (thanks to the soil type). This style reflects more of the characteristics of this Adelsheim your beholding.

The color is a light golden, with a bit of pale lime-colored rim/edge. You'll smell lemon zest and some orchard fruit, and maybe a little barn hay. So far it smells a lot like a French style. The flavors mimic the scent, along with fresh apple, honey, jasmine, and baking spice. This is where this wine becomes unique by comparison to the two main styles mentioned above. Adelsheim likes to tout this wine as an accurate representative to the (now famous) Willamette Chardonnay style. Most of this wine rests in French oak barrels for about a year, and some the rest of it (about 18%) sits in stainless steel tanks for the same amount of time. After a year, the oak barrel and steel tank juices are blended together and then bottled. The oaked juice is where the honey and baking spice notes derive, and the steel tank juice brings the fresh apple and lemon zest notes. I personally love this blending technique.

Feel free to experiment what foods go well with this wine. I'd start with something fragrant and a little exotic, perhaps Indian food, (not too spicy though). Seafood for sure. Have at it!