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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

Proceeding	91181755
Party	Plaintiff Franciscan Vineyards
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Date	06/01/2009
Attachments	8th Notice of Reliance.pdf (325 pages)(13657599 bytes)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

FRANCISCAN VINEYARDS, INC.,	Opposition No. 91181755
Opposer,	Mark: BLACK RAVEN BREWING COMPANY
v.	Serial No. 77223446
BEAUXKAT ENTERPRISES, LLC	Filed: January 8, 2008
Applicant.	

OPPOSER'S EIGHTH NOTICE OF RELIANCE
PURSUANT TO 37 CFR §2.122(e)

Please take notice that Opposer, Franciscan Vineyards, Inc., pursuant to 37 CFR §2.122(e) is hereby noticing its reliance on various excerpts from printed publications downloaded and printed from Nexis. The excerpts are comprised of a small number (i.e., ten from each year) of representative examples of English language third party articles from the year 1990 through 2009 that reference Opposer and/or Opposer's RAVENSWOOD wines.

Each of the excerpts are relevant to the renown and fame of Opposer's trademarks and of Opposer and its services and products, use by Opposer of the mark and name RAVENSWOOD, the goods and services marketed and sold by Opposer, the channels of trade through which Opposer's goods and services are and have been, offered and sold, and the similarity of the parties' respective marks, goods and services, and the legal similarity in channels of trade.

The excerpts are identified in the attached summary by date, name of publication, page, headline, and short excerpts from the article. Copies of the excerpts are attached immediately following the summary.

Dated: June 1, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and complete copy of the foregoing OPPOSER'S EIGHTH NOTICE OF RELIANCE was forwarded by first class postage pre-paid mail by depositing the same with the U.S. Postal Service on this 1st day of June, 2009 to the attorneys for the Applicant at the following address:

Justin D. Park
Romero Park & Wiggins P.S.
155-108th Avenue NE, Suite 202
Bellevue, WA 98004

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DATE	PUBLICATION	SECTION/PAGE	HEADLINE	TEXT
May 24, 2009	Knoxville News-Sentinel (Tennessee)	Life; Pg. 49	Easy-drinking Reds Perfect for Cookouts	. . . lengendary Zinfandel maker Ravenswood
May 13, 2009	Chicago Tribune	Good Eating; Pg. 3A	Location, Location, Location	Joel Peterson started out as a one-man operation with 327 cases of his Ravenswood Winery Zinfandel. Now, 32 years later, the winery is producing nearly 1 million cases of red wine a year. . .
May 13, 2009	The Washington Times	Plugged in - Living	Galas Jazz up the Arts World	'The evening, sponsored by . . Ravenswood Winery"
April 15, 2009	Plain Dealer (Cleveland)	Taste; pg. E9	Wine Buy of the Week	The bottle: Raveswood Vinters Blend Merlot
April 1, 2009	Richmond Times Dispatch (Virginia)	Food; pg. D-2	Narrowing Wines Helps Identify Your Favorite	Ravesnwood, a noted Zinfandel producing winery
March 23, 2009	Sun-Sentinel (Florida)	Life; pg. 3E	These Old California Vines Yield Fine Zinfandel Wines	For more than 30 years, Joel Peterson has been making zinfandel wines - - - Consider the 2006 Ravenswood . . .
February 27, 2009	Anchorage Daily News (Alaska)	Play; pg. H7	Wine of the Week	Ravenswood's blend series
February 20, 2009	Anchorage Daily News (Alaska)	Play; pg. H7	Wine of the Week	. . . Ravenswood winery . . . known for . . .zinfandels
February 5, 2009	The Augusta Chronicle (Georgia)	Applause; Pg. P19	Ravenswood Sonoma County Syrah, California 2005	. . . Ravenswood made its name with outstanding zinfandel . . .
January 28, 2009	Abilene Reporter-News (Texas)	Lifehome	Ravenswood Offers a Variety of Exceptional Wines	Ravenswood Winery built its reputation on high-end Zinfandel wines.
December 4, 2008	Sun-Sentinel (Florida)	Hiriser; pg. 15	More than Great Zinfandel	. . . Ravenswood Vineyards, a producer of fine and affordable wine . . has been around for a long time . . .
October 8, 2008	The News Journal (Delaware)	Spark; Pg 165P	7 Ways to Get Festive This Fall	. . . famed Ravenswood Winery in Sonoma. . .
September 10, 2008	The Independent Weekly (NC)	Eat & Drink; pg 35	Ravenswood: No Wimpy Wines	. . . the Ravenswood name has come to mean dependably rich, succulent, non-wimpy reds . . . now produces close to a million cases per year
September 4, 2008	The Atlanta Journal Constitution	Food & Drink; Pg 7K	Drink	Last year, Ravenswood produced 500,000 cases of Vintners Blend

August 13, 2008	The News Journal (Delaware)	Life; Pg. 3E	With Bold Zins, Ravenswood Founder Remains an Enemy of the Wimpy	Ravenswood's slogan, "No wimpy wines," became famous
April 30, 2008	The Arizona Republic	Pheonix Republicl Pg. 13	Emma Beth has the Heart to Go On	Fundraiser benefitting the Phoenix Children's Hospital Heart Center, featuring wines of Ravenswood
January 22, 2008	Marin Independent Journal (California)	Lifestyle	A zin for every taste	Ravenswood . . .continue at the very top of the zinfandel game
January 1, 2008	El Past Times (Texas)	Lifestyle; Entertainment	Zinfandel's history in U.S. is substantial	In the 1970's Joel Peterson founded Ravenswood, a well known and respected zinfandel producer
November 21, 2007	The Baltimore Sun	Taste; Wine Find	2004 Ravenswood 'Dickerson' Zinfandel	Among reds, zinfandel excels . . . and Ravenswood Dickerson is at or near the top of that breed.
November 7, 2007	Newsday (New York)	Food; pg. 814	Drinks	Look for these singular zins from. . . Ravenswood Winery
November 7, 2007	Windsor Star (Ontario)	Food; pg. 1	Fans Adopt winery's logo for tattoos	. . . the popularity of the label as a tattoo speaks volumes about the popularity of Ravenswood wines . . . Ravenswood Vintners Blend is the top-selling Zinfandel in the world . . .
August 19, 2007	Los Angeles Times	Travel; Pg. 3	Art in a Bottle	. . . Ravenswood Winery in Sonoma, known for its Zinfandels
July 25, 2007	The Globe and Mail (Canada)	Globe Life; Pg.L2	Ravenswood: No wimpy wines or winemaker	Ravenswood, the successful Sonoma winery best known for three things – top class zinfandels, the slogan . . . and a devout following
July 24, 2007	24 Hours (Canada)	Entertainment; pg. 11	Wild Art	The Ragin Ravenswood BBQ Event
July 18, 2007	Pittsburgh Tribune Review		Bigger is not better when it comes to zinfandels	At Ravenswood Winery . . . most successful zinfandel producer.
July 11, 2007	The Arizona Republic	Food & Drink; pg. 5	No Tomato Juice, Just nice reds and whites	Ravenswood was a boutique brand and is now a $10 grocery wine.
July 11, 2007	Inside Bay Area (California)	Food	Good value no secret for zin master	Ravenswood, a leader in the making of fancy (expensive) zinfandel...
July 2, 2007	PR Newswire US		The 'R's of Zinfandel Challenge	...three of the most notable producers of Zinfandel . . Ravenswood

July 1, 2007	Grocery Headquarters	Pg. 39(3)	Out of the Cellar	Ravenswood's top-tier single-vineyard wines . . . been increasing their market share in grocery.
June 20, 2007	Contra Costa Times (California)	Lifestyle; Food	Creamy Linguine Dish Fine Backdrop for Syrah	Ravenswood Winery . . . earned its reputation on zinfandel wines . . .
May 11, 2007	Jersey Journal (NJ)			…Ravenswood zinfandel at the Charity Wine Tasting for Women Rising event.
May 11, 2007	Sun-Sentinel (Florida)	Food; pg. 3	Tidbits	…Riverside Hotel…hosting a Ravenswood wine dinner.
April 11, 2007	San Antonio Express-News	Taste; pg.4F	Calendar	Ravenswood Winemaker Dinner
April 4, 2007	The Myrtle Beach Sun-News (SC)	Pg. 4	Napa-style zinfandel – wine of the week	Offering from Ravenswood
March 30, 2007	TheStreet.com	News & Analysis	Better Branding	Ravenswood's strong presence in stores…
March 21, 2007	News-Journal (Florida)	D ; pg. 3D	Vintage Point	Most red wind afficianados know Ravenswood
February 24, 2007	Daily Mail (London)	Weekend; pg 78	Seeing Red; wine	Ravenswood is California's leading producer of great-value zin
September 20, 2006	The Capital (MD)	Foog; pg. 1	Wine, etc.	…since 1976 . . . fabled Ravenswood wine . . . Ravenswood coined the phrase "no wimpy wines"
August 25, 2006	Business World	Pg. 54	Weekender: going out; wine overflows	The Wine Festival . . . includes Zinomania: The Ravenswood Ultimate Survival Class
August 14, 2006	Inside Bay Area (California)	Tri-Valley	Ravenswood serves ice cream sprinkled with Livermore history	Ravenswood 10th annual Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social . . . Ravenswood Progress League was formed with a mission to educate the public about the site's history
August 10, 2006	The San Francisco Chronicle	Wine; Pg. F2	Letters to wine	…Joel's partner…was as instrumental.. in making Ravenswood the successful operation it became…
July 27, 2006	The San Francisco Chronicle	Wine; Pg. F1	Ravens to Riches; Ravenswood founder Joel Peterson could retire weathly…	In 2001…Ravenswood was bought by Constellation Brands for $148 million. . . . Ravenswood Vintners Blend wines found in supermarkets and drugstores across the country. ..makes up about 80 percent of the nearly 1 mission cases of wine Ravenswood makes…

July 19, 2006	MiMiegasite.com	Articles	Vin Extraordinaire…	…Ravenswood offers an event for up to 50 people …to create their own wine blend
July 12, 2006	Pittsburgh Tribune Review		Zinfandel maker stood fast against wimpy wines	Among the many outstanding zinfandel producers…Ravenswood Winery …stands as a master
July 1, 2006	The Atlantic Monthly	Pg. 154	Zins online: a few choice wines for summer	Ravenswood has made itself practically synonymous with Zinfandel
June 29, 2006`	The San Francisco Chronicle	Wine; Pg F1	Fine whine: The sound of NASCAR's engines bring wine marketers running	…Ravenswood…a primary sponsor for three races in the 2006 NASCAR Busch Series
April 13, 2006	Stratford Beacon Herald (Ontario)	Food; Vine Lines; Pg. 10	If It's This Good, It Must be a Zin	Ravenswood is a name long-associated with…Zinfandel producers
April 1, 2006	The Sentinel	Pg. 21	A majestic way to tickle the tastebuds	Ravenswood is a well-known California wine brand….
March 25, 2006	Daily Mail (London)	WKD; Pg 83	And so to z	Ravenswood is a legendary producer of Zin
January 7, 2006	The Irish Times	Magazine; Food and wine	Not for wimps	…Ravenswood, famous for making wines that aren't "wimpy"
December 14, 2005	The Arizona Republic	Food & Drink; pg. 5F	Some Surprisingly super sips off the grocery shelf	…Ravenswood is one of the earliest and most important names in California zinfandel.
December 14, 2005	The Houston Chronicle	Flavor; Pg. 3	Winemaker meticulously tends to the zins of Ravenswood	The bread and butter wine of Ravenswood has always been its Vintners Blend zin….Producion of this particular wine has grown enormously over the years, pushing the Ravenswood total to around half a million cases.
November 30, 2005	The Capital (Maryland)	Food; Pg. D1	Wine, etc. Ravenswood grows out of cult statuts	Ravenswood's fabled wine maker Joel Peterson…
August 14, 2005	Calgary Sun	Showtime; wine; pf. SH11	Palatable Summer	Ravenswood….zin specialist from California
August 5, 2005	Pacific Sun	Pg. 17	What's new	Ravenswood Winery, almost as famous for its barbecues as for its big reds…
May 25, 2005	The Boston Globe	Food; Pg. E3	Decision clarified, clouds wine world	Constellation Brands, whose massive holdings includes giants like…Ravenswood…
May 18,	Pittsburgh		Briefs:	… Ravenswood signature

2005	Tribune Review		'Zinfomania' to visit arts festival	Zinfandel, made famous …
April 13, 2005	Sacramento Bee	Taste; Pg F4	Lots of choices, wide price range	Ravenswood Winery…A California winery best known for forthright zinfandels…
March 4, 2005	Stratford Beacon Herald (Ontario)	Food; Pg 16	Reds wines on the highlight reel	…Ravenwood is famous for their super-ripe, rich, luscious Zinfandels…
February 10, 2005	Pittsburgh Post-Gazette	Food; Pg. D-1	Wines sparkle	Ravenswood is one of the top producers of red zinfandel…
January 13, 2005	The San Francisco Chronicle	Wine; Pg. F1	Former Ravenswood vintner transplants himself	After 15 years at Ravenswood Winery…the source for arguably Ravenswood's finest Zins.
January 10, 2005	Forbes	Pg. 68	Big Gulp	Ravenswood, a winery with what is now the bestselling red zinfandel in America
January 5, 2005	The News Journal	Life & Leisure; Pg 3E	Zin lovers gather for activities in San Francisco	Ravenswood seems to get better and better each year and can arguably claim the crown of the best zinfandel winery.
November 24, 2004	The Capital (Maryland)	Food; Pg. C1	Etc: West Coast pinot noirs are worth taste	Ravenswood is known for its vineyard-designate zinfandels . . . one of the most reputable winemakers in California
November 14, 2004	Scripps Howard News Service	Life Style	Favorite little wine may be from a mega-winery	Constellation owned Ravenswood, a premium producer of Zinfandel
October 20, 2004	Sacramento Bee	Taste; Pg. F5	Nothing 'girlie' about this sauvignon bland from Styria	And speaking of wine labels, one of the more dramatic, effective and historic in California is Ravenswood Winery's bold interlocking circle of ravens
September 23, 2004	The San Francisco Chronicle	Wine; Pg. F8	Think you're tough enough to handle the zin of Ravenswood?	The company's main slogan –No Wimpy Wines—holds true.
August 10, 2004	Gambit Weekly	Pg. 53	Wine of the week: 2002 Ravenswood Vintners Blend Shiraz	Ravenswood's California winemaker went down under to produce this …wine
June 6, 2004	Ventura County Star (California)	Escapes; Pg. 2	Vintage buses return to Catalina	Ravenswood Winery in Sonoma has kicked off the summer season with weekend barbecues and music.
May 26, 2004	The Washington Times	Food; Pg. E03	Ravenswood, Zinfandel, Lodi	The Ravenswood winery produced a host of zinfandels…

			2001 $14	
May 12, 2004	The News Star (Louisiana)	Accent; Pg. 2B	Ravenswood County Series Zinfandels have own flavor	A circle of three ravens clutching at each other's legs is a symbol of Ravenswood Winery.
April 10, 2004	Belfast News Letter (Ireland)	Pg. 27	Lifestyle: The rich taste of a zinfandel grape…	Ravenswood, a serious producer of California zinfandel
January 22, 2004	Sun-Sentinel (Florida)	Food; Pg. 3	Ravenswood Zins Bound to Please	…one wine virtually synonymous with the grape is Sonoma county-based Ravenswood.
January 21, 2004	The News Journal (Delaware)	Life & Leisure; Pg. 3E	Ravenswood's bold zinfandels brim with 'gusty' flavor	…the famous dark label of three ravens in a circle.
December 31, 2003	The Capital (Maryland)	Food; Pg B1	Wine	Great Values. Ravenswood Vintners Blend Cabernet Sauvignon 2001
December 20, 2003	The Times (London)	Features	..the right festive bottles	2001 Ravenswood Vintners Blend Zinfandel…lip-smackingly good
November 19, 2003	Iowa City Press-Citizen	Life; Pg. 5B	Pinot Noir perfect with turkey	…such well-respected wineries as Franciscan, Ravenswood and Simi
November 19, 2003	New York Times Late Edition	Section Fl Pg. 12	Talk	Among the top zinfandel producers, like Ravenswood…
November 19, 2003	Newsday (New York)	Food & Dining; Pg. B35	Wines to be thankful for	The top tier, at several price points, includes Ridge, Ravenswood, Martinelli and Storybook Mountain
November 12, 2003	The Washington Post	Food; F07	Thanksgiving in red and white	Top choices. Ravenswood 2001 Vintners Blend Cabernet Sauvignon…long been one of the best red wine values from California
October 22, 2003	Tulsa World (Oklahoma)	Dining, Restaurants; Pg D6	Zinfandel grapes…	One of the leaders in producing high-quality zinfandels has been Ravenswood Winery
May 21, 2003	Salt Lake Tribune (Utah)	Pg. D1	Brash, all-American Zinfandel…	…Ravenswood, one of California's pioneer and premier zins
April 24, 2003	Sun-Sentinel (Florida)	Wine; Pg 3	Zins Deserve Some respect	For 25 years, Ravenswood has been producing extraordinary zins
December 31, 2002	Scripps Howard News Service	Life Style	Worthy Zins…	…wines from Ravenswood, one of California's best producers
December 19, 2002	The San Francisco Chronicle	Wine. Pg. D6	Disabled man sues wineries over handicapped access	Ravenswood, which hosts more than 10,000 visitors a year
December	The Seattle Post-	Life and Arts; Pg.	Pick of the week	Ravenswood produces about

4, 20002	Intelligencer	D4		400,000 cases of zin each year
November 27, 2002	Richmond Times Dispatch	Food, Pg. D-2	Ageless American Wines…	Some favorites: Traditional names such as Ravenswood…come to mind
November 27, 2002	Yakima Herald-Republic (Washington)	Pg. 81	Wine	The top zins-single vineyard bottling from Ridge, Ravenswood Cline….
November 8, 2002	Austin American-Statesman (Texas)	News. Pg. A1	A toast to Texas	The winemakers producing for Signature Wines are notables such as …Ravenswood
August 14, 2002	Wilkes Barre Times Leader	Agenda	Agenda	A comprehensive tasting of Ravenswood's renown and stunning line of Zinfandels..
February 27, 2002	North Short News (British Columbia)	Dining; pg. 33	Food Calendar	….fine California wines from such wine-makers as …Ravenswood
January 25, 2002	Albuquerque Journal	Venue. Pg. 11	Two new delis expand local sandwich scene	The wine menu will include Ravenswood chardonnay, zinfandel, cabernet sauvignon, and American Geeurztraminer.
January 9, 2002	The New York Times	Section F; Pg. 4	Tastings	Looks also for bottles from…Ravenswood
December 17, 2001	Business Week	Wines; Pg 138 E1	Mid-Price Delights from California	Ravenswood Winery, which over time has gained a near cult-like following…
November 28, 2001	The Houston Chronicle	Food; Pg 2	New wine..	…Ravenswood Winery….in 25 years, Peterson's production went from a handful of cases to a staggering 500,000.
November 21, 2001	Tampa Tribune	Baylife Flavor; Pg. 2	Get Comfortable with Ageless American Favorites	Some favorites...Traditional names such as Ravenswood
November 18, 2001	Wisconsin State Journal	Wine; pg G1	Dress up the bird with win	Ravenswood: the most widely distribute Zinfandel
September 8, 2001	The Record	SK-Wine	Stockton, Calif. Hosts regional wine-tasting event	….well-known wines including…Ravenswood
April 21, 2001	The San Francisco Chronicle	Business; Pg B6	Ravenswood Winery is Sold	Founded in 1976, Ravenswood won rave reviews for its distinctive Zinfandel wines…In the 1980's, it expanded into Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot and Syrah.
April 6, 2001	The Capital (Maryland)	Entertainment; Pg. 2	Dining Out	Our pick for best value…red would be Ravenswood Zinfandel
April 4, 2001	The Arizona Republic	The Good Life; Pg 6G	Zinfandel Fest Debuts in Valley	Ravenswood 1998 Old Vine Zinfandel…This is a big name in

				the Zinfandel world and Ravenswood wines are widely available
March 5, 2001	Forbes	Forbes life; Pg 190	Zinful Pleasures	Recommend the following…Ravenswood Monte Rosso
February 28, 2001	Kansas City Star	Food; Pg E1	The pows and bams belong to '99s…	Zins great three "r" wineries (Ravenswood, Ridge and Rosenblum) have unquestionably been in the top ranks of zinfandel for well over a decade.
December 31, 2000	Denver Rocky Mountain News	Pg. 35A	Californian touts wines of Colorado	Known for its zinfandel, Ravenswood grew from a first harvest of 479 cases to a publicly owned company that produced 500,000 cases last year.
November 19, 2000	The Washington Post	Magazine; Pg. W21	Big fish; Bigger fish	…wines by the glass include such worthy options as …Ravenswood Lodi zinfandel
November 5, 2000	The New York Times	Section 14; Pg. 14	Under $20	…list of good value wineries….Ravenswood
November 1, 2000	Arkansas Democrat-Gazette	Features; Pg E3	The Wine Press seasons in the sun…	Ravenswood 1997 Napa Valley Zinfandel…is the sort of wine that zinfandel lovers dream about.
August 23, 2000	Philadelphia Daily News	Food; pg. 50	The air was heavy and so were the wines	Not just any wines either – these were big, rich reds from Ravenswood
July 4, 2000	The Miami Herald	Food news	There's nothing wimpy about Ravenswood wines	Ravenswood popularly priced …zinfandel, which makes up half of its production.
June 16, 2000	The San Francisco Chronicle	Pg. 3; The Arts	Blues Greats Come to Boogie by the Russian River	This year's festival will also feature wine tasting…able to taste premium wines from Ravenswood
June 1, 2000	CBS Marketwatch	Wall St. Eavesdroper	Why Ravenswood's god rosy bouquet	Flaherty ™'s favorite vintner for investors is Ravenswood Winery (RVWD).
March 8, 2000	Morning Star (North Carolina)	Lifestyle; Pg. 3D	…Zinfandel is a terrific red	My favorites include Ravenswood
March 3, 2008	Sun Sentinel (Florida)	Pg. 61	Cool City/ Pembroke Pines	The wine list….top flight-zinfandels from Ravenswood
December 8, 1999	The Commercial Appeal (Tennessee)	Appeal. Pg. F3	High Alcohol makes big wine king of vineyard	Huge is the word for the unamused Ravenswood Zinfandel 1997
November 18, 1999	Times-Picayune (Louisiana)	Food; pg. F4	Fine Zinfandels available for Thanksgiving	Ridge, Ravenswood and Rosenblum…thress of the most reliable producers of world-class zinfandel on the planet
October	Newsday (New	Food & Dining.	….Courting	Of the syrahs tasted, these are

20, 1999	York)	Pg. B24	Syrahs in California	considerable merit: 1996 Ravenswoon Icon
October 20, 1999	Asbury Park Press	Pg 1D	Big red laps up spicy stew	Wine needs more Joel Petersons and more Ravenswoods
October 1, 1999	Los Angeles Magazine	Pg. 155	Escape to Wine Country	Ravenswood…Their motto says it all: Nullum Vinum Flacciudm: no wimpy wines. A retreat for red Zin addicts, Ravenswood hosts a weekend summer BBQ
August 27, 1999	Philadelphia Daily News	Pg 90	My Dinner with…	San Marzano offers an impressive list of wines, including Ravenswood zinfandel
August 11, 1999	The New York Times	Section F; Pg. 8	Talk	Take Ravenswood, a well-known winery in Sonoma, California
May 28, 1999	Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)	Pg. E10	Lilly's European Cuisine	One of Albuquerque's most fun food events is the Vintage Albuquerque Fine Wine and Art Auction to benefit the Mexico Symphony Orchestra…The founder of Ravenswood Winery…is the …honorary chairman.
January 6, 1999	Los Angeles Times	Food; Page 9	Drink	Prominent wine producers such as Rosenblum, Ravenswood…
December 2, 1998	The San Diego Union Tribune	Food; Pg Food-6	Buying for the connoisseur can be easy	California's top wineries such as…Ravenswood
November 29, 1998	The Boston Globe	Magazine; Pg. 30	Uncork the holiday spirit	Zinfandels from …Ravenswood…are unbeatable
July 15, 1998	Buffalo News (New York)	Food; Pg. 3D	Zinfandel's Colorful Comeback	My favorites include those from…Ravenswood
June 10, 1998	The Washington Post	Good; Pg. E08	Zinfandel buying basics	Benchmark bottling: Ravenswood Winery Old Hill Ranch
May 10, 1998	The New York Post	Entertainment; Pg. 043	'96S and one '95 that rully good	My first notes for the Ravenswood Sangiocomo Chardonnay 1996, Sonoma Valley were "exquisite" and "wonderful."
April 29, 1998	Fresno Bee (California)	Pg. E3, Wines of the week	Wines of the week	Ravenswood has few rivals in its mastery of zinfandels
April 29, 1998	Newsday (New York)	Food & Dining; Pg. B17	A Vintage year	…Ravenswood are among leading zinfandel producers in quality.
April 22, 1998	Dayton Daily News (Ohio)	Food; Pg. 3C	Store's Buyer gives sweet reds recommendations	Wine of the week: Ravenswood 1996 Vintners Blend Zinfandel
January 14, 1998	Chicago Sun-Times	Food. Pg 4	Napa's wines offer elegance..	The Ravenswood is a blockbuster
December 18, 1997	Florida Times-Union	Taste; Pg. E-6	Wine-lover lists sure to make holidays bright	…the great Zinfandel producers such as Ravenswood

			and gay	
November 19, 1997	Newsday (New York)	Food & Dining; Pg. B25	The Wine glass	The Ravenswood is a blockbuster
October 29, 1997	Arkansas Democrat-Gazette	Food; Pg. 5E	Tricks can be treats ..	…a glass of the remarkable Ravenswood 1995 Icon
October 1, 197	Wines & Vines	Pg. 16(5), Vol. 78	The pick of the crop	Joel Peterson, the winemaker at the Sonoma Valley's Ravenswood vineyards, has been a visible supporter of the farm workers even donating the proceeds to a couple of organizations from an auction conducted at the winery.
August 6, 1997	Birmingham news (Alabama)	Lifestyle; Pg. 2C	Sonoma is valley for fine wines	Ravenswood winery has summertime barbecues in the vineyards…
April 2, 1997	The Gazette (Quebec)	Wine. Pg. C5	'User-friendly' zins from Napa Valley	…you cannot talk of California's finest "zins" without mentioning the "Three Rs"..Rosenblum, Ridge and Ravenswood
February 5, 1997	The Record	Food; Pg F02	Rich Reds take the bite out of winter	…top producers such as Ridge, Ravenswood….
January 29, 1997	The Dallas Morning News	Food; Pg 5F	Ravenswood Zinfandel Napa Valley 1994 $12.99	One of the best producers is Ravenswood founded in 1976 by Joel Peterson
January 26, 1997	The San Francisco Chronicle	Pg. 34; Dining Out	Gibson Headed in right direction…	At the top of the 50-item list is …the 1994 Ravenswood Sonoma Zinfandel…
January 15, 1997	Dayton Daily News (Ohio)	Food. Pg. 2C	Red vs. white: zinfandels remain a mystery	Wine of the week: Ravenswood 1995 Vintners Blend Zinfandel
December 20, 1996	Anchorage Daily News (Alaska)	Weekend; Pg 6H	Gift of the Grape is always appreciated	..a list of some of the best..Other Reds Ravenswood Zinfandels
November 21, 1996	Florida Times-Union	Taste; Pg. F-1	'96 Nouveau will be in town for turkey day	This event included two excellent seminar/tastings. The first featured Joel Peterson, winemaker and president of the legendary Ravenswood Winery, famous for the intense and powerful character of its wines.
October 11, 1996	Times-Picayune (Louisiana)	Lagniappe; Pg. L36	Barataria offers taste of family tradidion	…Ravenswood, a pace-setting zinfandel producer
October 6, 2996	The Sunday Oregonian	Northwest living; Pg. L18	Leaves, wine choices should turn to Redkramer on	…these wines have the finesse one seeks….Among zinfandel fans…and they are legion…few wineries have a more passionate

			wine	following than..Ravenswood…acclaimed for its emphatic wines.
September 25, 1996	Chicago Tribune	Good Eating; Pg. 2	Win with zin	Today, zinfandels from..Ravenswood…and other wineries are brought up before they get to retail shelves.
September 18, 1996	The Washington Post	Food; Pg. E09	California Subdivisions	Ravenswood Winery Sangiacomo Vineyard 1994 ($27.50) is perhaps the best Merlot ever released from the appellation
August 7, 1996	The Washington Times	Part E; Food; Pg. E1	Zinfandels are layered, balanced as barbecue	Ravenswood famous for rare and expensive single-vineyard zinfandels excelled in 1994 with this more widely available offering.
May 22,1996	The Houston Chronicle	Food; Pg. 4	Wine of the Week	The 1994 Ravenswood "Napa Valley" Zinfandel…Four and ½ stars
February 15, 1996	The Daily Yomiuri	Pg. 10	The epicures	…as the voluptuous powerhouse zins of Ravenswood
January 10, 1996	The Baltimore Sun	Food; Pg. 1F	Time commits wine crime;	Most of the kingpins of the Zin mob would be there …the Ravenswood mob…
December 13, 1995	The Commercial Appeal (Memphis)	Appeal, Pg. 2C	Wines to stuff a stocking or a case	Four from Ravenswood
December 1, 1995	San Jose Mercury News (California)	Eye; Pg. 29	Curtain rises on holiday shows	Ravenswood Victorian Christmas Fair
November 29, 1995	The San Francisco chronicle	Food; Pg 4	Cellar Selection	…a Zinfandel that helped Ravenswood attain its success
November 1995	Texas Monthly	Reporter; Pg. 32	How to: choose a right wine for Thanksgiving	…a fine selection would be Ravenswood red Zinfandel
October 18, 1995	Denver Westward	Mouthing Off; Pg 62	Mouthing Off	At the tiny Ravenswood winery in Sonoma…we were treated to a series os tasters right out of the barrels…This winery is known as a mecca for zinfandel fans…
September 21, 1995	Orlando Sentinel	Food. Pg. H4	A tale of success: zinfandel zooms in price and kick	The keepers of the zinfandel flame….Joel Peterson of Ravenswood, began to get the recognition they deserved for their monumental old-vine zinfandels
September 14, 1995	San Diego Union Tribune	Food. Pg. Food-15	Now's the time to appreciate the quality of scarce Zinfandel	Ravenswood: This boutique Sonoma winery is dedicated to vineyard-designated Zinfandels…Ravenswood is

				expensive for zin
July 26, 1995	Arkansas Democrat-Gazette	Food; Pg. 2E	Wine has a place at a barbecue	…big Zinfandels…such as those made by Ravenswood…my personal favorite
July 13, 1995	Los Angeles Times	Food; Page 13	Crushorama	...Ravenswood, whose single-vineyard Zinfandels are nationally famous.
May 17, 2005	New York Times	Section C; Page 9	Wine Talk	In any winery can challenge Ridge's dominant position in Zinfandel, it is Ravenswood . . widely popular Vintners Blend…
March 18, 2005	The Globe and Mail (Canada)		On Wine …	Ravenswood chisels out a finer, more elegant tone
January 25, 1995	Birmingham News (Alabama)	Lifestyle; Pg. 3B	He acquired a 'taste' for making good wines at an early age	…most 5 year olds don't grow up in a family like that of Joel Peterson of Ravenswood winery.
January 18, 1995	Plain Dealer (Ohio)	Food; Pg. 3E	California cabernets disprove faultfinder	Ravenswood's winemaker is one of California's greatest zinfandel makers
January 11, 1995	Morning call (Allentown, PA)	A.M. Magazine, Pg. D1	Connoiseurs will be able to compare the best at Ritz Carlton wine festival	March 14: A celebration of Zinfandel with Ravenswood's Joel Peterson
December 29, 1994	San Diego Union-Tribune	Food. Pg. Food-7	No bones about it	Ravenswood: yet another overachiever from Sonoma.
Decembe r 1, 1994	San Diego Union-Tribune	Food. Pg. Food-10	Winemakers have individual approach	…Ravenswood…creating wines that are greater thtn the sum of their parts…some of the most superb bottling of wine in the world.
November 30, 1994	The Baltimore Sun	Food. Pg. 1E	It's time to keep company with Calif. cabernets	…Ravenswood's winemaker is one of California's greatest zinfandel makers.
October 15, 1994	Wine Spectator	Pg 60	The best of times	Many of the best red zinfandels come from Sonoma, including Ravenswood
July 14, 1994	Orlando Sentinel	Food. Pg. H1	A guide to the Disney wine festival	Among the newcomers are Ravenswood's Joel Peterson (maker of fine zinfandel)…
June 1, 1994	The Washington Post	Food; Pg. E9	Zapping Zinfandel	Producers such as …Ravenswood…have been wowing the zinfandel faithful for years…
May 25, 1994	The Capital (Maryland)	Food; Pg. 81	Wine, etc.	The best zinfandel can be found in the warm Dry Creek region of California. Wineries such as

				..Ravenswood have built reputations on just this grapa…..Mr. Peterson's zinfandels are monsters.
April 27, 1994	The San Francisco Chronicle	Editorial. Pg. A20	Letters to the Editor	The quintessential Zin: Joel Peterson at Ravenswood makes some superb Zins…
February 1, 1994	The Age (Australia)	Epicure; Pg. 5	Zinfandel back from the brink	As many wineries ceased making red zinfandel, it became the specialty of a few fanatics…Ravenswood
December 19, 1993	Orlando Sentinel	Food; pg. L6	Domestic Wines Earn Place at head of holiday table	…best red zinfandels…Ravenswood..
December 1, 1993	The Washington Times	Food; Wine; Pg. E1	Wines of Sonoma make an impression	Sonoma's top zinfandel producers are Ravenswood….
November 1, 1993	Wines & Vines	Pg. 48(2). Vol V 74	Take another look at export markets	Currently, export sales represent about 7 to 10 percent of Ravenswood volume. ..Ravenswood has already passed through the expensive "build-up" phase, and now finds export to be as profitable as out-of-state markets in this country.
August 25, 1993	The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)	Food; Wine; Pg. D3	The Zen of 'Zin'	Ravenswood Vintners Blend ($17.30), a wine that showed extremely well earlier this year at the Playhouse Wine Festival
July 29, 1993	San Diego Union-Tribune	Food. Pg. Food - 12	A dream cellar…	These are the wines I would purchase…Best value under $10: 1. Ravenswood Vintners Blend Zinfandel…
June 30, 1993	The Seattle Times	Food. Pg. F3	Zinfandel is taken more seriously these days	…a few winemakers have elevated it to its rightful position…Ravenswood produce oooh and ahhhs from wine lovers.
June 23, 1993	The San Francisco Chronicle	Food. Pg. 4	Wimps Don't Drink Ravenswood Wines	Ravenswood is no joke, either; it produces some of California's best Zinfandels.
June 16, 1993	Plain Dealer (Ohio)	Food. Pg. 2E	Reborn: A Faith in Zinfandel	…fanatic following of Ridge or Ravenswood.
April 14, 1993	New York Times	Section C; Pg. 1	Wine Talk	Ravenswood Winery…specializes in Zinfafndel…exacting standards of the wine maker, Joel Peterson
February 22, 1993	Nation's Restaurant News	Pg. 31	Zinfandel: as versatile as its producers	One of the features was Ravenswood's '86 Old Hill…one of the finest California Cabernets

				he'd ever sampled.
January 6, 1993	The Commercial Appeal (Memphis)	Fun Food & Facts, Pg. E6	Two dozen most memorable of '92	The list of 12 red wines…Ravenswood Old Hill Zinfandel 1990…..Ravenswood Sangiacomo Merlot 1990
January 6, 1993	The Seattle Times	Food. Pg. F4	The best and worst of the year in wine	Zinfandel: It's red again and doing better than ever under the labels of Ravenswood…
December 6, 1992	New York Times	Section 13LI, Pg. 21	A la Carte	…two wine tasting meals this month. The first…will feature the wines of Ravenswood
November 15, 1992	The Boston Herald	Magazine; Pg. 19	Wine	Ravenswood…A great value from one of California's best Zin makers.
November 12, 1992	Chicago Tribune	Food Guide; Pg. 5B		Joel Peterson of Ravenswood Winery will present several of the winery's highly praised single-vineyard zinfandels and other wines.
September 20, 1992	Boston Herald	Magazine; Pg. 15	Taming the wild Zinfandel	With Ravenswood, this is some of the best Zin available for this vintage.
August 26, 1992	The Commercial Appeal (Memphis)	Fun Food & Faces, Pg. E6	Top Price doesn't always indicate high-quality wine	I tasted some pretty darned good stuff… Ravenswood Dickerson Vineyard Zinfandel 1990… Ravenswood Cooke Vineyard Zinfandel 1990… Ravenswood Old Hill Zinfandel 1990… Ravenswood Sangiacomo Merlot 1990
January 16, 1992	St. Petersburg Times (Florida)	Food; Wine; Pg 10D	Chardonnays up from '89 quality	…wonderful red wines from Ravenswood …
November 17, 1992	New York Times	Section 6. Pg. 70	Wine	Any list of worthy producers would include Ravenswood…
October 10, 1991	Orlando Sentinel	Food. Pg. h14	Fall is time to bring on red zins	I choose wines that I know will go with our foods…favoring Ravenswood.
September 19, 1991	Los Angeles Times	Food. Pg. 11	About wine	Ravenswood is not a 40,000-case operation, pretty substantial for a so-called "boutique" winery.
July 24, 1991	New York Times	Section C; Page 6	Kitchen Bookshelf	Ravenswood and Ridge Vineyards, two eminent producers…
June 29, 1991	The Independent (London)	Weekend Travel. Pg. 44	In search of original Zin	…two other vineyard designated Zinfancels…that Ravenswood

				produces as among the best
June 27, 1991	Los Angeles Times	Food. Page 35	The mystique of zinfandel	….two of the state's best Zinfandel makers, Joel Peterson of Ravenswood…
June 6, 1991	Los Angeles Times	Food; Page 41	Food Calendar	…Ravenswood Winery, is offering a wine-tasting and gourmet cuisine trip on Idaho's Salmon River
May 30, 1991	The Atlanta Journal and Constitution	Food; Page 05	Wine	Ravenswood owner/winemaker Joel Peterson followed the family tradition
January 28, 1991	Sports Illustrated	Focus; Pg. 7	Meet Dr. Z's all-world wine team	Chicago Bears coach Mike Ditka, the noted hard guy…personally selects the wines for his two Chicago-area restaurants..Ravenswood was impressive.
November 25, 1990	New York Times	Section 6;Pg. 88	Wine	After Ridge, one of the most serious—and successful--- zinfandel makers is the Ravenswood Winery in Sonoma County.
November 19, 1990	The Commercial Appeal (Memphis)	Food; Pg. C1	Thanksgiving poses tough taste choices	Recommendations:…Ravenswood Vintners Blend 1988
November 16, 1990	Newsday (New York)	Part II; Pg. 23	Dining Out	…connoisseurs will appreciate…Ravenswood Vintner's Blend Zinfandel
October 1, 1990	Forbes	Forbes FYI, Pg. 16	Grape Juice; the under $10 sure thing.	Ravenswood…best known for its intense, limited production single-vineyard zinfandels…
June 7,1990	San Diego Union-Tribune	Food; Food-21	Hearty wines add to barbecue	Steve Gwynne…suggests the 1998 Ravenswood Vintner's Blend Zinfandel at $6.99 to accompany steaks and chops.
June 6, 1990	The Seattle Times	Food; Wine; Pg. D3	Raise a glass to grilled meals	Another favorite of mine is Ravenswood…
April 5, 1990	Chicago Tribune	Food Guide; Pg. 5	Poor player Merlot may get a chance to strut its stuff on the stage	1986 Ravenswood Merlot., Sonoma. A muscular wine…

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Easy-drinking reds perfect for cookouts Knoxville News-Sentinel (Tennessee) May 24, 2009 Sunday

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Knoxville News-Sentinel (Tennessee)

May 24, 2009 Sunday

SECTION: LIFE; Pg. 49

LENGTH: 418 words

HEADLINE: Easy-drinking reds perfect for cookouts

BYLINE: ROGER KILLEN **Wine**

BODY:

Warm weather usually means the proverbial switch to white **wine.** However, all those spring and summertime cookouts with lots of burgers and barbecue usually correlate to serving some easy-drinking reds. These four red **wine** selections are relatively new editions that are affordable, tasty and good all-around pairings.

2007 Coppola Celestial

Blue Malbec ($14.99): The Godfather has done it again. Writer and director Francis Ford Coppola has once again extended his famous Diamond Collection of **wines** to include the very hot Malbec grape. Embellished with aromas of clove, pepper and allspice, the 2007 Coppola Malbec offers up black cherry flavors, a hint of cinnamon and a dash of oak infl uenced black fruit. Leave it to the movie maestro to work his magic on yet another **wine.** This one is classic Malbec with more fruit-forward enjoyment than the deluge of South American juice fl ooding the market.

2008 Darby & Joan

Cabernet ($9.55): The latest roll out by one of Australia's premier **wine** groups, the Grateful Palate Imports is the 2008 Darby & Joan Cabernet, an un-oaked red with loads of luscious fruit. Its bouquet opens up with a combination of plum berries and green bell pepper. Although it's a huge 15 percent in alcohol, Darby & Joan doesn't hog the glass like it was lugging around a lot of heat. A very gracious dose of watermelon Jolly Rancher does fade toward the end, but for under $10, this one shouldn't disappoint.

2006 Razors Edge Shiraz

($11.39): While we're on the subject of **wines** from the land down under, I'd be remiss if I didn't recommend a new one to the East Tennessee market. The 2006 Razors Edge is textbook Aussie Shiraz. Slightly warm and spicy, it manages to walk the edge between a plum, cherry start and a dried fruit finish. This is a smooth Shiraz with no razor burn. Great with a Thunder Road Burger from Litton's or Aubrey's, Razors Edge is another solid Aussie Shiraz and a safe case purchase.

2007 Zen of Zin ($9.55):

I was recently visiting Big Brother Tony down in Hotlanta and had a great California Zinfandel with some of his lip-smacking delicious barbecue ribs. Wowzer! The 2007 Zen of Zin is a bottle of karmic love. Produced by legendary Zinfandel maker **Ravenswood,** the Zen of Zin answers an oak lovers dream with notes of vanilla, brown sugar and spicy goodness. If you're looking to restore a little peace to the universe or at least to you own soul, then the Zen of Zin is just what the yogi implied.

Roger Killen is **wine** manager at Bob's Package Store in Knoxville.

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SIP OF THE WEEK Charlotte Observer (North Carolina) May 13, 2009 Wednesday STATE EDITION

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Charlotte Observer (North Carolina)

May 13, 2009 Wednesday STATE EDITION

SECTION: BUSINESS; Pg. 3D

LENGTH: 100 words

HEADLINE: SIP OF THE WEEK

BYLINE: KATHLEEN PURVIS, Staff Writer

BODY:
2006 **RAVENSWOOD** OLD VINE ZINFANDEL

LODI, CALIF.,

$12 SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE.LOOKING BACK, I'VE RECOMMENDED ONLY FIVE ZINFANDELS SINCE 2006. THAT'S STRANGE - THE OLD-VINE VARIETIES IN PARTICULAR ARE SOME OF MY FAVORITE **WINES. WHEN THE WINE** HAS A BARGAIN PRICE AS WELL, THERE'S NO REASON TO OVERLOOK IT. THIS ONE PACKS A LOT OF FLAVOR INTO THE GLASS - A RICH, ALMOST SILKY AROMA, DEEP COLOR AND FLAVORS OF DARK BERRIES, DARK CHOCOLATE AND SPICE, WITH ENOUGH ACIDITY TO KEEP IT LIVELY. A NICELY BALANCED **WINE** THAT HITS ALL THE MARKS. REALLY, THIS IS ONE YOU SHOULDN'T IGNORE. Kathleen Purvis

GRAPHIC: PHOTO:1

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Location, location, location; Single-vineyard wines don't forget where they came from Chicago Tribune May 13, 2009 Wednesday

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Chicago Tribune

May 13, 2009 Wednesday
Chicagoland Final Edition

SECTION: GOOD EATING ; ZONE C; Uncorked ; Pg. 3A

LENGTH: 474 words

HEADLINE: Location, location, location;
Single-vineyard **wines** don't forget where they came from

BYLINE: Bill Daley

BODY:

Joel Peterson started out as a one-man operation with 327 cases of his **Ravenswood** Winery zinfandel. Now, 32 years later, the winery is producing nearly 1 million cases of red **wine** a year under the ownership of Constellation Brands. And while his inexpensive Vintners Blend line is what he calls his "cash flow" **wine** -- it kept his enterprise going in the early years -- he retains a passion for the small-production top-tier zinfandel that made his reputation.

These **wines,** called the Vineyard Designate Series, are **wines** made from individual vineyards.

"You can taste the difference," Peterson insisted during a recent sampling of various **Ravenswood wines.** The winemaker was right.

As we worked our way up the quality/price ladder, starting with the Vintners Blend made from grapes harvested across California to **wines** made only with Sonoma County grapes to **wines** fashioned of grapes from, say, the Teldeschi Vineyard in Sonoma's Dry Creek Valley, we could taste an increasing focus, a greater distinctiveness.

Wine has always been about location.

The French call it terroir, which translates roughly into a sense of place. A combination of factors makes up terroir, from soil types to climate to sun exposure to elevation. Then there's how the farmer grows the grapes and how the winemaker turns them into the finished product.

What it means for you is a collection of **wines** that can offer a variety of sensory experiences. One single-vineyard **wine** may be brash, a second might be elegant, a third sensual. That can be very appealing for consumers looking for more than the usual **wine** experience.

"We enjoy drinking more interesting **wines,**" Peterson said. "It's like an intellectual game. All of us like complexity."

For the winemaker, the decision to create a new single-vineyard designate takes much thought and commitment.

"What I tell people is that doing a vineyard designate is a real investment in the land, and there are certain criteria," said Merry Edwards, a Sonoma County-based winemaker noted for the single-vineyard pinot noirs she makes at her eponymous winery in the Russian River Valley.

"You have to have a commitment to farming, and you need to make sure the personality of each vineyard designate is separate, distinct and unique with a sense of place. And when you make the **wine,** you look for consistency from year to year."

Edwards sells six single-vineyard pinot noirs. It can take a number of years before she's ready to launch a new single-vineyard **wine. The wine** has to be distinctive, different from any other in the line.

"I taste to the profile that has become the personality of the vineyard," she said. "Most of my blending is with aroma and secondarily with texture. I want a **wine** that's smooth and luscious in the mouth."

wdaley@tribune.com

Galas jazz up the arts world The Washington Times May 13, 2009 Wednesday

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May 13, 2009 Wednesday

SECTION: PLUGGED IN - LIVING; RANDOM ACTS; B03

LENGTH: 684 words

HEADLINE: Galas jazz up the arts world

BYLINE: By Stephanie Green, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

BODY:

This weekend is busting at the seams with events, both swanky and recession-proof, to salute the arts and support emerging talent in Washington and beyond.

On Friday night, the Phillips Collection's hallowed halls will welcome guests for the museum's annual gala. While works by Edgar Degas and Henri Matisse keep a watchful eye, guests will **wine,** dine and dance.

"This year's gala focuses on the local community from the locally sourced, sustainable menu to the honorees. All proceeds from the gala will support [the museum's] award-winning education programs that serve more than 90,000 local students, teachers and families, with a specific focus on schools in Washington, D.C.," gala spokeswoman Kelly Dieter says.

Tickets are $1,000 and can be purchased by calling 202/387-2151, ext. 311, or e-mailing events@phillipscollection.org

With the help of a little jazz, the young and young at heart are standing up and being counted for arts and culture.

The Jazz Age in Paris will come to the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel Saturday night as the Washington Performing Arts Society holds its annual gala, hosted by Pierre Vimont, the ambassador of France.

The evening's theme will harken to the time between World War I and World War II when icons including Ernest Hemingway and Josephine Baker dazzled the City of Light with their uniquely American flair.

The 800 guests will enjoy a silent auction and cocktails, followed by dinner and - the highlight of the evening - a performance by Wynton Marsalis accompanied by a four-piece band.

Tickets for the event start at $350. For more information, call 202/293-9325.

Also on Saturday night, the jazzy theme continues at the annual Smithsonian Young Benefactors Ball, to be held in the Kogod Courtyard at the National Portrait Gallery. With the theme All that Jazz: Roaring Twenties, the event features as honorary guests social blogger Pamela Lynne Sorensen and NBC correspondent at large Luke Russert. MicroStrategy chief executive officer Michael J. Saylor has signed on as honorary patron.

Started in 1990, the Young Benefactors, also known as YBs, comprise about 1,000 young professionals with special interests in the arts, culture and history and advancing the Smithsonian Institution among their generational peers.

Kate Stilwill, communication coordinator for the YBs, says the jazz theme was selected for the event "because we wanted to remind everyone that it is possible to have fun during hard economic times," referring to the Great Depression that began in 1929.

She explains that the current economic climate has stifled ticket sales, so the host committee decided to lower the ticket price to $125 as a "last-minute promotion to get people in the door."

The evening, sponsored by Capitol File magazine, Heineken International and **Ravenswood** Winery Inc., will benefit the Culture4kids Fund, an organization that provides local children access to the Smithsonian's educational resources, including its summer camp program.

Visit www.YoungBenefactors.org for tickets or call the Smithsonian ticketing office at 202/633-3030.

White House honor

Last week, the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts announced that 20 of its YoungARTS finalists have been named Presidential Scholars in the Arts, a prestigious honor for a graduating senior.

Each year, NFAA begins with more than 6,000 applicants to its YoungARTS program. Through a rigorous adjudication process, 60 YoungARTS finalists are nominated for consideration by the Commission on Presidential Scholars, from which 20 are named Presidential Scholars in the Arts.

Next month, the scholars will be presented with their medallions at a special ceremony with President Obama at the White House.

Ernest F. Baker II of Opa-Locka, Fla., a 2009 Presidential Scholar in the Arts for dance, says, "Being a Presidential Scholar in the Arts and a YoungARTS winner has proven to me that anything is possible; it has changed my life. My success with YoungARTS has made me feel that I should continue to pursue my career as a dancer and choreographer. I never thought I'd get this far - all the way to the White House!"

GRAPHIC: Ernest F. Baker II and Kate Davis are among this year's Presidential Scholars in the Arts. [NO CREDIT]

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WINE BUY OF THE WEEK Plain Dealer (Cleveland) April 15, 2009 Wednesday

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April 15, 2009 Wednesday
Final Edition; All Editions

SECTION: TASTE; Pg. E9

LENGTH: 112 words

HEADLINE: WINE BUY OF THE WEEK

BYLINE: Donald Rosenberg, Plain Dealer Reporter

BODY:

The bottle: **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend Merlot California 2006.

Price: $9.99.

Varietal: Merlot.

Where it's from: California's Sonoma County, where **Ravenswood** produces an array of varietal **wines,** including this budget-priced merlot.

Where we found it: It is available in many local stores.

Tasting notes: The nose on this crimson **wine** has aromas of red fruit, black pepper and wood. The bold, full style, with firm fruit carrying through restrained tannins, makes it a terrific value.

Pairings: Beef, lamb, pork, poultry, pasta and creamy cheeses.

Each week, Donald Rosenberg highlights a moderately priced **wine** worth trying. Listed retail prices are based on state of Ohio minimums.

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Narrowing wines helps identify your favorite Richmond Times Dispatch (Virginia) April 1, 2009 Wednesday

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Richmond Times Dispatch (Virginia)

April 1, 2009 Wednesday
Final Edition

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. D-2

LENGTH: 455 words

HEADLINE: Narrowing **wines** helps identify your favorite

BYLINE: JACK BERNINGER; Special Correspondent

BODY:

When you shop for a **wine,** the number of choices can be daunting.

Narrow the search and go for your favorite varietal, say a Zinfandel, and do your own taste test to determine

which best suits you.

Refine the search even more and look for the same varietal by the same winery.

Ravenswood, a noted Zinfandel-producing winery from California, presents that chance.

A recent tasting of three **Ravenswood** Zins resulted in some surprises, then again, maybe not. The winery's motto is, "No wimpy **wines.**"

Each was full-bodied and rich with excellent flavors. Each was made by the same winemaker, Joel Peterson, and produced and aged in the same way. But each came from different areas, each had a different blend and each exhibited characteristics of its own area - or terroir.

These **wines** are in **Ravenswood's** County Series, a slight step below its Vineyard Designates and a step above its Vintners Blends. The **wines,** all 2006 vintages and all available in the Richmond market, were:

* Napa Valley Old Vine Zinfandel (86% Zinfandel, 13% Petite Sirah, 1% Carignane); $18

* Sonoma County Old Vine Zinfandel (79% Zinfandel, 12% Carignane, 5% Petite Sirah, 4% mixed); $15

* Lodi Old Vine Zinfandel (78% Zinfandel, 21% Petite Sirah, 1% Carignane); $12

The results?

If a big, tannic **wine** is your choice, then the Napa Valley Zin is the way to go. It had excellent raspberry plum scents and tastes, and its tannins and dryness made it stand out... or standoffish if dry isn't your thing. Though drinkable now, it should mellow out with some aging. The winery says it can lay down for up to seven years.

The Sonoma County Zin had its fans.

"From a Zinfandel standpoint, I thought the Sonoma was perfect," Keith Reynolds said. "Great taste. Very well balanced."

Raspberry and blackberry dominated the taste but didn't obscure a bit of cinnamon. The flavor rolled to the finish. It, too, can age up to seven years.

Al Coleman's favorite was the Lodi, a soft, well-balanced **wine** with loads of fruit.

"It had everything a Zin should have - the balance of dryness and tannins, the combination of fruit and a taste of spice," he said. "I got a lot of the spice and pepper from the Petite Sirah."

Ravenswood's County Series is produced in much the same way its more expensive big brother, Vineyards Designate, is. After the **wine** is made and aged, a determination is made whether it can stand on its own. If it doesn't quite stand up to the standards of Designate **wines,** it will be blended with other types of **wine** from the same area with the hope of creating a **wine** that represents that specific area.

Ravenswood says the County Series may be its best value **wine.** There's no argument from this corner.

Contact Jack Berninger at jberninger@timesdispatch.com

NOTES: VINES & **WINES**

GRAPHIC: PHOTO

LOAD-DATE: May 1, 2009

Source: News & Business > Combined Sources > **News, All (English, Full Text)**
Terms: **ravenswood and wine and date(geq (1/1/2008) and leq (5/26/2009))** (Edit Search | Suggest Terms for My Search)
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THESE OLD CALIFORNIA VINES YIELD FINE ZINFANDEL WINES Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, Florida) March 12, 2009 Thursday

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Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, Florida)

March 12, 2009 Thursday
Broward Metro Edition

SECTION: LIFE; Bob Hosmon Tasting Notes; Pg. 3E

LENGTH: 421 words

HEADLINE: THESE OLD CALIFORNIA VINES YIELD FINE ZINFANDEL **WINES**

BYLINE: Bob Hosmon Tasting Notes

BODY:

For more than 30 years, Joel Peterson has been making zinfandel **wines** in California's Napa and Sonoma counties. From the beginning, his **wines** have been single vineyard reds that emphasize the fruit, and they have been superb. No one disagrees.

Consider the 2006 **Ravenswood** Dickerson Zinfandel. Produced from vines that were planted in a small Napa vineyard in 1920, this zinfandel is easily recognizable from its hints of mint and cedar. Like all of Peterson's offerings, the Dickerson zin emphasizes fruit with a whisper of French oak in the finish.

The 2006 **Ravenswood** Big River Zinfandel, produced from Alexander Valley grapes planted in 1900, delivers the typical taste of **wine** made from old vines. It's complex, concentrated and filled with soft plum flavors. I also like the 2006 **Ravenswood** Barricia Zinfandel, a blend of zin and petite sirah Sonoma grapes. It's rich yet smooth and silky. Peterson explains that the petite sirah contributes tannin and a peppery undertone.

In making the 2006 **Ravenswood** Belloni Zinfandel, the winemaker blends Alexander Valley zinfandel with other black grapes. The result: a red that is well balanced and ends with a long finish. Close your eyes and you can taste hints of raspberry and blueberry.

The old vines planted between 1905 and 1910 that provide the grapes for the 2006 **Ravenswood** Teldeschi Zinfandel yield a red that has black cherry flavors with nuances of vanilla and plum typical of grapes grown in Sonoma's Dry Creek Valley. It's a favorite of mine with its intense, assertive, "press the pedal to the metal" structure.

Serve with: Pair these extraordinary zinfandels with grilled meats; game; osso buco; Italian pastas made with meat, tomato or cheese; and pizza with sausage or hearty mushrooms.

Availability/suggested retail: Sold in better **wine** shops, the **Ravenswood** zinfandels are priced from $32 to $35.

Have a question about **wine?** Write to **Wine,** Sun Sentinel, 200 E. Las Olas Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301-2293. Or send an e-mail with your first and last names, address and telephone number to dhartz@SunSentinel.com with "**Wine** Column" in the subject line. Sorry, no personal replies.

INFORMATIONAL BOX:

Wine of the week

Selection: The 2007 Artesa Chardonnay from the Carneros district of California is the perfect choice for those who prefer their white **wines** filled with refreshing fruit flavor and not overpowered by oak.

Serve with: Match this appealing white with poultry, fish or grilled shrimp.

Availability/suggested retail: Sold in **wine** shops for about $20 a bottle.

NOTES: < Informational box at end of text.

Wine of the week Anchorage Daily News (Alaska) February 27, 2009 Friday

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Anchorage Daily News (Alaska)

February 27, 2009 Friday
FINAL EDITION

SECTION: PLAY; Pg. H7

LENGTH: 161 words

HEADLINE: Wine of the week

BODY:

Petite sirah is used as a blending grape. Properly, it is duriff, but is known in this country as petite sirah. It is a cross between syrah and peloursin. Since it produces dark, spicy and richly textured **wines** it has always been popular as a blender. You see it used to crank up soggy vintages of cabernet, pinot, zinfandel and other mainstream varietals. In California and Australia it makes great standalone **wines** capable of aging 10 to 20 years. **Ravenswood's** blend series has a 2006 petite sirah that is excellent. It offers rich, stacked flavors for very little. The nose is spicy, with plums and cherries and undertones of leather, cigar and licorice. The mouth shows fine grain, chewy tannins, a medium body and dark stone fruits of cherry and plum. Deeply colored and nicely rustic, this **wine** is not widely distributed but well worth the hunt. Serve with full flavored cuts of meat. Costs about $10.

-- Michael McVittie reviews

wines available locally

GRAPHIC: Wine of the week

LOAD-DATE: February 28, 2009

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Wine of the week Anchorage Daily News (Alaska) February 20, 2009 Friday

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Anchorage Daily News (Alaska)

February 20, 2009 Friday
FINAL EDITION

SECTION: PLAY; Pg. H7

LENGTH: 105 words

HEADLINE: Wine of the week

BODY:

Wine of the week

They say Napa has the price, but Sonoma has the deal, and it's true. The cabernet coming out of Napa is twice the price of Sonoma, but that's going to be a hard sell in today's economy. Here's a tasty cab put together by Joel Peterson, winemaker and creator of the **Ravenswood** winery. He's known for his zinfandels, but he's got a winner in the 2005 **Ravenswood** Sonoma County cabernet sauvignon. Peterson popped a little cabernet Franc in there to broaden the aromatics and flavors. It's a varietal when done right. Serve with rich meat dishes. Costs about $20.

-- Michael McVittie reviews

wines available locally

LOAD-DATE: February 21, 2009

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Ravenswood Sonoma County Syrah, California, 2005 The Augusta Chronicle (Georgia) February 5, 2009 Thursday

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The Augusta Chronicle (Georgia)

February 5, 2009 Thursday
ALL EDITION

SECTION: APPLAUSE; **wine** time; Pg. P19

LENGTH: 213 words

HEADLINE: Ravenswood Sonoma County Syrah, California, 2005

BYLINE: Dennis Sodomka

BODY:

Cost: $14-16

What: While **Ravenswood** made its name with outstanding zinfandel, they have evolved to include many varietals. This Syrah is blended with Grenache, Carignane and Viognier to produce a classic Rhone-style **wine.** The deep reddish-purple color leads to floral scents mixed with smoky, jammy, black cherry aromas. The spicy, complex flavor ends with a hint of oak that lingers on the finish. It has enough structure to last several years in the cellar.

The Winery: This is a great example of **Ravenswood's** County series of **wines,** which are crafted from individual sites in the county on the label. After aging for 20-24 months in French oak, the **wines** are blended to produce an expression of regional terroir. That is, they reflect the special characteristics of the region in which they are grown. The individual **wines** in the blend often are as good as more expensive **wines,** but because there isn't enough for a separate vineyard-designated **wine,** they go into the cheaper blend.

Goes with: Steak, ribs, veal, hearty minestrone, We had it with grilled chicken and the smoky barbecue flavor perfectly accented the smoky characteristics of the **wine.**

Reach Dennis Sodomka at dsodomka@knology.net Read his column planning a **wine** tasting party in the February issue of Augusta Magazine.

LOAD-DATE: February 26, 2009

Source: News & Business > Combined Sources > News, All (English, Full Text)
Terms: **ravenswood and wine and date(geq (1/1/2008) and leq (5/26/2009))** (Edit Search | Suggest Terms for My Search)
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Ravenswood offers a variety of exceptional wines Abilene Reporter-News (Texas) January 28, 2009 Wednesday

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Abilene Reporter-News (Texas)

January 28, 2009 Wednesday

SECTION: LIFEHOME

LENGTH: 251 words

HEADLINE: Ravenswood offers a variety of exceptional **wines**

BODY:

Ravenswood Winery built its reputation on high-end red Zinfandel **wines.** It would be a mistake, however, to limit your enjoyment of **Ravenswood** to Zinfandel.

The **Ravenswood** Sonoma County series of **wines** offers exceptional character in several different varietals.

My favorite is **Ravenswood** 2006 Sonoma County Chardonnay ($15). This highly perfumed **wine** has floral aromas and juicy flavors of nectarine and apricot. The enchanting bouquet is enhanced by a dollop of Muscat (3%).

The rest of the **wine** is all Chardonnay (97%) with a perfect balance of tropical fruit, toasty oak and buttery texture. The beguiling finish leaves you wanting another sip. Lovely on its own, this **wine** is even better with grilled salmon or cream-sauced pasta.

Ravenswood 2006 Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon ($15) is likewise an overachiever at this price. This is a complex **wine** with layers of cassis and black cherry flavor. Aged for twenty-two months in French oak, this **wine** has ample notes of vanilla and spice.

Unlike the Chardonnay, the Cab is not a **wine** to sip on the porch. It will likely age nicely for up to ten years, and is a natural match for well-marbled steak.

Ravenswood 2005 Sonoma County Syrah ($15) is rounded out by Grenache (5%), Carignane (5%) and Viognier (3%) for a classic Rhône-style blend.

This **wine** has ripe plummy flavors that show its Sonoma County roots. It also has the smoky and almost meaty character of a **wine** from the French Rhône. This stylish hybrid pairs well with beef stew and wild game.

LOAD-DATE: February 7, 2009

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MORE THAN GREAT ZINFANDEL Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, Florida) December 4, 2008 Thursday

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Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, Florida)

December 4, 2008 Thursday
Broward Metro Edition

SECTION: HIRISER; Pg. 15

LENGTH: 581 words

HEADLINE: MORE THAN GREAT ZINFANDEL

BYLINE: BENNET and SHEILA BODENSTEIN Special to the Forum

BODY:

Have you ever heard of **Ravenswood?** No, we do not mean Abner Ravenwood, the archaeology professor who trained and nurtured Indiana Jones. The **Ravenswood** in question is **Ravenswood** Vineyards, a producer of fine and affordable **wine** to which we strongly doubt dear old Abner had any connection.

Ravenswood Vineyards has been around for a long time. Its longevity in the highly competitive **wine** market speaks volumes about the quality of its **wine.** Throughout its history, it has been recognized for the quality and variety of its zinfandel **wines.** There are, however, many other varieties made by **Ravenswood** that are of the same quality as their zinfandels.

The **Ravenswood** vintners have a lot of experience handling zinfandel grapes and have applied their knowledge to some of the other classical varieties. The results are outstanding. Its **wines** exhibit an exceptional depth and fruit flavor, which we consider to be above and beyond what is in the marketplace today in a similar price range.

2006 Cabernet Sauvignon ($15). This **wine** is without question a true California cabernet sauvignon with a big fruit aroma and flavor. Cherry is the featured flavor and aroma, followed very closely by summer berries and a hint of oak in the background. The tannins, the component of a red **wine** that produces the dry sensation in the cheeks, are held in check and combined with the rest of the elements in the **wine** to produce a velvety feel in the mouth. We found this to be an excellent **wine** that can accompany a broad spectrum of summer meat dishes and should not be relegated solely to meals featuring heavy red meats.

2005 Syrah ($15). Syrah **wines** are the up-and-coming variety of the 21st century. Few other **wines** can accompany so wide a variety of modern foods. The **Ravenswood** Syrah is a medium-bodied, deep ruby-colored **wine** that displays the aroma of red raspberries and cloves. On the palate, the **wine** almost totally divorces itself from the aromas and offers the flavors of black currents, red fruits and a whisper of oak. The same flavors linger in the mouth long after the **wine** has been swallowed. This **wine** is true to the **Ravenswood** full fruit philosophy and is a joy to drink.

Vintners Blend 2006 Petite Sirah ($10). Petite sirah is just coming into its own in this country. While the variety is very popular in southeastern France, it languished for many years as an oddity and curiosity in the United States. Somehow, though, the variety has burst onto the marketplace and is capturing the fancy of **wine** lovers. First, and most important, this is a separate variety and should not be confused, compared to or associated with syrah **wines.** The names are even spelled differently. This petite sirah is a beautiful example of the dynamics and expansiveness of the variety. Dark summer berries and chocolate dominate the aroma and flavor with obvious hints of vanilla and oak. The finish, one of the outstanding features of this **wine,** is long and laced with cracked black pepper. This is a petite sirah to remember. When you have experienced it, the memory will linger in the mind for a very long time.

If we may, we would like to leave the **wines of Ravenswood** and get into the Beaujolais Nouveau, the first of the French **wines** to be released to the public and which is purported to herald what the rest of the Burgundian vintage will be like. We sampled the new **wine** and if it tells us anything, it's that the rest of this year's French vintage will be terrible. Our advice: buy American. {ZONE} HRB

LOAD-DATE: December 17, 2008

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Terms: ravenswood and wine and date(geq (1/1/2008) and leq (5/26/2009)) (Edit Search | Suggest Terms for My Search)

7 Ways to get festive This fall The News Journal (Wilmington, Delaware) October 8, 2008 Wednesday

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The News Journal (Wilmington, Delaware)

October 8, 2008 Wednesday
Final Edition

SECTION: SPARK; Pg. 16SP

LENGTH: 2311 words

HEADLINE: 7 Ways to get festive This fall

BYLINE: KELLY HOUSEN AND ROB KALESSE | spark

BODY:

KELLY HOUSEN | spark

Since we've flipped the calendar to October, our tank tops and flip-flops have been replaced with warm, fuzzy sweaters, corduroy jackets and suede boots.

And just because summer is a distant memory filled with Grapefruit Crush dreams at the Starboard and hazy Spark Summer Music Series rock shows, that doesn't mean that your weekends have to be empty. There are plenty of worth-while events on deck as well as places to go and food to eat this fall seaosn.

Check out our list of seven fun things to check out that will keep you busy until it snows.

{}#1. A BONFIRE BUILT FOR TWO

Pack your 'mallows and weiners, it's time to roast them over an open flame. Whether you're looking for something for a big group to do on a Friday night, or just want to take your sweetie out and explore human nature (in nature), a bonfire is a way to go.

Since building a bonfire in your backyard is a smidgen of a fire hazard, leave it to the pros at these local spots. They'll take you out to your bonfire, drop you off, and then pick you up later. You can almost smell the s'mores now.

Carousel Park

Where: Carousel Park, 3700 Limestone Road.

When: Any evening, as long as you make a reservation. Group hayrides start at 4 p.m., romantic hayrides are at 8 p.m.

Price: $95

Includes: A 45-minute hayride and a one-hour bonfire. The romantic bonfire also includes two skewers for roasting snacks. For those who go the group hayride rout, it's BYOS (thats bring your own skewers). Or you can rent them from Carousel Park.

Romantic: You'll get dropped off at a secluded spot, and left to your own devices until the driver returns to pick you up.

Group: The price is for one wagon, which can fit up to 25 people. (If you fill up a wagon for a group hayride, it's less than $5 per person.) It's important to make reservations for both types of bonfires.

More info: 995-7670 or www.nccde.org (click on the Fall Program Guide)

Milburn Orchards

Where: 1495 Appleton Road, Elkton, Md.

When: Check what evenings they have available when you make a reservation.

Having attended the $135-a-plate dinner last fall, we're here to tell you that it's quite the extravagant event, with an awesome dinner prepared by local chefs, **wines** paired with each course, dancing and a silent auction.

Last year's speaker was Victoria Wyeth, whereas this year, as an added bonus, they're bringing in Joel Peterson, of the famed **Ravenswood** Winery in Sonoma, Cal. Call 866-890-4367 for your tickets to the limited event.

{}Chaddsford Winery

Fall foliage, chill music and Spiced Apple **Wine** -- that's the way to spend your Sunday afternoons in October. Chaddsford Winery is hosting their Spiced Apple Sundays on the 12th, 19th and 26th of this month, from noon-5 p.m., with live music from 2-5 p.m.

There is a $10 hot mulled **wine** tasting fee, but you can take a tour of the winery while you're there, picnic outdoors in the crisp autumn air and gather some of their favorite recipes for your own fall and holiday entertaining.

{}Info: 632 Baltimore Pike, Chadds Ford, Pa., 610-388-6221

{}Twin Brook Winery

While it's possible to pair **wine** with any great meal, with all the ingredients in most dishes, it's hard to pinpoint the precise relationship between certain characteristics of the **wine** and food.

But with chocolate and cheese, you get right to the point. And if you've never paired either with **wine,** a trip to Twin Brook Winery should be at the top of your list this fall, most notably on Nov. 8 and 9, for their **Wine,** Cheese & Chocolate Weekend.

From 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday and noon-5 p.m. Sunday, the folks at Twin Brook will sample some of the finest imported and domestic cheeses and chocolates, as well as **wine** pairings by the glass for all visitors. All products that weekend will be available for sale.

{}Info: 5697 Strasburg Road, Gap, Pa., 717-442-4915

{}#6 PUNKIN' CHUNKIN'

Where: Bridgeville

When: Friday, Oct. 31 to Sunday, Nov. 2

Time: Gates open at 7:30 a.m., the last event is usually around 8 p.m.

Admission: $9 per adult, plus $2 parking per vehicle

The fest: Yes, that's not Superman you see flying though the air, it's a pumpkin, and it got there thanks to either a catapult or an air gun.

There's live music starting at 6 p.m. on Friday, with performances by The Charlie Daniels Band, Randy Owens, Joanna Cotten, Carolina Rain and Jo Dee Messina. There's live music all day on Saturday, with The Funsters, 5:01 The Band, Cherry Bud Band, Midlife Crisis Band, and Barron Creek Band all performing. There will also be fireworks at 8:30 p.m. On Sunday there's a chili cookoff at 11 a.m. and awards at 4 p.m.

More info: www.punkinchunkin.com

{}#7 FANTASTIC FALL FOODS

Orchards have more to offer us in the fall than just apples and cider. Linvilla Orchards, in Media, Pa. has hundreds of different kinds of hot sauce, and any jelly that you could imagine.

At Milburn Orchards, in Elkton, Md., pick up one of their jellies or fruit butters, a pie or one of the best sweets ever, their famous apple cider donut.

Honey mustard

$2.79, Linvilla Orchards

This is one of the many mustards that Linvilla carries -- some of their own brand, some other specialty brands. It has the right balance of honey and mustard, and if you'll excuse me, I have to go find a soft pretzel or a chicken nugget.

Apple cider donuts

85 cents each, Milburn Orchards

Milburn's apple cider donuts put Dunkin' to shame. The donuts are light inside, with a hint of apple cider flavor and coated in a mixture of sugary goodness. It's impossible not to lick your fingers when you're done.

Peanut butter pretzel pie

$9.95, Linvilla Orchards

Source: News & Business > Combined Sources > News, All (English, Full Text)
Terms: ravenswood and wine and date(geq (1/1/2008) and leq (5/26/2009)) (Edit Search | Suggest Terms for My Search)

Ravenswood: No wimpy wines The Independent Weekly (Durham, North Carolina) September 10, 2008 Wednesday

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The Independent Weekly (Durham, North Carolina)

September 10, 2008 Wednesday

SECTION: EAT & DRINK; Pg. 35 Vol. 25 No. 37 ISSN: 0737-8254

ACC-NO: 58905

LENGTH: 1416 words

HEADLINE: Ravenswood: No wimpy **wines**

BYLINE: Ciompi, Arturo

BODY:

ABSTRACT

Many of you have seen and drunk **Ravenswood** "Vintner's Blend" California Zinfandel. At under $10, this perennial best value is a staple at grocery stores, Costco, World Market and even specialty **wine** shops. Such is the consistent quality and value of this Zinfandel, sourced from throughout California's vineyards, that the **Ravenswood** name has come to mean dependably rich, succulent, non-wimpy reds. ("No Wimpy **Wines**" is [Joel Peterson]'s credo.) Vintner's Reserve now produces dose to a million cases per year and is the mainstay that allows for the single-vineyard holdings.

Peterson eventually followed in his parents' footsteps, becoming a laboratory scientist, while supplying that sensibility toward his growing love of **wine.** Applying a scientist's patience and insight, he scoped out some of California's oldest and greatest vineyard sites with a firm plan in mind. In an era when many growers pulled up centuryold zinfandel vines to plant more cosmopolitan Chardonnay and Merlot, Peterson was instrumental in saving some of these old stands of vines, dating from the 1800s to 1920, and producing some of today's much sought after "old-vine" specialties. Peterson is ferocious in his belief about the quality of these old vineyards and their ability to produce memorable products. In contrast, the shortsightedness of many growers has come home to roost, as we now live in a social climate that admires the preservation of such antiquities.

Peterson helped found Zinfandel Advocates and Producers (ZAP), a 17-year-old organization promulgating the quality and history of Zinfandel in California. Zinfandel is the third-most widely planted grape in the state. A few years ago, ZAP proposed that Zinfandel should be named "California's Historic **Wine.**" That idea was shot down by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2006.

FULL TEXT

Aug. 7 was a grand day to be in uptown Charlotte. Winding down from a four-week national tour, Joel Peterson, winemaker of **Ravenswood** Winery, was in town to show off his seven single-vineyard signature **wines,** the central prize and passion of this superb estate. A few lucky tasters imbibed this prestigious lineup-**wines** that are standard-bearers of a philosophy Peterson has been cultivating since 1976.

Many of you have seen and drunk **Ravenswood** "Vintner's Blend" California Zinfandel. At under $10, this perennial best value is a staple at grocery stores, Costco, World Market and even specialty **wine** shops. Such is the consistent quality and value of this Zinfandel, sourced from throughout California's vineyards, that the **Ravenswood** name has come to mean dependably rich, succulent, non-wimpy reds. ("No Wimpy **Wines**" is Peterson's credo.) Vintner's Reserve now produces dose to a million cases per year and is the mainstay that allows for the single-vineyard holdings.

Resilient and energetic, Peterson told the story behind these current releases, beginning with a personal history. He grew up in Richmond across the bay of San Francisco, the son of scientist parents (his mother was a chemist who worked on the atomic bomb). In the 1950s, his parents formed a **wine** club of 20 like-minded members. As a boy, Peterson was allowed to taste the **wine,** but had to spit; his dad measured the amount of **wine** that went into his mouth and out into the spittoon. With a European sensibility, the family and their **wine** club tasted all manner of French **wines** including, in one case, a 1951 Chateauneuf-du-Pape that left a lifelong impression on Peterson.

Peterson eventually followed in his parents' footsteps, becoming a laboratory scientist, while supplying that sensibility toward his growing love of **wine.** Applying a scientist's patience and insight, he scoped out some of California's oldest and greatest

DRINK; Good wine is more than alcohol percentage The Atlanta Journal-Constitution September 4, 2008 Thursday

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September 4, 2008 Thursday
Main Edition

SECTION: FOOD & DRINK; KULERS UNCORKED; Pg. 7K

LENGTH: 1344 words

HEADLINE: DRINK;
Good **wine** is more than alcohol percentage

BYLINE: GIL KULERS; For the Journal-Constitution

BODY:

Joel Peterson unapologetically makes **wine** with nearly 16 percent alcohol. This is the same man whose motto promises "No wimpy **wines.**"

The founder and only winemaker Ravens-wood Winery has ever had audaciously complains that plenty of **wines** suffer from EAS ---excessive alcohol syndrome. His don't.

"I'm not arguing for high alcohol," he said during a recent visit to Atlanta. "It's not only about the alcohol. People talk about European **wines** being so low in alcohol, and why can't [California vintners] make **wines** like that. If you were making **wine** in France in '45, '47, '49, '29, '59, '61 or '82, you'd have vintages that all had alcohol levels that were quite high --- generally over 14.5 percent."

Peterson, who adores French **wines,** is unafraid to speak the dirty little secret held by California winemakers (and vehemently denied by the French): Every year is an epic vintage year in California because of its ample sunshine and powerful Pacific Ocean. So why not make epic **wine** every year with the ingredients offered by Mother Nature?

Because it's a complicated process for someone who has spent a lifetime making zinfandel, especially when talking about alcohol levels. Zinfandel grapes ripen unevenly. At harvest, some look like raisins; others like plump, juicy grapes; and some are tiny, tart berries --- sometimes all in the same bunch. Some winemakers wait until all the grapes catch up to the raisins or they pick out the unripe berries.

"When you do this, you go clear over to the end of the scale with residual sugar [in the **wines**] or 17 percent alcohol **wines,**" he said, explaining that the concentrated sugars in the raisins can greatly increase the alcohol content. Peterson's artistry comes in part from knowing when he has the right balance of under and overripe grapes. The resulting **wine** typically lands in the mid-15 percent alcohol range, nothing you'd mistake for a wimpy **wine,** but not suffering from EAS either.

The other confounding issue Peterson has: Those persnickety **wine** writers, who plead for lower alcohol levels, yet reward alcoholic bombs with high scores. Peterson admits he's benefited from the schizophrenic **wine** press. In fact, he could hang his very survival on a 1984 visit by the influential **wine** critic Robert Parker.

Long-haired, grungy and just back from a ski trip, Peterson caught Parker in the driveway of Peterson's rundown Sonoma County, Calif., winery, which Parker described as a "tin shack." Thoroughly unprepared, Peterson rinsed out some glasses and they tasted the 1982 and 1983 vintages.

"He tasted my Sangiacomo chard and called it the 'reddest chard he ever tasted,' " Peterson said. More importantly, Parker blessed Peterson's zinfandels.

"He put me on the map," Peterson said. "I was grateful and at the time I really needed the mention."

At the time, Peterson --- who was working in the laboratory of Sonoma Valley Hospital --- was not quite paying the bills at the winery and his investors were understandably edgy. But even with the initial boost from Parker, he still needed some help.

"You need to make a white zin," Peterson recalled one of the investors saying. "I said: 'You are out of your mind!' Then he said that I had better think of something because [the investors] won't be there forever."

Peterson put together an inexpensive red zinfandel sourced from various sites in Sonoma. He called it his "cash-flow **wine.**" He made 1,500 cases and called it Vintners Blend.

It immediately sold out. In 1985, Peterson tripled the volume. It, too, sold out immediately. And while Peterson never intended to make one of the world's most popular red zinfandels, he did. Last year, **Ravenswood** produced 500,000 cases of Vintners Blend. His dream --- to craft small quantities of unique **wines** from select vineyards --- did not drown in the immense volumes of Vintners Blend, however. As fate would have it, the more generic zinfandels he made, the better able he was to keep his single-vineyard winemaking endeavors afloat, keeping investors happy.

Those investors were made extremely happy in 2001 when the world's largest **wine** company, Constellation Brands, bought **Ravenswood** for $148 million. One of Peterson's stipulations was that he remain as the winemaker. Even at 54, with the distinguished title of senior vice president, the grungy, hippie inside still wanted to make single-vineyard zinfandels.

And that he does. Peterson makes six vineyard-designated **wines** from locations in Northern California, some dating to the 19th century. And while he doesn't need the money, he remains the self-described "geeky little winemaker" trying to show people that big **wines** with nearly 16 percent alcohol can still have the finesse of a 1961 bordeaux.

Beyond the coaxing from **wine** writers, Peterson speculates on how California winemakers got on this tangent of making **wines** bigger for the sake of being bigger.

"The truth of the matter is that there are **wines** being made now that could not be made years ago due to the current technology," Peterson said. The specialized yeasts and technical processes have proved irresistible for curious winemakers. Couple that with positive reviews and impressive sales and you have an industry hooked on high-alcohol **wines.**

"These wines have 5 grams of residual sugar and are steeped in new oak," Peterson said. "They have a blast of flavor, but are not particularly pleasant to drink. They have become the giant Hummers of the **wine** industry. They're ridiculous and absurd."

Peterson's **wines** may share the same high-alcohol label, but he is quick to add that along with the alcohol comes unique, bold flavors and sufficient acidity that produces a balanced **wine.** Certainly not wimpy in the alcohol department, but nothing Peterson makes apologies for.

Gil Kulers is a certified **wine** educator with the Society of **Wine** Educators and teaches in-home **wine** classes. You can reach him at gil.kulers@winekulers.com

WINE RECOMMENDATIONS

Note: **Wines** are rated on a scale ranging from thumbs down, one thumb mostly up, one thumb up, two thumbs up, two thumbs way up and golden thumb award. These are suggested retail prices as provided by the winery, one of its agents or a local distributor.

2006 **Ravenswood** Big River Zinfandel, Alexander Valley, Calif.

$35

Two thumbs way up

Amazing aromas of black cherry and mincemeat pie. Brooding flavors of dark brown sugar, brandy-soaked raisins, dry cherry and ripe plums. Wonderfully balanced and enjoyable despite the 15.7 percent alcohol.

2006 **Ravenswood** Old Hill Zinfandel, Sonoma Valley, Calif.

$60

Two thumbs way up

Concentrated floral aromas, especially lavender, with a note of dry cherry. Anise-laced cedar flavors, with subtle blueberry and cherry notes. The cedar faded after two hours leaving berries and floral qualities.

2006 **Ravenswood** Dickerson Zinfandel, Napa Valley, Calif.

$35

Two thumbs way up

Smells like dark chocolate-covered cherries in a cedar box. Absolutely delicious black cherry and plum flavors mixed with cinnamon, cocoa and caramel cream.

2006 **Ravenswood** Barricia Zinfandel, Sonoma Valley, Calif.

$35

Two thumbs up

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With bold zins, Ravenswood's founder remains an enemy of the wimpy The News Journal (Wilmington, Delaware) August 13, 2008 Wednesday

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The News Journal (Wilmington, Delaware)

August 13, 2008 Wednesday
Final Edition

SECTION: LIFE; Pg. 3E

LENGTH: 487 words

HEADLINE: With bold zins, **Ravenswood's** founder remains an enemy of the wimpy

BYLINE: ROGER MORRIS

BODY:

Joel Peterson is the godfather of zinfandel.

As founder of **Ravenswood** winery in 1976 and still its head winemaker, Peterson took the neglected grape and, along with Paul Draper of Ridge and Kent Rosenblum, made it into a serious table **wine** with many of the characteristics of a great red Bordeaux. Peterson was in town recently to taste his **wines** and talk about his zin-ophilia.

When Peterson started **Ravenswood,** it was the age of the entrepreneur in northern California winemaking. Oh sure, there were millionaires like Joe Phelps moving in, but many of the winery startups were seat-of-the-pants operations, similar to the Internet startup companies launched by those geeky garage guys down in Silicon Valley.

The atmosphere, particularly in Sonoma County where **Ravenswood** is located, was loose and informal. The winemakers were passionate about their craft, mostly socialized with each other at night, and competed to get contracts for the best grapes during the day. **Ravenswood's** slogan, "No Wimpy **Wines,**" became famous.

In 2001, Peterson sold **Ravenswood** to Constellation Brands, continuing an end-game strategy of many people who started wineries during these boom years.

The good news is that Peterson, who has the grizzled good looks of one of Van Gogh's subjects, is still making great **wines** and says he loves the Constellation life. The fact that Peterson, 61, is still around seven years later indicates he probably means it.

Although **Ravenswood** makes many thousands of cases of its Vintner's Blend zin, the esthetic gold mine is in its vineyard-designated **wines** that come from all around the state -- Dickerson, Belloni, Big River, Teldeschi, Barrica, Old Hill, Pickberry.

"I make all of these **wines** the same way, because I do believe in terroir," Peterson says. "My mentality is more European -- open-top fermentation, punch down [to break the crust of grape skins], natural yeast, about 18 months in the barrel." Does he still use stems to make sure his **wines** aren't wimpy? He laughs. "I have a new winery, but I kept my old crusher," he says, "and it's so bad I get stems anyway."

The designated vineyards are mostly old vines, and most have some other grapes mixed in -- petite sirah, carignane, alicante bouschet. All the **wines** are fairly tannic, which helps them age gracefully into superior food **wines.** Still, there are differences -- the Old Hill is very Bordeaux-like. The Teldeschi is smoothly balanced and tastes of blackberry juice and dry chocolate. The Dickerson is spicier.

Peterson is proud that his son, Morgan, has decided to become a winemaker, even if it came after years of studying other things in college. "We've been making pinot noir together since he was 5," Peterson says.

Roger Morris has written about **wines** for years and regularly visits the winegrowing areas of the world. Write to him at The News Journal, Box 15505, Wilmington, DE 19850; fax 324-2415; or e-mail features@delawareonline.com

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Emma Beth has the heart to go on The Arizona Republic (Phoenix) February 1, 2008 Friday

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February 1, 2008 Friday
Final Chaser Edition

SECTION: PHOENIX REPUBLIC 3; Pg. 13

LENGTH: 504 words

HEADLINE: Emma Beth has the heart to go on

BYLINE: Kate Nolan, The Arizona Republic

BODY:

Emma Beth Bjorkman handed me her sketch of SpongeBob SquarePants and said, "That's a Bob-Bob."

Emma Beth, 3, was filling me in on her big-girl lifestyle, a frantic torrent of activity involving a Dora the Explorer tricycle, an outdoor swing set and a winning performance of the alphabet song, where "L-M-N-O-P" becomes "Emma No P."

Grabbing a plastic Elmo guitar, Emma Beth had her mom tune to MTV and air-guitared along, twin ponytails bobbing.

For an ending, she threw back her head, leapt forward and finished with a double knee-slide and a Pete Townshend full-circle twang, good enough for a Lollapalooza show.

That would have been a story by itself, even if the peppy toddler hadn't pulled up her shirt to show off her two bellybuttons.

She has the predictable one, plus another beside it, a white plastic cap that seals off a food tube attached to her insides.

Emma Beth was born with a rare problem. Her heart lacks one of four chambers. The right ventricle, the one that sends blood to the lungs for oxygen, never developed, so at birth Emma Beth's blood vessels sent both oxygenated blood and non-oxygenated, or blue, blood into the same chamber.

For decades, pediatric heart surgeons have been seeking ways to sustain life for children like Emma Beth, whose malady was once a death sentence.

For Emma Beth, the solution has been "Dr. Dori," as she calls Dr. Michael Teodori.

The Phoenix Children's Hospital heart surgeon is something of a legend, having helped create the hospital's heart center and performing 300 open-heart procedures a year with a very low mortality rate.

Teodori led five surgeries on Emma Beth, re-engineering her blood flow into a unique configuration in which much of the blood skips the heart and surges to the lungs via the force of gravity.

After the fifth procedure, in October 2006, Emma Beth finally traded the bluish tinge of her fingers and lips for a healthy pink, a sign she's getting more oxygen.

But her brother, Ethan, 6, still has to slow her down when his little sister plays too hard and starts gasping. Emma Beth is due for another surgery in 2009 to complete the replumbing after her major arteries grow larger.

The point of this week's column is that area residents can do something to help. On Feb. 10, Emma Beth's parents and friends are throwing a benefit for the highly regarded center, which recently teamed with the Mayo Clinic to provide care for adult survivors of birth defects of the heart. The $55 ticket price will contribute toward a $75,000 fundraising goal to help maintain the support Emma Beth and thousands of other kids count on.

*

Phoenix Children's Hospital Heart Center **wine** tasting

What: Fundraiser benefiting the Phoenix Children's Hospital Heart Center, featuring **wines of Ravenswood,** Mondavi and other wineries and appetizers from Patsy Grimaldi's Brick-Oven Pizzeria.

When: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Feb. 10.

Where: Market Street Park at DC Ranch, 20715 N. Pima Road, behind Grimaldi's, in Scottsdale.

Cost: Tickets are $55.

Details: www.pchwinetastingevent.com or 602-546-2664.

LOAD-DATE: April 9, 2008

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Charles Olken: A zin for every taste Marin Independent Journal (California) January 22, 2008 Tuesday

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Marin Independent Journal (California)

January 22, 2008 Tuesday

SECTION: LIFESTYLE

LENGTH: 852 words

HEADLINE: Charles Olken: A zin for every taste

BYLINE: Charles Olken

BODY:

The continuing controversy that follows zinfandel is not going to be solved by the latest set of **wines** coming from California vintners. Those who think zinfandel has gotten too ripe, too hot, too fat for its own good are going to point to half the **wines** on the market and say, "How can you drink that overweight, hot and ponderous stuff?"

Those who think that zinfandel is meant to be big and rich, full of juicy, berryish flavor and able to stain one's teeth with its inky color are going to point to the other half and say, "Who wants to drink those thin, wiry **wines?**"

And somehow, no one who produces **wines** in the middle, with alcohols in the mid- to upper-14 percent range and whose fruit and acid keep the **wine** in impeccable balance, gets credit for splitting the difference.

Take a look at this week's three-star **wines.** Not only are they made by folks who know how to craft zinfandel and have been at it for decades with great success, but the **wines** themselves are tasty, balanced, involving and age-worthy. If those **wines** are not your stylistic favorites, there are still plenty of interesting, relatively mannerly offerings among the plump, ripe set, and there are choices, in the lighter group of **wines.**

The thing is that ever since zinfandel emerged as an important varietal **wine** several decades ago, it has been all things to all people. From white zinfandel (which is more pink than white in most versions) to late harvest and all those in between, including the occasional sparkling zinfandel, the grape has shown its versatility.

It is the first grape to have it own fan club with thousands of members, most of whom are going to gather in San Francisco at the end of January to taste the wares of more than 300 producers in the biggest and best public tasting of which I know. The tasting is the work of ZAP, for Zinfandel Associates and Producers, and all zin fanatics are invited to join in; go to www.zinfandel.org for information.

Two stars 2005 Carol Shelton, Rocky Reserve, Florence Vineyard, Rockpile, Dry Creek Valley, $33. A real favorite year in and year out, this **wine** from grower Jack Florence's vineyard high in the Rockpile area above and to the west of the Dry Creek Valley floor, is just one of Shelton's outstanding creations this year. I like its sweet berryish fruit, and its brash but balanced stance on the palate. Put this one aside for a platter of savory sausages or a garlic-laden leg of lamb.

Two stars 2005 Edizione Pennino, Rutherford, Napa Valley, $40. From Francis Ford Coppola's Napa Valley winery, this lovely **wine** stands as compelling proof that concentration and careful construction can go hand in hand in zinfandel. Its blackberry, cola and caramel character runs deep and yet is superbly balanced. It is a bit tannic for current drinking with the elegant lamb preparations it deserves; I would set it aside for a short stay in the cellar.

$ Two stars 2004 Madrigal, Napa Valley, $26. There is an intriguing sense of sophistication about the layered aromas of this deeply fruited Zinfandel that sets it apart from much of the varietal crowd. Its flavors are deep and focused on berryish concentration even as its evident heat and grippy tannins take it towards the more rustic side in texture. Enjoy it now with savory fare or let it age for a few years.

Three stars 2005 **Ravenswood,** Teldeschi, Dry Creek Valley, $32; three stars 2005 **Ravenswood,** Big River, Alexander Valley, $32. It is now three decades since this winery burst onto the scene and declared itself as a serious player in the zinfandel ranks with its slogan, "No Wimpy **Wines.**" Together with Ridge Vineyards and Alameda's Rosenblum Cellars, **Ravenswood** formed the three "R's" of zinfandel, and these wineries today continue at the very top of the zinfandel game. Both **wines** are filled with concentrated, well-ripened blackberry fruit, and both display the zesty acidity that has long been a Ravens-wood hallmark. Drink

them now or in five years, they are superb efforts.

Three stars 2005 Ridge, Geyserville, Sonoma County, $35. There are those who find Ridge **wines** too light. I see the joy in those **wines,** but, it is the more balanced, complex, mannerly **wines** from Ridge that occupy more space in the zinfandel section of my cellar than any other. "Geyserville" has been in the Ridge portfolio for some 35 years now; and it was one of the great **wines** back in the 1972 and 1973 vintages when it debuted, and it is superb in the current vintage as well. This bottling, like those of **Ravenswood** above, invites early drinking with its berryish fruit and its lovely, still developing flavors, but it is also one of those Zinfandels that is happy to age for five years, ten years and often even for more.

And, here is the list of Good Value **wines:**

- $ 2006 Castle Rock, Dry Creek Valley, $13.

- $ 2006 Cline, Ancient Vines, California, $18.

- $ 2005 Kenwood, Sonoma County, $14.

- $ 2005 **Ravenswood,** Napa Valley, $14.

Charles Olken is a magazine publisher, syndicated columnist and author of **wine** books. For more information about his Connoisseurs' Guide to California **Wines,** log onto www.wineaccess.com/expert/connoisseurs.

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Zinfandel's history in U.S. is substantial El Paso Times (Texas) January 1, 2008 Tuesday

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El Paso Times (Texas)

January 1, 2008 Tuesday

SECTION: LIFESTYLE; Entertainment

LENGTH: 702 words

HEADLINE: Zinfandel's history in U.S. is substantial

BYLINE: By Vic Poulos / Special to the Times

BODY:

At Zin Valle Vineyards, we specialize in growing and producing zinfandel, a **wine** best known for its intense fruitiness, lush texture and higher alcohol content.

To Californians, zinfandel, as the most widely planted grape varietal, has almost a mythic status. During the past 40 years, the grape's history has seen the varietal rise and fall in stature, only to be "revered" today.

Zinfandel has become much more popular throughout the country as well. As winemakers continue to experiment with different varietals, they have found that zinfandel has been a huge hit with customers. And for good reason! First, a little history.

History of Zinfandel

The exact origin of zinfandel, or "zin" as many enthusiasts call it, continues to be debated, but many call it America's original **wine** grape.

The zinfandel **wine** grape was first brought to New York (not California) from Vienna, Austria, in the 1820s, where it was grown in greenhouses as the varietal likes growing in warmer environments, according to "Zinfandel: A History of a Grape and its **Wine**" by Charles Sullivan.

More recent research by Carole Meredith, a geneticist at UC Davis, however, found that the true origin of the zinfandel grape is actually Croatia. She was able to confirm this by making a DNA fingerprint of zinfandel and comparing it with a varietal native to Croatia.

The first zinfandel vines were planted in California in about 1830, and its popularity grew quickly, making it the most widely grown variety in the U.S. by the end of the 19th century, according to the book.

During the Prohibition era, small amounts of home production as well as the production of sacramental **wine** was allowed, keeping zinfandel in the minds of many consumers. On the East Coast, however, zinfandel dropped in popularity and varietals with thicker skins were grown instead to withstand the harsher climate.

In the 1960s, Ridge Vineyards led the way with its old vine single vineyard bottlings. In the 1970s, Joel Peterson founded **Ravenswood,** a well known and respected zinfandel producer. By the 1990s, with **wine's** resurgence, Larry Turley, an emergency room doctor and brother of the famous oenolgist Helen Turley, planted zinfandel in the heart of the Napa Valley. Likewise, the Seghesio family in Sonoma California dedicated its winery to the production of zinfandel. Kent Rosenblum, a veterinarian and onetime home winemaker, followed. By the late 1990s, zinfandel was well established as the "American Varietal" in the **wine** world. From the sweeter and lighter white zinfandel, to the bold and high alcoholic red zinfandel, the varietal now has a cult following. If you are a zinfandel fan, check out the ZAP (Zinfandel Advocates and Producers) Web site at www.zinfandel.org.

Zinfandel is now grown by more than 200 producers, and accounts for more than 23 percent of the total vineyard territory in the U.S., according to the California Association of **Wine** Grape Growers. That number has likely grown, however, as more vineyards in warmer climates such as El Paso are turning to zinfandel.

Fast facts

Zinfandel can range from a light, fruity blush **wine** to a strong red **wine** with ultra-intense pepper and jam characteristics. Many tasters of the Zin Valle Red Zinfandel pick up flavors of pepper.

Zinfandel grapes are small and difficult to grow. As the plant grows, the grape clusters tighten and ripen unevenly, making it difficult for the winemaker to set the perfect harvest time. Pick it early and the **wine** will taste green and vegetal. Pick late and it tastes like prunes and results in an extraordinary high alcohol content. Harvest timing is "key" to a good zinfandel.

A close relative of zinfandel is primitivo, a red grape variety grown in the Apulia region of southern Italy. Primitivo is a rich, bold grape, and it actually took researchers many years to figure out that the two varietals actually taste a lot alike.

Zinfandel food pairings

Red zinfandel pairs perfectly with steak, lamb, roast and hearty foods. Try zinfandel with some pasta with a heavier, tomato-based sauce for a pleasant surprise or even Chinese food with the spicier sauces. White zinfandel pairs well with pizza, salmon, Mexican food and barbecue.

Vic Poulos owns Zin Valle Vineyards.

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2004 RAVENSWOOD `DICKERSON' ZINFANDEL; WINE FIND The Baltimore Sun November 21, 2007 Wednesday

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November 21, 2007 Wednesday
FINAL EDITION

SECTION: TASTE; **WINE** FIND; Pg. 5F

LENGTH: 131 words

HEADLINE: 2004 **RAVENSWOOD** `DICKERSON' ZINFANDEL;
WINE FIND

BYLINE: MICHAEL DRESSER

BODY:

From:

Napa Valley, Calif.

Price:

$32

Serve with:

Roast turkey

You can serve either white or red with the Thanksgiving feast. Among whites, I recommend pinot gris. Among reds, zinfandel excels - especially the style of zinfandel that comes from Napa Valley fruit. And **Ravenswood** Dickerson is at or near the top of that breed. This **wine** is incredibly intense, complex and full-bodied, but with excellent balance and acidity. The flavors of cassis, blackberry and black cherry are clear and pure. The 15.5 percent alcohol is virtually undetectable under the fruit, but in combination with turkey and stuffing should ensure a great Thanksgiving night's sleep. If you can't find the low-production Dickerson, try Grgich Hills 2005 Napa Valley Zinfandel for a near-Dickerson experience.

[Michael Dresser]

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DRINKS Newsday (New York) November 7, 2007 Wednesday

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Newsday (New York)

November 7, 2007 Wednesday
NASSAU AND SUFFOLK EDITION

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. B14

LENGTH: 295 words

HEADLINE: DRINKS

BYLINE: Peter Gianotti

BODY:

Zinfomania

The 2005 zinfandel vintage, a bit more restrained and refined than the excellent, fruit-driven 2004, has lots of winners to go with holiday meals.

Look for these singular zins from two of California's exceptional producers, Rosenblum Cellars and the **Ravenswood** Winery:

2005 Rosenblum Richard Sauret Zinfandel ($25): An attractive Paso Robles winner, heady with black fruit, and very good with roast turkey.

2005 Rosenblum Harris Kratka Zinfandel ($35): Delightful, concentrated, smooth, plummy. with a burst of black cherry, this Alexander Valley **wine** is made for prime rib, porterhouse, roast lamb.

2005 Rosenblum Snows Lake Zinfandel ($35): Spicy, slightly smoky, floral; a high-mountain, Lake County **wine** ideal with steaks.

2005 Rosenblum Monte Rosso Reserve Zinfandel ($45): Terrific, big, balanced, complex Sonoma **wine,** with finesse, intensity, blackberry notes, real character. Thanksgiving bottled.

2005 **Ravenswood** Belloni Zinfandel ($30): Very ripe, balanced, rich, vivid, and loaded with berries. Long finish, and ready for the crown roast.

2005 **Ravenswood** Dickerson Zinfandel ($30): Spice, red berries, soft tannins, and a trace of mint. It will stand up to all the trimmings.

2005 **Ravenswood** Barricia Zinfandel ($30): Highly aromatic, well-structured, with cassis and spice characteristics, this is immediately enjoyable.

2005 **Ravenswood** Big River Zinfandel ($30): Jammy, plummy pleasure, round, slightly herbaceous, versatile and to the point. A very tasty intro.

LI **WINES**

A sweet holiday visitor arrives in a new guise: the 2005 Macari Vineyards Block E, made entirely with chardonnay instead of a blend including viognier and sauvignon blanc. Concentrated, clean, with tropical fruit notes, it certainly has varietal character. A 375-ml bottle is about $35.

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Fans adopt winery's logo for tattoos Windsor Star (Ontario) November 7, 2007 Wednesday

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Windsor Star (Ontario)

November 7, 2007 Wednesday
Final Edition

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. F1

LENGTH: 550 words

HEADLINE: Fans adopt winery's logo for tattoos

BYLINE: Shelley Boettcher, CanWest News Service

BODY:

Want to make Joel Peterson nervous? Offer to show him your tattoo.

It's not that he doesn't appreciate the artistry of a fine tat, he says.

It's just that as the winemaker and founder of **Ravenswood Wines** in California, Peterson often meets people who want to show him how much they love both his **wine** and its famous black and white label of three ravens, intertwined like a Celtic knot.

Problem is, their tattoos of said label are often on skin that's usually hidden out of the range of polite company.

"I've seen breasts, butts, the middle of backs and lower, arms, belly buttons, you name it," he says with a laugh.

"One time, I was getting a massage.... The therapist found out what I did and took off her blouse to show me her tattoo." (For the record, he wasn't hanging out in a seedy massage parlour where you might expect to have someone whip off their shirt in front of you.) Still, the popularity of the label as a tattoo speaks volumes about the popularity of **Ravenswood wines.**

Peterson started the winery in 1976, with the intention of focusing on red Zinfandels -- big, bold spicy **wines** that go well with red meat and Mediterranean food.

Although the grape is the third most cultivated grape in California (behind Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon), it was best known in the '70s as a sweet, pinkish **wine.**

"I don't do pink. I don't do sweet. And I don't do wimpy," he says and has said for years.

But Peterson could see the grape's potential.

"The red **wines** being made out of it at the time were excellent," he recalls.

"It was the right grape in the right place." That first year, he made 427 cases. By 1981, Peterson took over a space that **wine** critic Robert Parker Jr. once described as "a tin garage." In fact, an oak toilet seat manufacturer had owned the place before Peterson arrived to turn it into a winery.

It took another six years before Peterson was getting paid for his work, 11 years after starting **Ravenswood.**

"It was definitely a labour of love, more than a financial success." The winery now makes more than 800,000 cases of **wines** (including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Petite Syrah and Chardonnay).

The **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend is the top-selling Zinfandel in the world, and one of the most popular California reds in Canada.

And Peterson is now a senior vicepresident with Constellation **Wines,** the largest **wine** company in the world.

Its sales are more than $4.6 billion each year.

"If I'd done Cabernet, I would have been a little fish in a big pond.

"It's turned out that I'm a whale in a small pond. But that's OK." Not bad for a guy whose first exposure to **wine** was as a child growing up in Northern California. When Peterson was 10, his father -- a chemist and amateur oenophile -- started a winetasting club at a time when few such clubs -- or, for that matter, wineries -- existed in the U.S.

Peterson has passed that passion for **wine** on to his own two children. His son Morgan bottled under the Vino Bambino label for a time. Now he's starting his own winery, Bedrock **Wine** Company (bedrockwineco.com).

As for Peterson, he spends most of his time these days on business -- and occasionally, whether he wants to or not, checking out tattoos.

Some are good. Some aren't. Most are black, like the label; one had been reinterpreted in green and orange ink "around someone's belly button."

GRAPHIC:
Colour Photo: Mikael Kjellstrm, Calgary Herald; BODY ART: Three ravens in Celtic knot. ;

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Art in a bottle; A little sipping and blending and voilà: your own California vintage. Los Angeles Times August 19, 2007 Sunday

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August 19, 2007 Sunday
Home Edition

SECTION: TRAVEL; Features Desk; Part L; Part L; Pg. 3

LENGTH: 1274 words

HEADLINE: Art in a bottle;
A little sipping and blending and voilà: your own California vintage.

BYLINE: Jenn Garbee, Special to The Times

DATELINE: NAPA, CALIF.

BODY:

The teacher instructed us to measure 15 milliliters of **wine** by sucking on our glass pipettes and transferring the liquid to our waiting beakers. For the next half-hour, we tinkered on our own, adding a generous pour from B, a few drops of C until the formula was just right.

On a recent weekend excursion to Napa and Sonoma, my husband, Kevin, and I rediscovered pipettes and other lab apparatus we hadn't seen since high school chemistry class. Only here, we weren't back in school; we were on vacation.

Many wineries recently have added hands-on winemaking seminars and blending sessions. They range from hourlong, single or multiple-bottle blending classes to more involved, full-barrel winemaking programs over several weekends.

At first, we were skeptical. We're neither sommeliers nor oenologists. But we were keen on the idea of swirling up our own house blend and learning a little about winemaking.

First stop, COPIA: the American Center for **Wine,** Food and the Arts in downtown Napa, where we took an afternoon blending seminar.

"Winemaking is subjective, which means no one can tell you what you're tasting, or what kind of **wine** to make," said Mikaela Sullivan, a COPIA **wine** educator.

Armed with a pipette, 100-milliliter beaker and five single varietal **wines** -- Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot -- we started blending.

Kevin experimented with his own mix. I made a **wine** in the style of Joseph Phelps' Insignia, using one of the formula blends listed on our class handout. The 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Merlot, 3% Malbec and 10% Petit Verdot blend was nicely balanced.

A COPIA staff member mixed a full bottle of my formula and placed it in a hand-crank corking device. I gave the lever a firm pull, and voilà! In less time than it takes to cook dinner, I had made a bottle of **wine.**

With the basics down, we drove to **Ravenswood** Winery in Sonoma, known for its Zinfandels, to focus on a single varietal.

Jake Watson, **Ravenswood's wine** educator, instructed us to taste a Carignan, Petite Sirah and Zinfandel. Next, we blended a control **wine** and spent the next half-hour mixing Zinfandel with varying amounts of Carignan and Petite Sirah.

After we settled on our favorite blend, Watson mixed our **wines,** handed us the bottles to cork and finished them off with a wax seal.

To learn more about professional winemaking, the next morning we drove to Owl Ridge **Wine** Services, a custom-crush facility in the Russian River Valley that produces Pinot Noir for local vineyards. In May, Owl Ridge launched Sonoma Grapemasters, a custom-crush program for amateurs. **Wine** enthusiasts participate in crush, blending and bottling sessions under the guidance

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Ravenswood: No wimpy wines - or winemaker The Globe and Mail (Canada) July 25, 2007 Wednesday

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The Globe and Mail (Canada)

July 25, 2007 Wednesday

SECTION: GLOBE LIFE; DECANTER; Pg. L2

LENGTH: 1278 words

HEADLINE: Ravenswood: No wimpy **wines** - or winemaker

BYLINE: BEPPI CROSARIOL

BODY:

Wine-wise, California has been getting a bad rap lately.

Some people believe the state epitomizes two of the global industry's more dubious trends: the proliferation of insanely priced trophy labels, and the fever for corporate buyouts that seems designed only to ram more of those cheap, generic-tasting megabrands onto the shelves.

Then there's Joel Peterson's sanguine assessment. Mr. Peterson, 60, is founder of **Ravenswood,** the successful Sonoma winery best known for three things - top-class zinfandels, the slogan "No wimpy **wines**" and a devout following that is the envy of the **wine** business.

To hear him tell it, the changes in the industry have been good for consumers, especially those looking for value at the lower end.

"If you've been drinking **wines** that are in the under-$15 category, it's improved your life substantially," he said in an interview last week in Toronto.

Those generic-tasting **wines** conjured up in boardrooms "actually taste quite good."

They also are a key driver, he says, behind the current **wine**-drinking explosion. "You see a lot of young people who can now afford a bottle of **wine** that tastes good. It used to be that you could drink a lot of bad **wine** in that category. It's hard to pick up a bad **wine** now."

As for the pricier end of the spectrum, Mr. Peterson says quality hasn't suffered, as evidenced by the continuing success of such legendary labels as Stag's Leap **Wine** Cellars.

And, despite early fears to the contrary, **Ravenswood's** quality has survived the consolidation wave intact, a fact apparent to anyone tasting the **wines.**

Six years ago, the winery was bought by Constellation Brands, the acquisitive Fairport, N.Y.-based company that has since swallowed Hardys, Robert Mondavi and Canada's Vincor, and is now the world's largest **wine** producer.

The $148-million (U.S.) sale wasn't Mr. Peterson's idea; **Ravenswood** had gone public two years earlier, and the other major shareholders, intent on cashing out, forced his hand.

But, rather than stroll into the California sunset with his multimillion-dollar payout or start over with an overpriced boutique luxury label (like many of his predecessors), Mr. Peterson stayed on, and stayed the course, crafting a broad range of products priced between about $15 and $80 (Canadian) a bottle that have continued to garner acclaim.

In fact, Mr. Peterson's positive take on the state of less expensive **wines** is notable given the fact he has a reputation for making some of the United States' most distinctive and regionally expressive **wines.**

Ravenswood's signature grape, zinfandel, has been grown in the United States for almost 200 years, which is why it's known as "America's heritage grape," the popular libation of fortune seekers during the Gold Rush. In Italy, the only other country with significant plantings of zinfandel, more commonly called *primitivo* there, the vine has a significantly shorter history.

Few grapes are easier to identify in a blind tasting than zinfandel. Almost always thick in texture and inky-purple in colour, the **wine** is dense with flavours of raspberry jam and peppery spice, often framed by gripping acidity and smooth tannins. It is the ideal red for slow-cooked, sweet-spicy barbecue and a good match for grilled, rare steaks. Even spicy Asian food makes a nice complement.

Ravenswood produces an array of zinfandels from all over California, many sourced from vines between 80 and 125 years of age. That is positively ancient in the **wine** world - and significant, because the older a vine gets, the fewer, but more flavour-concentrated, berries it produces.

The average age of the vines used in the $24 Lodi blend, a superb **wine** for the money, for example, is 87 years. The vineyard used for his most expensive zinfandel, the $76 Old Hill, was planted in 1884.

Mr. Peterson, who in his trademark Hawaiian shirt could pass for Mike Love of the Beach Boys, now employs a team of winemakers, but he still signs off on all the blends. He is blessed with what some have described as the **wine**-tasting equivalent of perfect pitch, a talent documented in a 1991 book by David Darlington about the zinfandel's rise, originally called *Angels' Visits* but since renamed simply *Zin*.

Which is what one might expect from a guy who started studying fine **wine** in earnest at the age of 10. The son of **wine** enthusiasts who were also both chemists (his mother worked on atomic-bomb research), he would help his father take notes for the latter's **wine**-tasting club in the 1950s.

"We would sit down on Friday nights with 12 glasses of **wine** and I would have to tell him what they tasted like. I'd say, 'Apples.' He'd say, 'What kind of apples?' "

The young Mr. Peterson also mastered another **wine**-tasting talent early on: spitting. "He actually measured the **wine** in my glasses with a graduated cylinder and then measured the **wine** in my spit bucket" to make sure only the minimum made it down his throat.

Mr. Peterson, who started professional life as an immunologist, founded **Ravenswood** in 1976 with partner Reed Foster and $4,000 (U.S.). In their first year, they made 426 cases.

Today, the winery's annual production has reached one million cases. About half of that is a $20 (Canadian) product called Vintners Blend, the world's bestselling zinfandel, which the irreverent Mr. Peterson is fond of calling "Château Cash Flow."

Among his other well-worn lines (repeated again during the interview) is, "**Wines** belong on the table, not on a pedestal," a swipe at three-figure California trophy **wines.**

The winery's success is remarkable not only for its popularity at a broad range of prices. **Ravenswood** also enjoys an impressive cult following, thanks in no small part to its eye-catching logo - a sketch of three ravens joined at the talons.

The label crops up in more than its share of movies, such as the current hit *Knocked Up*. "It got a full camera shot," Mr. Peterson says.

It was also prominently displayed, and consumed, by Owen Wilson and Kate Hudson in 2006's *You, Me and Dupree*. "When Dupree and the wife are sitting there, getting happy and drunk, they're drinking a bottle of **Ravenswood.** In fact, every **wine** in that entire movie was a bottle of **Ravenswood.** It was hilarious." And, Mr. Peterson stresses, it wasn't a paid product placement.

Devotion to the logo has been known to go to extremes. People regularly show up at the winery tasting room to flaunt their **Ravenswood** tattoos, he notes. "I've seen a hundred tattoos. It's a little scary."

That enthusiastic fan base has enabled **Ravenswood** to fetch steep prices for its more expensive bottles, which may seem out of sync for a quintessentially American **wine** that cannot be - as cabernet and pinot noir often are - measured against the great red archetypes of Europe, such as Bordeaux, Burgundy and Tuscany.

But Mr. Peterson insists zinfandel has every right to fetch those prices and, in fact, remains a bargain because it's proven to be the most interesting and well-suited vine for California's soil.

"We've planted a stake in the ground, and this is the right stake."

*****

Tasting notes

Ravenswood Vintners Blend Zinfandel 2005

$19.95 in Ontario

Fresh raspberries leap out

of the glass. The **wine** is lifted

by firm acidity and peppery spice. Very good zin value.

Ravenswood Belloni

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Wild Art 24 Hours (Toronto, Canada) July 24, 2007 Tuesday

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24 Hours (Toronto, Canada)

July 24, 2007 Tuesday
VANCOUVER EDITION

SECTION: ENTERTAINMENT; On the Town; Pg. 11

HEADLINE: Wild Art

GRAPHIC: 8 photos by Michael Schratter 1. Chair of the California **Wine** Fair Lisa Seed, Artistic Director of the Arts Club Theatre Bill Millerd and Gramercy Grill proprietor Susan Lewandoski enjoyed some delish food, excellent **wine** and even better company at the Arts Club Theatre Company's California **Wine** Fair's "Zin Fling," a special **Ravenswood** winemaker's event that was held at the Gramercy Grill. 2. Film and TV glitterati painted the town red, and budding socialite Kitty Wong was feeling "graceful" next to Will & Grace star Eric McCormack during Saturday night's fiftith annual Rouge benefit that had 1000-plus guests enjoying a magical summer evening at Robson Square. 3. YouthCO AIDS Society's Stephanie Grant and Brandy Svendson were looking sultry next to The 4400 starlet Megalyn Echikunwoke during the YouthCO's Acquired Taste Fundraiser at the Alibi Room on Saturday night. 4. "The King of Zin" **Ravenswood** winemaker Joel Peterson serves up a glass of his world class **wine** between guests Sarah Kiehne and Josh Alter during the Raging **Ravenswood** BBQ Event at Savory Coast Restaurant. 5. The Champagne + Shoes Event had Sanafir Restaurant & Lounge packed with Vancouver's sexiest toes and had Flame Eadie indulging in some Moet & Chandon while admiring a pair of gorgeous scarlet high heels worn by Urban Rush hostess Fiona Forbes. 6. Second-place finisher Bardot's Bar Manager Waldo Villeda hams it up with Epic Battle of the Bartenders winner Donnelly Nightclub's Beverage Director Jay Jones during Saturday's Heineken Yaletown Street Party. Judging the contest proved to be an inebriating jolly good time! 7. Eleven-year-old Jonas Whelan and his cousin Jameel Hosseini were first in line for Steve Nash's autograph during last week's Steve Nash Sports Club's $5-million, 38,500-sq.ft fitness facility opening. 8. Diva Executive Chef Dino Renaerts and celebrated **wine** critic Anthony Gismondi, picked up CBC Radio's Fred Lee as chefs, restaurateurs and food service folks took to the links at University Golf Club to raise money for the BC Chef's Association in their organization's ninth annual golf tournament.

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Bigger is not better when it comes to zinfandels Pittsburgh Tribune Review July 18, 2007 Wednesday

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Pittsburgh Tribune Review

July 18, 2007 Wednesday

LENGTH: 761 words

HEADLINE: Bigger is not better when it comes to zinfandels

BYLINE: Dave DeSimone

BODY:

With chest-thumping braggadocio, far too many California winemakers cannot resist the juvenile competition of seeing who can make the biggest "zin."

Such full-throttle and typically oak-laden California red zinfandels can attain alcohol levels of 16 percent and beyond, resulting in overwhelming and virtually undrinkable monstrosities.

Aggressively marketed with cutesy names referring to "earthquakes," "gnarly vines" and "sin," mammoth zinfandels often capture the media spotlight and high numerical ratings in national **wine** publications. Wretched excess once again pays off.

There are, however, other winemakers wielding confident, steady hands and delivering more restrained zinfandels, epitomizing world-class table **wines.** While decidedly less glamorous, such zinfandels are still fruity, and yet better balanced to provide splendid complements to grilled steaks, burgers, lamb chops and veal.

California-born Michael Dashe and his French-born spouse, Anne, co-founded Dashe Cellars to produce such **wines.** They seek to express the complex essence of northern California's low-yielding, old-vine zinfandels growing on steep hillsides with infertile, rocky soils.

The Dashes ferment in small lots with indigenous yeasts and rely on little or no fining and filtration to clarify the **wines.** New oak barrel aging is limited to about 20 percent and more subtle French oak is employed. The resulting **wines** are robust, yet elegant.

For example, the 2004 Dashe Cellars Zindandel, Todd Brothers Ranch Old Vines, Alexander Valley, California -- available either online at www.dashecellars.com" or outside Pennsylvania for $28 -- has a dark ruby color and intense aromas and flavors of sweet blackberries with chocolate hints balanced by vibrant acidity and silky tannins. The **wine** carries 14.8 percent alcohol very gracefully. Highly recommended.

While exclusively focused on the Dry Creek Valley -- zinfandel's "Promised Land" -- father and son winemaking team Doug and Andrew Nalle, of Nalle Winery, express what they call zinfandel's intrinsic "zinberry" character. After hand-sorting the grapes, the Nalles also ferment in small batches and use only French oak for barrel aging. Their **wines** offer fruity elegance and superb, supple balance second to none.

For example, the 2004 Nalle Winery Zinfandel, Dry Creek Valley, California (Specialty 13727, $22.99) has beguiling aromas and flavors of blackberries and raspberries with chocolate hints balanced by fine acidity, elegant tannins and a rather modest 13.9 percent alcohol. Highly recommended. And for a little refreshing humor in an otherwise often pretentious world of **wine,** check out the Nalles' tongue-in-cheek Web site: www.nallewinery.com.

At **Ravenswood** Winery, founder Joel Peterson's sure hand continues to guide the **wine** production of the current largest and most successful zinfandel producer. Peterson's balanced approach to zinfandel favors proper proportions of fruitiness, acidity and elegant tannins. French oak barrels are used for aging, and high alcohol content never gains the upper hand to overwhelm the **wines.**

The 2004 **Ravenswood** Zen of Zin Old Vine Zinfandel, California (7664, $14.99), for example, has medium ruby color and attractive black cherry aromas with smoky hints. The ripe fruity flavors of black cherries are balanced by silky tannins and lively acidity through a well-balanced, fruity finish. The **wine** carries 13.5 percent alcohol. Recommended.

Turning to European **wines,** Michel Faraud's fabulous 2004 Domaine du Cayron Gigondas (Specialty 18874, $22.99) is a

marvelous table **wine** delivering deft balance similar to more restrained zinfandels, albeit with a totally different aroma and flavor profile. Savvy consumers snapped up our region's initial allocation last month, but now the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board's adept inventory management has provided an additional allocation for western Pennsylvania specialty retail shelves.

As a classic southern Rhône blend of 70 percent grenache for depth and fruity heft, and equal parts of cinsualt and syrah to round out the mix and add complexity, Faraud's **wine** has distinctive earthy and meaty traits -- the so-called "goût de terroir" -- along with nuances of garrigue, the mix of wild lavender, thyme and rosemary prevalent on Gigondas' stony hillsides. The deep purple color has aromas of plums, black pepper, smoked meats and herbal hints. Firm yet supple tannins frame flavors of plums and peppery notes with lively acidity for this authentic vin de terroir. Try it with grilled lamb with rosemary. Highly recommended.

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NO TOMATO JUICE, JUST NICE REDS AND WHITES The Arizona Republic (Phoenix) July 11, 2007 Wednesday

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The Arizona Republic (Phoenix)

July 11, 2007 Wednesday
Final Chaser Edition

SECTION: FOOD&DRINK; on **wine**; Pg. 5

LENGTH: 565 words

HEADLINE: NO TOMATO JUICE, JUST NICE REDS AND WHITES

BYLINE: mark tarbell, Special for The Republic

BODY:

After years of trial and error and thousands of sips and spits, I've come to the conclusion that **wines** that taste like tomato juice are bad. This is why I work hard each week, tasting dozens of possibilities in order to save you from the tomato juice. Yes, even the whites can taste like tomato juice. These don't.

2006 Banfi "Fumaio" Sauvignon Blanc/Chardonnay, Italy ($9-$11, not pictured) -- Banfi is a large and well-known Italian house with a great reputation. This pick is a grocery store standout -- a great value, easy to find and inexpensive. The color is truly silver and white, almost clear. The aroma is of citrus and pleasant fruit. The taste is crisp and clean with a hint of rich fruit character. It's a universal chill-out white. 85 points.

2005 Gainey Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc, Santa Ynez Valley, Calif. ($13-$15) -- Keep this one for the indoor cocktail hour. If you like Sauvignon Blanc soft, you'll like it. The color is a very pale straw yellow. The aroma has a little wet grass and ripe grapefruit with a hint of orange citrus blossom. The taste is ripe, round orange-lime with a soft finish. 84 points.

The Reds this week are all over the board. The **Ravenswood** is an easy "grill master" recommendation. The Coppola is a special treat for Zin lovers, while the Spaniard is serious and demands a meal and some chitchat.

2004 **Ravenswood** Syrah, Sonoma County, Calif. ($9-$11) -- **Ravenswood** was a boutique brand and is now a $10 grocery **wine.** Normally this would be a bad move, but in its case, it works. The **wines** I've tasted are definitely worth the trip. The color is a very deep purple and dark currant. The aroma is sweet red wood and a little pepper. The taste is of ripe and juicy fruit with dry and peppery structure. The **wine** offers quite a lot of bang for the buck. 87 points.

2005 Oops Cabernet Franc/Carmenere "Voluptuous Beauty," Valle Central, Chile ($10-$12) -- I wouldn't go so far as to say it's a "voluptuous beauty," but it sure has its place on the table. The color is black raspberry and ruby. The aroma is grippy and green with some red earth. The taste is softer than the nose suggests, with a light but nice balance of fruit and soft dryness. An interesting **wine.** 86 points.

2004 Coppola "Director's Cut" Zinfandel, Calif. ($20-$24, not pictured) -- The name Coppola may be known for those tiny '70s hit movies known as The Godfather series, but it's also a serious winery making value selections and a whole other kind of blockbuster. This Zin has strength, elegance and balance with whopping ripe fruit. The color is dark as night. The aroma is giant, lush and berry sinful. The taste is giant, lush and berry extracted. 90 points.

2001 Bodegas Ysios Rioja "Reserva," Spain ($20) -- The color has a lovely graduation of dark ruby in the core to a slight red brick in the rim. The aroma is smoky, caramel, orange and black currant. The taste is soft with a great layer of forward fruit and well-integrated tannins structure. It's a food **wine** and shows its age well.

92 points.

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Key to the ratings

100: A perfect **wine.**

95-99: Excellent. Worth looking for.

90-94: Extremely good. A standout in its class.

85-89: Very good. A solid, well-made **wine** and a good value.

80-84: Good. Fine for everyday entertaining and large parties.

75-79: A soundly made **wine** for everyday drinking.

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Mark Tarbell, owner of Tarbell's restaurant in Phoenix, can be reached at **wine**@tarbells.com

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Good value no secret for zin master Inside Bay Area (California) July 11, 2007 Wednesday

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Inside Bay Area (California)

July 11, 2007 Wednesday

SECTION: FOOD; Bay Area Living

LENGTH: 910 words

HEADLINE: Good value no secret for zin master

BODY:

THERE WAS A time not so long ago that zinfandel was the unchallenged leader for priceworthiness among red **wines.**

Even with folks such as Ridge and Joseph Swan, making **wines** (as early as 1970) that began the process of moving zinfandel from mass-produced bottlings into something much more special and thus more expensive, the majority of zinfandels a few decades ago would qualify for "good value" status relative to cabernet sauvignon and pinot noir.

Zinfandel is still less expensive today than the top **wines** from those two highly regarded varieties, but with so many zins, including those recommended to you in this column a few weeks back, north of $30 and some reaching as high as $50, there is a substantial portion of the zinfandel marketplace that simply has little to do with everyday drinking.

There is no use lamenting the good old days; they are not coming back regardless of how much we reminisce. But, there are still zinfandels around that will not set you back an arm and a leg, and they are perfect for the grilled meats that are a staple of summertime fare.

Tonight, for instance, I am off to visit the new home of a best friend's son. The kid (to me at least) is a successful lawyer and former collegiate baseball player and, true to hisroots, he has built his young family a fine home directly across the street from several Little League fields.

As is typically the case when our group gets together, I am the designated **wine**-bringer. It is an assignment I relish for several reasons. The first is that my supply of **wine** is beyond any reasonable limits and the chance to share that excessive bounty with friends is a joy. But, consider this: If the **wine** is not any good, I have only myself to blame. However, since I will have brought it, I will call it "good" and enjoy it.

It is burgers and hot dogs tonight and I am going to bring a bunch of lighter-styled, everyday-priced zinfandels. There is no reason to drink "nose in the air" **wine** with burgers and dogs. Syrah would be an equally good choice, but I have been trying lots of zin lately in search of **wines** that have not gone over to the very ripe, highly extracted, tannic, and thus expensive, side of the spectrum. There are not as many these days as there used to be, but I have found a few to like and will bring them along tonight.

$ 2005 Bogle, Old Vine California, $11

This **wine** is a throwback to the simpler days of zinfandel. It is light and fruity, shows enough of the berryish character to be true to its name and is incredibly easy on the palate and the pocketbook. It would work equally well to wash down barbecued chicken as it would as an accompaniment to burgers and hot dogs.

$ 2005 Dashe, Dry Creek Valley, $22

Perhaps just a bit out of the everyday bracket in terms of price, this ripe and rich zinfandel is wonderfully deep and precise in its blackberryish fruit. Its richness will make it a special treat with tri-tips and other beef and lamb roasts hot off the spit.

$ 2005 Dry Creek Vineyard, Heritage, Sonoma County, $16

The addition of 15 percent petite sirah, a gambit that reflects the former practice of interplanting other varieties with zinfandel, has here given a slight bit of backbone to a very attractive zinfandel for near-term drinking with ribs and barbecued pork chops.

$ 2005 Easton, Amador County, $14

One of the reasons zinfandel can go so well with red-sauced foods like pasta and pizza is its tendency, especially in **wines** that are not super-ripe, to carry a bit of a pungent, tangy edge. And here is a **wine** that hues back to that former stance and mixes ripe berry fruit with a touch of zestiness. It will be a good choice whether the red-sauce direction is Italian or

barbecue.

$ 2004 **Ravenswood,** Napa Valley, $15

This **wine** and its sibling below are more than ample proof that **Ravenswood,** a leader in the making of fancy (expensive) zinfandel also knows its way around **wines** that offer plenty of value. This one is slightly fruitier and a little more straightforward and it is on point from front to back.

$ 2004 **Ravenswood,** Old Vine, Sonoma County, $15

There are more similarities than differences between these two from **Ravenswood,** but this one is a touch higher in tannin and carries an extra edge of spice in its berryish flavors. Choose this one for foods with chewier textures and more highly seasoned flavors.

$ 2005 Sebastiani, Sonoma County, $15

Once again, Sebastiani scores well with a priceworthy, widely available red **wine.** This one is full of youthfully vital ripe berry and black fruit aromas and makes a nicely rounded first impression on the palate. It is well-balanced overall and ends with the piquant, zesty edge so well-suited for service with red-sauced pastas and hickory-influenced ribs.

$ 2005 Sobon Estate, Old Vine, Amador County, $13

Sweet raspberries and milk chocolate abound in the medium-intense, slightly sweet-edged aromas of this fully ripe, fairly fleshy and nicely balanced bottling. It heats up just a bit on the back of the palate and dries just a touch at the finish, but neither dryness nor heat manage to drive its persistent and likeable fruit from the scene or threaten its status as a very good value.

Contributing writer and Alameda resident Charles E. Olken writes the Connoisseurs' Guide to California **Wine,** a monthly newsletter. You can obtain a sample copy of his guide by sending your name and address to CGCW, P.O. Box V, Alameda, CA, 94501 or by e-mailing CGCW@aol.com . The Web site is http://www.cgcw.com .

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The 'R's of Zinfandel' Challenge - The Results Are In! PR Newswire US July 2, 2007 Monday 7:31 PM GMT

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July 2, 2007 Monday 7:31 PM GMT

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HEADLINE: The 'R's of Zinfandel' Challenge - The Results Are In!

DATELINE: NAPA, Calif. July 2

BODY:

NAPA, Calif., July 2 /PRNewswire/ -- Identifying the "R's of Zinfandel" has been an entertaining trivia pastime amongst Zinfandel drinkers for quite some time, but on June 5, Napa Valley's COPIA: The American Center for **Wine** Food & the Arts, hosted the first competitive tasting of Zinfandels whose producer's names begin with the letter R. The tasting was part of their Zinfandel Month activities in accordance with COPIA's new focus on providing educational resources and events for the **wine** industry and the consumer. A panel of professional **wine** judges was assembled to evaluate 46 **wines** organized into nine flights and the results were intriguing. The flights consisted of Alexander Valley, Russian River Valley, Dry Creek Valley, Sonoma County, Sonoma Valley, Napa Valley, Sierra Foothills, Lodi and Paso Robles, all of which are known as excellent growing regions for the Zinfandel grape.

The three best known R-named producers of Zinfandel showed their considerable expertise with the varietal and their **wines** performed well in the tasting. The 2004 **Ravenswood** Belloni Vineyard ($30) bottling took first place in the Russian River Valley appellation. **Ravenswood's** second place finishes went to the 2004 Big River ($30) vineyard in Alexander Valley, the 2004 Teldeschi ($30) vineyard in Dry Creek Valley and the 2005 Lodi ($15) bottling in the Lodi flight.

Rosenblum secured first place finishes for their 2004 Maggie's Reserve ($45) from Sonoma Valley and the 2004 Lyon's Reserve ($45) from Napa Valley. Ridge Winery's star **wines** included the 2004 Dusi Ranch ($26) from Paso Robles, which scored first place from that region, and their 2004 Three Valleys from Sonoma County ($18) won second place as did the 2004 York Creek ($28) from Napa Valley.

Up and coming Zinfandel specialist Rancho Zabaco Winery, based in Sonoma, took five winning spots, tying with **Ravenswood** for the overall number of **wines** that placed. Rancho Zabaco produces Zinfandel from four of the appellations featured in this tasting. Their 2004 Toreador ($50) and the 2004 Monte Rosso ($35) took the 2nd and 3rd place spots in the Sonoma Valley flight. Renwood, an established Amador County producer, swept the Sierra Foothills flight, with their 2004 Fiddletown ($25), 2004 Grandmere ($35) and 2004 Grandpere ($40) taking 1st, 2nd and 3rd place respectively.

The tasting brought several newcomers to the R collection of Zinfandel producers. The Alexander Valley's first place winner was the Rusina 2004 Alexander Valley Zinfandel ($26). Rusina is a family owned winery and just 264 cases of this **wine** were produced. The Dry Creek Valley's first place went to Reverence **Wine** Cellar's 2004 Carreras Ranch Zinfandel ($28). Reverence is owned by Mike Trotta, who is also the winemaker at Elyse Winery in Napa Valley.

Roshambo Winery submitted two **wines,** 2004 The Reverend ($22), which took first place in the Sonoma County appellation and their 2004 Taylor Vineyard Zinfandel ($35), which tied for third place in the Dry Creek Valley flight. Other small producers whose **wines** placed in the top three of their flights included 2004 Robert Rue's Wood Road Reserve from Russian River Valley ($32, 2nd place) and 2005 R& B Cellars Swingville from Lodi ($10, 1st place). In the Paso Robles flight, Rotta Winery's 2004 Giubbini Estate ($27) took 2nd place while the 2004 Red Head Ranch ($27) and the 2004 Paso Robles Zinfandel ($17) from Sonoma-based Rabbit Ridge tied for third place.

The tasting panel thoroughly enjoyed the experience and commented that tasting the **wines** by appellation was key and the **wines** did in fact show the characteristics and flavors that one would expect from each of these distinct growing regions, thereby reinforcing the importance of appellation source in comparing Zinfandel. Overall, their favorite appellations for these **wines** were Dry Creek Valley and Sonoma Valley. When asked what their advice would be for choosing Zinfandel, the general consensus was that consumers should experiment, because the stylistic variations are so wide, and find the style they prefer and then support the wineries that produce the best of that style. Zinfandel is not a one-trick pony and "it has probably changed in its history more than any other varietal." said Steve Heimoff of **Wine** Enthusiast.

The panel included Peter Marks, Master of **Wine** and Senior Director of **Wine** & Food at COPIA; Steve Pitcher, freelance writer

for The **Wine** News and San Francisco Chronicle; Steve Heimoff, West Coast Editor for **Wine** Enthusiast magazine; Wilfred Wong, Cellarmaster at Beverages & More, Alan Boehmer, Editor of Suite 101's New World **Wine,** Wolfgang Weber, Senior Editor at **Wine** & Spirits magazine, Charles Olken, The Connoisseur's Guide to California **Wine** and Tannis Reinhertz, Management Instructor at the Culinary Arts and Hospitality Studies Department of City College of San Francisco.

Zinfandel's current popularity grew after a small band of "Zinfandel Advocates & Producers" got together to promote Zinfandel. They formed an educational, non-profit organization known as ZAP. Coincidentally, three of the most notable producers of Zinfandel at that time had names beginning with R: Ridge, Rosenblum and **Ravenswood,** spawning the phenomenon of the letter R indicating a safe choice for consumers when choosing Zinfandel and coining the term "R's of Zinfandel."

Today, the "R's of Zinfandel" may have grown beyond the original three as evidenced by the results of this tasting and there are many excellent choices for consumers who are fans of what is now considered America's Heritage grape.

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Out of the Cellar: rings are rising as wine shoppers begin skipping the entry-level offerings and trade up to premiums; center store Grocery Headquarters July 1, 2007

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HEADLINE: Out of the Cellar: rings are rising as **wine** shoppers begin skipping the entry-level offerings and trade up to premiums;
center store

BYLINE: Turcsik, Richard

BODY:

BETTER ADD "CRITTER BRANDS" TO THE ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST.

The popular priced **wines**--named after and featuring cute though not always cuddly animals on their labels--are slowly getting pushed out of the **wine** aisle, their habitat being taken over by premium varietals with higher price tags and sophisticated bloodlines.

That was one of the first things **wine** importer Peter Click noticedas he walked the floor of the London International **Wine** Trade Fair in late May. Click likes attending the show because he sees the English, Londoners in particular, as trendsetters who stay a step or two ahead of their American cousins when it comes to **wine.**

"We definitely see a move away from the critter brand phenomenon,"says Click, president of Seattle-based Click **Wine** Group. "It was a trend I was already getting an inkling of, and it was validated for mejust walking around the exhibition."

But Click, whose flagship **wine** is the critter brand Fat Bastard--with a cute hippo icon on the label--is unfazed. "Fat Bastard is a 10-year-old brand that is growing and doing well, and I think our loyal consumer base is still there," he says. The company recently added Blushing Bastard, a rose, to the lineup. "Rose is really a growing category," Click says. "We thought we'd do an in-and-out program for 90 days in the spring and summer, but many of our wholesalers have come back and asked for more."

And Click **Wine** Group continues to add to its portfolio, with brands like Clean Slate, a German Riesling, and Root: 1, Chilean **wines** grown on ungrafted root stock. "With Root: 1 there is something beyond avisual nature of the label, which is great," Click says. "We are telling the consumer a bit of a story to help educate them."

And as they become educated, consumers move up the price ladder, which is good news for retailers.

[ILLUSTRATION OMITTED]

[ILLUSTRATION OMITTED]

That's what Russ Martin, category manager at Yoke's, a 13-unit Spokane, Wash.-based supermarket operator, has discovered. "We're seeingour average sale per customer go up about $2.50 this year," he says.Plus, Yoke's customers prefer local **wines.** "We're seeing a tremendous conversion from California premiums and Australian **wines** to Washington State **wines,** and to some degree Oregon. Oregon Pinots are substantial over here," Martin says.

The switch is highest with **wines** in the $15 to $40 range. "Two years ago we were about even with Washington State and California premium **wines,** with both doing about 21% to 22% of our business," Martin says. "But now Washington **wines** are leading with 30% of our business and the California premiums are down."

"We're absolutely seeing a premiumization of the shelf set," says Stefanie Jackel, brand manager for **Ravenswood,** a premium

wine label produced by San Francisco-based Centerra **Wine** Co., a division of Constellation **Wines** U.S. "Several years ago most of the movement was in the $5 to $7 price range, but today we're definitely seeing more shelf space allocated to premium brands, and more offerings in the $9 to $11 range, and up," she says.

[ILLUSTRATION OMITTED]

While **Ravenswood's** top-tier single-vineyard **wines** are primarily sold on-premise, its mid-tier ($7.99) Vintner's Blends have been increasing their market share in grocery. "Now we're seeing our **Ravenswood** County Tier [$13-$18] in supermarket shelf sets as well, stores like Supervalu, Kroger, Safeway and Publix," Jackel says. Named after California counties--Lodi, Sonoma, Napa--**Ravenswood's** County Tier **wines** include Chardonnay, Syrah, Cabernet, Merlot and several Zinfandel offerings. "The amount of shelf space devoted to that tier and price point is expanding, and you're seeing **wines** that can play with that quality message in that segment growing horizontally and having more offerings," she says.

SHIFT IN SHELF HEIGHT

The growth of premiums is changing where and how they are merchandised.

"In the aisle you see a lot more superpremium priced **wines** at eye and chest level, more the shopping level versus the top shelf," says Jackel. "That mid-level shelf used to be $5 **wines** and now we're seeing $7 to $10. We're seeing more shelf space dedicated to $9, $10 and $11 and up bottles. Retailers say they are working to increase their ring to $10 and up."

Retailers are also increasing the amount of shelf space devoted toimports, capitalizing on another growing trend.

"I'm seeing the globalization of **wines, with wines** from Argentina,Spain, Italy and other countries having more and more significance within the grocery environment," says Kristina Kelley, director, marketing, premium brands, at E & J Gallo in Modesto, Calif.

Younger imbibers are driving import growth. "If you take a look atthe millennials and Generation Y, the percentage of **wine** they are consuming in imports versus domestic continues to grow compared to the baby boomers," Kelley says.

"Imports represent a tremendous value still, and I think consumersare willing to experiment and try new **wines** and new countries," she says. "In a lot of cases it is very much a sense of discovery in finding the **wines** they like that happen to be from another country."

'A SENSE OF PLACE'

One of Gallo's up-and-coming brands is the Italian import LeonardoDaVinci Chianti, developed in partnership with a cooperative in the Chianti region of Montalbano. Gallo serves as its U.S. marketing, importing and distribution arm. "It has become important to go out and see **wines** we think can impact the market and bring to the consumer at good, readily acceptable price points, but that are grounded in a sense of place, country and origin," Kelley says.

She says DaVinci uses oak barrels and the best fruit that the Chianti region has to offer, coupled with modern vineyard practices that increase yield and quality.

The exchange rate of the Euro is impacting prices, but so far sales remain strong. "As long as the quality is there and the American consumer still perceives a value/quality relationship, I think the market can bear it, but it is still something that everybody has their eye on," Kelley says.

South Africa is the next up-and-coming region. "Overall, South Africa is extremely hot right now," Kelley says. "It has become a traveldestination, and people are exploring the different types of food and **wine** from that area; the sauvignon blancs have really improved in quality. But the bread and butter of the import industry is still the Italian portfolio. In a supermarket, Italian **wines** are the easiest tomerchandise and promote because they lend themselves so well to food."

That's why cross-promotion is so important, as Kelley says, "Getting it outside the **wine** department and on display with food items thatmake a very simple, easy meal."

COMPLEMENT TO FOOD

"In a grocery store, the average basket ring of beer, **wine** and spirits is actually higher for **wine,** which suggests it is typically usedmore heavily for a meal occasion than, say, a social gathering, cocktail party or casual get-together," says Stuart Barker, director, category management, national accounts, at Diageo in Norwalk, Conn.

Diageo looks at the business from a holistic standpoint, dubbing it TBA (Total Beverage Alcohol) because the three categories are oftenmerchandised and shopped together. Diageo's key **wine** brands include Beaulieu Vineyards, Sterling Vineyards, Chalone, Acacia and Edna Valley. "We have a new brand from Australia called Archetype, and we are also introducing New Haven, which comes from New Zealand," Barker says.

"The dominant trend within TBA is premiumization, which is centralto Diageo's global strategy," he says, citing **wines** in the $10 rangeand above, noting that it isn't uncommon for many supermarkets to stock bottles for $25, $45 or more. "That is where the key growth is," he says. "It is double-digit growth, and through our internal modeling we see double-digit increases moving forward."

Much of the growth is being driven by the demographic shift towardan older, affluent consumer with more discretionary income, Barker says. "But even for consumers on a tighter budget, the consumption trend towards affordable indulgence is very much in vogue," he says. "We've seen that for the last two years, and we don't have any indication of it slowing down."

Creamy linguine dish fine backdrop for syrah Contra Costa Times (California) June 20, 2007 Wednesday

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June 20, 2007 Wednesday

SECTION: LIFESTYLE; Food

LENGTH: 410 words

HEADLINE: Creamy linguine dish fine backdrop for syrah

BYLINE: Contra Costa Times

BODY:

RAVENSWOOD WINERY in Sonoma may have earned its reputation on zinfandel **wines** with attitude, but this year's release of the 2004 Sonoma County Syrah proves that the winemakers there are not a one-grape act. The syrah is like drinking a lush handful of fermented cherries and boysenberries. It's jammy but not too sweet; just right for those who love round, fruit-forward, California-style **wines.** When I asked chef Eric Lee what he would serve with this **wine,** he suggested this simple comfort dish. The creaminess provides just the right backdrop for the fruit in the **wine;** the heartiness of the grilled chicken and mushrooms stand firm alongside the **wine's** pepper notes.

Reach Oakland Tribune Food writer Jolene Thym at jthym@angnewspapers.com or 510-353-7008. Grilled Chicken Paillard with Creamy Mushroom Linguine

Serves 4 FOR CHICKEN:

4 boneless skinless chicken breasts 2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons soy sauce 2 cloves garlic, minced

Pinch of salt and pepper FOR LINGUINE:

1 onion, minced 2 cloves garlic, minced

4 tablespoons unsalted butter 1/2 pound mushrooms, cleaned and sliced

2 sprigs thyme, picked 1/4 cup **Ravenswood** Syrah

1/2 cup beef or chicken stock 3 ounces heavy cream

1/2 pound linguine, cooked al dente, shocked in cold water, and tossed in olive oil 2 tablespoons chives, chopped

2 teaspoons Italian flat parsley, chopped, plus more for garnish Pinch salt and pepper

1. For the chicken: Coat the chicken breasts with the olive oil and place inside a gallon size plastic bag. Using a meat mallet, pound the chicken until it is 1/4 inch thick. Repeat with the remaining breasts. Place into a nonreactive baking dish along with soy, 2 cloves garlic, and salt and pepper, and marinate covered in the refrigerator for up to one hour. Grill over a hot grill. 2. For the linguine: Saute the onion and 2 cloves garlic over medium heat in the butter until lightly golden, about 3 minutes. Add the mushrooms and thyme. Cook until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the **wine** and cook until almost fully absorbed. Add the stock and reduce by half. Add the cream and reduce by half. Add the cooked pasta. Add the chives and parsley and season with salt and pepper. Toss until the pasta is heated through. Top servings of linguine with chicken paillards. Garnish with additional parsley.

-- Recipe courtesy of chef Eric Lee Per serving: 623 calories, 37 g protein, 50 g carbohydrates, 29 g fat, mg cholesterol, 953 mg sodium, 3 g fiber. Calories from fat: 42 percent.

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Jersey Journal (New Jersey) May 21, 2007 Monday

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May 21, 2007 Monday
FIRST OR FULL RUN; BAYONNE EDITION

GRAPHIC: WITH THE HELP OF VOLUNTEER SERVER Tom Savitski, Mark Wisniewski tastes a **Ravenswood** zinfandel at the Charity **Wine** Tasting for WomenRising event.

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May 17, 2007 Thursday
Broward Metro Edition

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. 3

LENGTH: 292 words

HEADLINE: TIDBITS

BYLINE: Ashley Carmichael & Deborah S. Hartz

BODY:

WINE DINNER/**RAVENSWOOD:** Crown **Wine** and Spirits and the Riverside Hotel, 620 E. Las Olas Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, are hosting a **Ravenswood wine** dinner Monday at 6:30 p.m. **Ravenswood** proprietor Joel Peterson will attend the five-course meal at which six **wines** will be poured. The dinner that costs $100 (all inclusive) is limited to 50 people. For reservations, call 888-563-9463.

WINE TASTING/SPANISH: Whole Foods Market Boca Raton, 1400 Glades Road, Suite 110, will host a free Spanish **wine** tasting from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday. Vintages will be accompanied by Spanish cheeses. Reservations are not needed. Call 561-447-0000.

FESTIVAL/FOOD & **WINE:** Clear Channel Radio and the Airport Hilton Waterfront, 150 Australian Ave., West Palm Beach, will host Clear Channel's second annual Classy Evening on the Water Food and **Wine** Festival at 6:30 tonight. Live music, Polynesian dancers, food, **wine** and spirits from around the world will highlight the twilight. Tickets are $30 per person; $50 per couple and can be purchased at the door. Call 561-616-6684.

COOKING DEMO/SWEETS: Macy's Men's & Home Store Aventura, 19535 Biscayne Blvd., will host a free cooking demonstration at 1 p.m. Saturday. Macy's culinary specialist Ceci Seitz will prepare steamed banana pudding topped with sweet caramel sauce in the Kitchen at the Cellar on the second floor. Call 305-682-3300.

WINE TASTING/SPANISH: Cafe Maxx, 2601 E. Atlantic Blvd., Pompano Beach, will host a Spanish **wine** tasting at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday. Abadia Retuerta, Bodegas Julian Chivite, Bodegas Roda and Bodega Don Olegario vintages will be sampled along with food prepared by chef Oliver Saucy. Cost is $30 per person (all-inclusive). Reservations requested. Call 954-782-0606.

-- Ashley Carmichael & Deborah S. Hartz

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CALENDAR San Antonio Express-News April 11, 2007 Wednesday

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San Antonio Express-News

April 11, 2007 Wednesday
STATE&METRO Edition

SECTION: TASTE; Pg. 4F

LENGTH: 697 words

HEADLINE: CALENDAR

BODY:

FIESTA OLE

7 p.m. Thursday, San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels Ave. Free. Visit www.sanantonioherbs.org for more information.

The president of the Fiesta San Antonio Commission, Jorge Gonzalez, will present the background and highlights of Fiesta. Linda Skop will give a food demonstration from the Fiesta cookbook, "Las Cocinitas de Fiesta" (The Little Kitchens of Fiesta), and San Antonio Herb Society food expert Janet Miller will provide tips on Fiesta cooking.

GOT MILK MUSTACHE MOBILE TOUR

11 a.m.-2 p.m. Thursday, Market Square; 6:30-9:30 p.m. Friday, San Antonio Zoo; 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Wal-Mart, 3302 S.E. Military Drive; 5-7 p.m. Saturday, H-E-B, 9900 Wurzbach Road.

Free interactive community events for the whole family will encourage better beverage choices.

COOKBOOK SALE

9 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday. San Antonio Public Library, 600 Soledad St. Free admission. Call (210) 227-9519 for more information.

Hundreds of cookbooks will be featured at the Friends of San Antonio Public Library Annual Spring Book Sale in the basement of the library. One hour of free parking in the Central Library garage will be available with a validated ticket.

JAZZ DINNER

7:30 p.m. Saturday, Carmens de la Calle, 720 E. Mistletoe Ave. $39.95. Call (210) 737-8272 for reservations.

Listen to Joan Carroll and Ken Slavin present "That's So Gershwin" after a dinner that includes a choice of Seafood Paella or Roast Pork Loin with Mediterranean Couscous and choice of flan with a dark cherry port sauce or Carmen's signature Ha Cha Cha spicy brownie with ice cream.

SPANISH FLAVORS AND TASTES

Noon-3 p.m. Saturday, Whole Foods Market, 255 E. Basse Road. Free. Call (210) 826-4676 for more information.

Different Spanish olives and Spanish olive oils will be available to sample. Learn how to use these items at dinner parties.

TAMALES-EATING CONTEST

11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Delicious Tamales, 1330 Culebra Road. Register at any store location. Registration deadline is Thursday. Call (210) 735-0275 or visit www.delicious tamales.com for more information.

Contestants in three categories compete to see who can eat the most tamales in three minutes. Includes live performances by The Network for Young Artists and special appearances by the Spurs Coyote and Delicious Tamales mascots Paco and Lola. Also

included will be a moonwalk bounce for children and giveaways by KXTN and 105.3-FM radio stations.

GOSPEL BRUNCH

Noon-3 p.m. Sunday, Casbeers, 1719 Blanco Road. $12. Admission by advance ticket only. Call (210) 732-3511 for more information.

A "not fancy but S.A. substantial" menu will be followed by music from the Gloria Chords. Music will begin at 1 p.m.

QUICK-FIX MEALS WITH ROBIN MILLER

6:30-9 p.m. Monday, Central Market Cooking School, 4821 Broadway. $80. Call (210) 368-8686 for reservations.

Food Network star Robin Miller will show how to create "meal kits" for dinners and how to transform leftovers into different dishes. Recipes will include Chicken and Wild Mushroom Quesadillas and Thai Chicken with peanuts and lime.

ANNIVERSARY DINNER

6:30 p.m. April 18, Café Paladar, 18322 Sonterra Place. $85. Call (210) 798-7200 for reservations. Space is limited.

Guests can celebrate the café's one-year anniversary with a seven-course exploration of Latin culture. Each course will celebrate a different aspect of Latin culture and be paired with a cocktail or **wine.**

FIESTA LEARN AT LUNCH

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. April 18, Cooking With Care Kitchen. $35. Call (210) 325-7639 or e-mail amy@cookingwithcare.com for reservations, which are required. Space is limited.

Amy Sokol demonstrates the preparation of Roasted Tomatillo and Avocado Salsa with homemade Baked Tortilla Chips; Baked Chiles Rellenos with a Zucchini Ranchero Sauce; Red Mexican Rice; and Pecan Praline Morsels.

RAVENSWOOD WINEMAKER DINNER

6:30 p.m. April 18. 20nine, 255 E. Basse Road. $75. Call (210) 798-9463. Reservations are required.

Owner/winemaker Joel Peterson hosts a four-course dinner. Menu includes Lobster and Mango Spring Roll; Wilted Spinach Salad with warm bacon dressing and goat cheese crostini; and Twice-done Short Ribs, braised and barbecued with Cheese Grits and roasted baby corn.

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Napa-style zinfandel smooth, not strong; WINE OF THE WEEK The Myrtle Beach Sun-News (South Carolina) April 4, 2007 Wednesday

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THE SUN NEWS
Found on MyrtleBeachOnline.com
The Myrtle Beach Sun-News (South Carolina)

April 4, 2007 Wednesday

SECTION: E; Pg. 4

LENGTH: 82 words

HEADLINE: Napa-style zinfandel smooth, not strong;
WINE OF THE WEEK

BYLINE: Michael Dresser, The Baltimore Sun

BODY:

California's Napa Valley tends to produce a much different style of zinfandel than fruit from Sonoma County or other parts of the state. This offering from **Ravenswood** is an excellent example, with its hints of raspberry, vanilla and spices. Some zins "shock and awe" the palate; this one seduces it. It's racy rather than rumbling. There's something to be said for each style. It's fully ready to drink now, and the **wine's** finish is long and smooth.

Serve with roast poultry, pasta and red meat.

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Better Branding TheStreet.com March 30, 2007 Friday 11:10 AM EST

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March 30, 2007 Friday 11:10 AM EST

SECTION: NEWS & ANALYSIS; Small Business Management Series

LENGTH: 959 words

HEADLINE: Better Branding

BYLINE: Annika Mengisen, TheStreet.com Staff Reporter

BODY:

Steve Woodruff, founder and principal consultant of Impactiviti, a consultancy that provides branding, identity and market strategy services to businesses, defines branding as the expression, projection and experience of the organizational identity and its promised value.

Sound too lofty for a small business?

Just look at some major success stories that started modestly, including **Apple**(AAPL:Nasdaq), which grew to revolutionize the way people listen to music, and Fuze, a small soda company that was just sold to **Coke** (KO:NYSE).

Debbie Millman, president of design for Sterling Brands, an independently owned branding consultancy that works with **Unilever** (UN:NYSE), **Campbell Soup** (CPB:NYSE), **Nestle**, **GlaxoSmithKline** (GSK:NYSE) and others, reveals that many of the major branding successes in the past five years have in fact come from the underdogs because of their scrappy, nonhierarchical nature.

"There's not as much decision-making by committee [in a small business]," says Millman, asserting that small businesses tend to speed to the market with a focus on product instead of getting bogged down with red tape and risk assessment. Larger companies often have to use think tanks to keep up and stay focused.

Woodruff gets excited over "No Wimpy **Wines,**" the Sonoma, Calif.-based **Ravenswood wines** tagline, with a red crossed-out circle symbol to match. "While the elitist might consider this approach just a tad plebian, for the vast majority of **wine** buyers who are looking for a good quality, hearty **wine,** this is great branding," says Woodruff.

Ravenswood's strong presence in stores proves that small business doesn't have to mean small presence.

Simplicity Sells

For a small business to get noticed, the key, says Woodruff, is to keep it simple and direct.

This straightforward concept proves a challenge for many small-business owners who are often emotionally attached to their work. They will often try to get the whole package out there in one fell swoop, which can cloud an otherwise potent image.

In many cases, hiring an outsider may be the most effective way to get to the meat of your message.

Woodruff helps business owners package their messages more effectively, offering his objective view. "One of my clients gave me bullet points of all their stuff," says Woodruff. "After a very simple suggestion [from an outsider], the lights went on."

Just like producing a good vodka, the message has to be distilled to its essence. "You've got to explain in a few words what you are doing and why," Woodruff adds. "You build all your branding and marketing off that core message. If you don't have that, you don't have anything."

If you're still lost, look to the leader of the company, advises William Arruda, president of Reach Communications. A small business should be founded by someone who has a passion and a certain set of values, says Arruda, "so often understanding

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Vintage Point News-Journal (Daytona Beach, Florida) March 21, 2007 Wednesday

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News-Journal (Daytona Beach, Florida)

March 21, 2007 Wednesday
Final Edition

SECTION: SECTION D; Pg. 3D

LENGTH: 410 words

HEADLINE: Vintage Point

BYLINE: Jeff Farance

BODY:

Most red-**wine** afficianados know **Ravenswood.** But do they really know **Ravenswood?**

Most of us are familiar to some degree with the eponymous Vintners Blend series of California **wines,** which are exactly that -- mostly purchased grapes from a changeable group of vineyards that are combined for both optimum taste and consistency while achieving the best buy for consumers.

Usually priced at $10 or thereabouts a bottle (and often discounted), these represent some wonderful **wines** that tend to pair well with foods and yet show off the best characteristics of their grapes.

It's been a recent revelation that **Ravenswood** even produces whites (they have several, and we've not had the chance to sample them as yet; we've still got a whole collection of their premium Zins awaiting a group tasting).

They also do a series of Vineyard Designates, which are single- vineyard **wines,** and are priced accordingly (around $35), as well as the County Series of **wines** made from grapes grown specifically in Sonoma or Napa (about half the price of the Vineyard Designates).

And we'll plan to delve further into all of those, but, on a recent evening, we opened three **Ravenswood** reds that were new to us (and haven't been around all that long anyway).

All of the **Ravenswoods** seem to share a quality that winemaker Joel Peterson says he admired in the European **wines** he tasted in the 1960s and '70s: They "were made in a relatively primative way without much technological interference. Even then, this was unusual, but I didn't see why we couldn't employ Old World methods if we were vigilant."

Here's what we tasted in the New World:***Ravenswood** 2004 Sonoma County Syrah (around $18): The label of this deep ruby **wine** promises "smokey, jammy black cherry" aromas; we agreed, then got more elegant, reserved, softened fruit on the palate, with a low-key finish that grew as it lingered.***Ravenswood** '04 Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon (around $20): Also a deep garnet, the Cab had an elusive nose, but packed its power into bold black cherries on the palate, with a moderate body and moderate, pleasing finish.***Ravenswood** '04 Sonoma County Merlot (around $18): The Merlot made up for the Cab's lesser nose, with orange peels and lead pencils and maybe a whiff of tobacco that became dark fruit, zesty spices and some chocolate on the palate, with a body worthy of many of the **Ravenswood** Zins. And the finish was nothing to sneeze at -- or was sufficient to possibly induce a sneeze or two.

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Seeing red; WINE Daily Mail (London) February 24, 2007 Saturday

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Daily Mail (London)

February 24, 2007 Saturday

SECTION: WEEKEND; Pg. 78

LENGTH: 653 words

HEADLINE: Seeing red;
WINE

BYLINE: MATTHEW JUKES

BODY:

Red Nose Day is on March 16, and this is the second part of my look at the best **wines** involved in this charity event. This week it is the turn of the reds. Most of the big **wine** retailers are donating ten per cent of the selling price of every **wine** in this column to the cause. Look out for the **Wine** Relief logos everywhere, and enjoy great **wine,** have a laugh on Red Nose Day and do your bit for charity at the same time.

2004 **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend Zinfandel, California (Pounds 6.49, Majestic).

Ravenswood is California's leading producer of great-value zin. Stuffed with blueberry, violet, dark plum, vanilla pod, chocolate, blackberry and sweet cinnamon spice notes, this is one of the most reliable and affordable red **wines** on the planet. Do not miss out on your chance to sample this, as it is a true icon in the modern **wine** world.

2004 McWilliam's Hanwood Estate Cabernet Sauvignon, South Eastern Australia (Pounds 6.49, Morrisons, Tesco). This inexpensive red has previously appeared in my 100 Best Australian **Wines** of the Year, and was one of the cheapest **wines** ever to make this list. Bravo, McWilliam's. It's hard to produce a **wine** this good, for so little. Cabernet is a world-famous grape, yet it invariably disappoints lower down the price scale. This, however, has everything you could wish for. Bordeaux, beware.

2005 Tesco Finest Valpolicella Ripasso, Veneto, Italy (Pounds 5.99). This cheeky chappy made it into my Top 250. Made by the Casa Girelli team, this is an excellent Valpol with juicy berry fruit flavour and a nice tangy aftertaste.

Get cooking: it may not cost the earth, but this **wine** demands to be taken seriously and any old reheated dish will not do. Lasagne is its dream date, and anyone can make that!

2005 Zonte's Footsteps Shiraz/Viognier, Langhorne Creek, Australia (Pounds 7.99, Somerfield).

The lush 2004 vintage of Zonte's is still in some stores, but the feisty 2005 is bursting onto the scene and is destined to be a blockbuster.

Brooding, black cherry fruit is spiked with a dash of the white grape, viognier, to temper the power in the glass and add an extra dimension of flavour and intrigue to the aroma. You'll need to pair this with a meaty dish or a serious plate of cheese to get it to perform at its best. Hold onto your hats - this is powerful stuff.

2005 Angove's Stonegate Limited Release Petit Verdot, South Australia (Pounds 5.99, Waitrose). Angove's is a specialist with the rare petit verdot red grape, and this has a brilliant flavour that comes as a welcome change from the usual cabernets and shirazes. Black fruit is the theme, and there is also a dark-chocolate texture that makes this stunning with crispy duck or barbecued dishes.

2004 Trincadeira, JP Ramos Alentejo, Portugal (Pounds 7.49, Waitrose). Portuguese red **wines** are really making waves over here, and this funky, juicy, blueberry, liquorice and cinnamon-stuffed **wine** is a case in point.

Trincadeira tastes like no other grape on the planet, and needs to be paired with a meaty dish to set it on the right path. I'd also give it some air before diving in, as it unravels in the glass to show an amazing complexity of aromas and flavours.

This week's WOW

2005 Porcupine Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon, Coastal Region, South Africa (Pounds 5.49, Sainsbury's). Sainsbury's has chopped 25 per cent off the price of my **Wine** of the week. Subtract another ten per cent for the donation to Red Nose Day, and it is being virtually sold at cost price.

This is one of the best **wines** that winemaker Marc Kent has made under the Porcupine Ridge label.

Blackcurrant and sweet woodsmoke saunter onto your palate from this complex red.

Try a taste-off between this and the Hanwood cabernet above, because these are world leaders.

Matthew Jukes's The **Wine** List 2007 is published by Headline, Pounds 9.99. You can email Matthew at matthew@matthewjukes.com. The **Wine** Book (Pounds 18.99, Headline) is available in good bookshops now.

LOAD-DATE: February 25, 2007

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Wine, etc.: High alcohol, fruity flavors in zinfandels The Capital (Annapolis, MD) September 20, 2006 Wednesday

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The Capital (Annapolis, MD)

September 20, 2006 Wednesday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. D1

LENGTH: 1118 words

HEADLINE: Wine, etc.: High alcohol, fruity flavors in zinfandels

BYLINE: Tom Marquardt Patrick Darr

BODY:

There are times - more frequently today than ever - when we forsake zinfandel. After all, if it's so good, why doesn't any other **wine**-growing country make it? And, if you want to cellar good **wine,** do you really want to put your money in alcoholic zinfandels rather than cabernet sauvignon? The answer to that depends on what you - not the critics - like more: zinfandel or cabernet sauvignon.

Zinfandel's heritage is a source of controversy. DNA research has traced it to the European grape primitivo. Today, the grape is grown mostly in California where it enjoys a cult following. In order to enjoy zinfandel, you have to like jammy flavors, spice, high alcohol and forward fruit. And when these **wines** age, they develop ripe, port-like flavors.

Zinfandel likes heat, so the grapes grow well in hot areas where they get long hang-time on the vine - which explains alcohol content that can be as high as 17 percent. Lots of producers make zinfandel, but those which specialize in it do a better job of striking a balance between fruit and alcohol. A cheap zinfandel with jammy flavors is easy to find, but the vineyard-designated zinfandels offer much more complexity and style. We have found the better ones include petite sirah in the blend just to give the **wine** more structure.

With fall approaching, we have sampled the zinfandels from three producers that show higher level of excellence than most California producers.

Rosenblum

This Alameda producer has more than 40 **wines** in its portfolio, but it's the single-vineyard zinfandels that justify Rosenblum's reputation. Drawing grapes from Napa, Sonoma, Alexander, Russian River and other regions, winemaker Jeff Cohn crafts small productions of excellent zins. Rarely do they lack complexity or character, a result of cropping vines to reduce yields and thus increase concentration.

Here are three we enjoyed:

Rosenblum Harris Kratka Vineyard Zinfandel 2004 ($35). Blending 15 percent petite sirah and 10 percent carignane in this Alexander Valley **wine** gives some nice depth to its profile. Violet aromas, lots of ripe plum fruit and good, good mouthfeel.

Rosenblum Maggie's Reserve Zinfandel 2004 ($45). Using grapes from the Samsel Vineyards in Sonoma Valley, the blend includes a bit of alicante bouschet for the aroma and a bit of petite sirah for the structure.

Raspberry and mint aromas with spice, blackberry and a hint of cloves on the palate. Broad definition, good concentration of fruit and long finish.

Rosenblum Rockpile Road Vineyard Zinfandel 2004 ($35). Made entirely of zinfandel from the Dry Creek Valley, this gem is packed with ripe black cherry and cassis flavors with hints of chocolate and pepper. We served it alongside pasta with bolognese sauce and it was superb.

Ravenswood

Joel Peterson has banked his future on zinfandel since 1976 when he produced just 327 cases of the **wine.** Today, he is making many more cases of his fabled **Ravenswood wine,** still with a dedication to a grape this country can call its own.

Every year we sample the six vineyard-designated zinfandels with the pleasure of noting how different they can be. Some are distinguished by their power while others are distinguished by their luscious fruit. But all have the spice and intense berry flavors identified with this grape variety. They are a true testament to a great winemaker who makes zinfandel a worthy grape variety.

Ravenswood coined the phrase "no wimpy **wines**" to describe zinfandels and the following live up to their marketing:

Ravenswood Big River Zinfandel 2004 ($30). Using all zinfandel grapes from Alexander Valley, the Big River has good concentration and extract of fruit with ripe blackberry and plum flavors and a touch of sweet vanillin oak. Soft and voluptuous texture.

Ravenswood Dickerson Zinfandel 2004 ($30). Dickerson Vineyard in Napa Valley has been a steady favorite of **Ravenswood** over the years. It always packs raspberry fruit and a load of other flavors like chocolate, mint and coffee. It will age at least 5 years.

Ravenswood Teldeschi Zinfandel 2004 ($30). Old vines produce the grapes in this blend of zinfandel, petite sirah (17 percent) and carignane (5 percent). The fruit is more jammy with plum and cherry flavors.

Ravenswood Old Hill Zinfandel 2004 ($60). Only a thousand cases are made of this special elixir grown on old vines in Sonoma Valley. Nearly a fourth of this wild blend is made up of a dozen other grape varieties, including tempranillo, syrah and grenache. The result is a unique **wine** with ripe blackberry and coffee flavors.

Dry Creek Vineyard

Although Dry Creek Vineyard makes a variety of **wines,** in our opinion it's the sauvignon blanc and zinfandel that distinguish it. Founder David Stare, who introduced zinfandel in 1973, has handed the reins to son-in-law and daughter Don and Kim Wallace.

The terroir of the Dry Creek Valley of Sonoma County yields unique **wines** and few producers make zinfandel from this region as good as Dry Creek Vineyard.

Dry Creek Vineyard Beeson Ranch Zinfandel 2003 ($30). With vines from one of the oldest active vineyards in the valley, this zinfandel has jammy raspberry flavors, soft tannins and a eucalyptus aroma.

Dry Creek Vineyard Old Vine Zinfandel 2003 ($26). The producer uses five sources, including the Beeson Ranch, for its old vines. It sports blackberry and spice aromas and plum flavors with a nice touch of forest-floor.

Anniversary memory

The Antinoris have been making **wine** for more than 600 years on its 4,200 acres of prime vineyards in Italy. Piero Antinori, the patriarch and owner of the winery, is credited with originating the super-tuscan movement that has significantly raised the world profile of Italian **wines** over the last quarter century.

Piero is assisted in running the winery by his three daughters - Albiera, Allesia, and Allegra. Allegra journeyed to Washington, D.C., in the mid nineties and hosted a dinner for members at the Italian restaurant Galileo. Fortunately, we were seated next to Allegra and had an opportunity to discuss the **wines** and food matches as they were served. At one point during the dinner Pat turned to Allegra and off-handedly commented that Italian **wines** really seemed to come alive when served with food. Allegra looked puzzled and after a moment replied "Why would you drink **wine** without food?"

Her comment captured the essence of how Italians perceive **wine,** and have integrated it into their everyday lives. Italians look at **wine** as an essential part of the table and believe it is meant to be enjoyed daily, just as food is an essential part of daily living. Chin-chin ("To your health")!

Do you have a question or suggestion for a topic? Write to the authors in care of this newspaper or e-mail tmarquardt@capitalgazette.com.

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WEEKENDER: going out; Wine overflows BusinessWorld August 25, 2006 Friday

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BusinessWorld

August 25, 2006 Friday

SECTION: Pg. S4/4

LENGTH: 669 words

HEADLINE: WEEKENDER: going out;
Wine overflows

BODY:

WINE FESTIVAL

TOAST 2006: The **Wine** Festival

Aug. 25-26

Rockwell Tent, The Power Plant, Rockwell Center, Makati

There are a number of reasons to enjoy TOAST 2006: The **Wine** Festival. This annual **wine** celebration by WineDepot and HSBC boasts of more than 100 **wines** poured, 20 world renowned wineries from seven countries, six **wine** masters and 10 **wine** activities that will keep visitors and their taste buds happily busy.

The weekend}s events are meant to be an opportunity to educate visitor's to **wine's** subtle flavors and aromas, expand their **wine** knowledge, meet with experts and simply enjoy some of the world's finest **wines.**

The jampacked **wine** schedule on Aug. 25 includes "Zinomania: The **Ravenswood** Ultimate Survival Class" conducted by Angus Lilley from 2-3 p.m. **Ravenswood** is a small, highly specialized winery in Sonoma, California that produces Zinfandel **wines** that have become the benchmark of California zinfandels. During the class, Mr. Lilley will uncork five exceptional Zinfandels for a round-about tasting and commentary.

In a "Sparkling Afternoon" from 4-5 p.m., **wine** master Rebecca Hopkins will pour and discuss the fine details that go into making and drinking sparkling **wines.** Attendees get to try Arras, premium Tasmanian sparkling **wines,** paired with caviar.

Then there is the Kilikanoon Masterclass with **wine** maker Kevin Mitchell from 4:30 to 5 pm. Hailed as one of the best **wine** makers in South Australia's Clare Valley **wine** country, Mr. Mitchell will take guests through his prized **wines** in different vintages and tell the story behind each of the **wines.**

From 3:30 to 5 p.m., catch "Nobilo and Oysters" with Oyster Bar Rockwell. Marlborough Sauvignon Blancs from Nobilo and Selaks will be paired with fresh oysters by Oyster Bar Rockwell. There will be another "Nobilo and Oysters" on Aug. 26, 3-5 p.m.

Some of the best **wines** take center stage at World Icon **Wines** Masterclass. Fifteen "iconic" **wines,** all critically acclaimed and winners in **wine** competitions, will be poured and discussed during the masterclass. Some of the **wine** masters will also be present to discuss their respective **wines** and give their two cents on other **wines** on exhibit.

At 7 p.m., WineDepot will launch its newest **wine** brand, Bellagio.

On Aug. 26, **wine** activities include "Birth of an Icon" featuring Banfi's Poggio Alle Mura from 12:30 to 2 pm. Richard Goodine of Banfi, Italy's youngest honored **wine** estate, will reveal the science and passion that went into creating the exceptional Brunello that is Poggio Alle Mura.

For Grant Burge fans, book a seat on the "Reconstruction of Southern Rhone-style **Wine**" masterclass from 2-3 p.m. **Wine** maker Craig Stanborough will unleash Grant Burge **Wines'** Grenache Shiraz and Mourvedre and expertly blend them recreate the Southern Rhone-style.

Torbreck's David Powell is back and will hold a masterclass from 4-5 p.m. This is a rare chance to taste the Torbreck line of

wines, some of which came from the yield of 100-year-old Shiraz vines.

The crowning event of TOAST 2006 is the **Wine** Gala Dinner and Auction on Aug. 26 at the Rizal Ballroom of the Makati Shangri-La. The black tie affair will showcase a menu featuring dishes specially created to compliment the evening's premium **wine** offerings. There will be a **Wine** Makers Table where guests can chat, consult and enjoy exceptional **wines** with any of the celebrity **wine** makers present.

The gala will be capped by the **wine** makers auctioning off their prized **wines,** rare vintages, and special **wine** accessories for the benefit of the Springboard Foundation, a nonprofit organization that raises funds for children in the Philippines.

For tickets to TOAST 2006's master classes and seminars, log on to winedepot.com.ph, call WineDepot at 889-4889 or visit their showrooms located at Yakal St. in Makati, West Gate Alabang and at the Ortigas Town Center along Dona Julia Vargas Avenue in Pasig City. Registration fee for the TOAST 2006 **Wine** and Food Tasting at the Rockwell Tent is at P500 which includes a bag, raffle ticket and **wine** glass for tasting.

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Ravenswood serves ice cream sprinkled with Livermore history Inside Bay Area (California) August 14, 2006 Monday

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Inside Bay Area (California)

August 14, 2006 Monday

SECTION: TRI-VALLEY

LENGTH: 431 words

HEADLINE: **Ravenswood** serves ice cream sprinkled with Livermore history

BYLINE: By Kristofer Noceda, STAFF WRITER

BODY:

LIVERMORE -- There was ice cream, for crying out loud.

The sweet treat -- served in flavors like vanilla, chocolate and rainbow sherbet -- was more than enough to draw hundreds to **Ravenswood's** 10th annual Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social held on a warm Sunday afternoon.

"It has that old-fashioned, lazy afternoon feel to it," said Maryalice Faltings, a director for the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District, which operates the site. "We want to give people the sense they've stepped back in time."

To help accomplish that goal,the Livermore Heritage Guild's "Historymobile" was featured with Victorian croquet and a live soundtrack played by the Pleasanton Community Concert Band and Valley Banjos. Kids were also treated to miniature horse-and-buggy rides, face paintings and a petting zoo.

But amid the fun and games, officials wanted to remind the public of the site's rich history.

Ravenswood used to only be open to the public for weddings and special shindigs, but that changed in 1996, when the **Ravenswood** Progress League was formed with a mission to educate the public about the site's history.

"It's important to see where the city came from," said Gary Dunbar, a 10-year Livermore resident who attended the event with his family. "There's been a lot of progress, and we're (the city) trying to get bigger, but something like this brings back that country atmosphere."

A Queen Anne cottage was the site of tours given by docents dressed in 1890s costumes.

Inside the Victorian-style home, viewers stepped into the lives of the Buckley family from San Francisco, who built the home and made it their summer getaway from 1885 to 1920.

"What's really important for Livermore is the fact that **Ravenswood** is the only Victorian the public can go in and see what that lifestyle was like," Faltings said.

To the right of the cottage is the main house, which was used for entertainment and dinner parties. The house's historic purpose made it an ideal place to serve ice cream, hot dogs and refreshments.

Ravenswood was also home to one of the Livermore Valley's larger early wineries, growing 100 acres of grapes and producing 500,000 gallons of **wine** a year.

Now the site is limited to 33 acres, but the grapevines will resurface with a dedication ceremony next month.

As for the ice cream?

"That's an event that would have happened during the 1890s in Livermore," Faltings said with a chuckle. "Churches would have done it. (An ice cream social) was a common get-together back in those days for the community."

For more information, go online to http://www.larpd.dst.ca.us or call (925) 443-0238.

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LETTERS TO WINE THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (California) August 10, 2006 Thursday

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THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (California)

August 10, 2006 Thursday
FINAL Edition

SECTION: WINE; LETTERS TO **WINE**; Pg. F2

LENGTH: 1039 words

HEADLINE: LETTERS TO **WINE**

BODY:

Spreading the credit around

Editor -- As a longtime Sonoma resident, and one who was affiliated with **Ravenswood** Winery for many, many years, it was quite an "eye-opener" to read that Joel Peterson was single-handedly responsible for **Ravenswood's** phenomenal success ("Ravens to riches," July 27).

I have known Reed Foster, Joel's partner and co-founder of **Ravenswood,** for quite a long time, and know that he was as instrumental (if not more so) as Joel in making **Ravenswood** the successful operation it became to be able to sell it for the amazing price they received from Constellation Brands.

I was dumbfounded when I read the article, as it made it appear that Joel, and Joel alone, is responsible for **Ravenswood's** successes. There were many, many dedicated people involved at the winery over the years; Justin Faggioli, Callie Konno, Benedicte Rhyne, but most importantly Reed Foster, who was the marketing genius behind the "No Wimpy **Wines**" program.

There is no doubt that Joel was producing great **wines** and had the "knack" when it came to grower relationships, but he was not the sole force behind this winery's successes.

Placing all the credit with one person is very rarely the case. Dig a little deeper next time, huh?

SUSAN IHRIG

Glen Ellen

Wine economics

Editor -- That was a fine article on Screaming Eagle and the economics of **wine** ("Worth its weight in gold?" Aug. 3). A friend who is a **wine** merchant told me that the secret to making a small fortune in the **wine** business was to start with a large fortune. This is probably an old saw, but the old firms in which families made money are, it seems to me, few and far between in Napa these days.

RANDY SIVERSON

El Macero (Yolo County)

Reigning **wine**

Editor -- Re "Sauvignon Blancs fit for a king" (July 27): Thank goodness someone finally spoke the truth about my very favorite varietal in the kingdom. How disappointed I have been so many times when well-meaning but uninformed guests bring a bottle of the "other" white over. I've perfected the technique of smiling outwardly while cringing inwardly at the thought of another

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RAVENS TO RICHES; Ravenswood founder Joel Peterson could retire wealthy -- but he still loves making wine THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (California) July 27, 2006 Thursday

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San Francisco Chronicle

THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (California)

July 27, 2006 Thursday
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SECTION: WINE; Pg. F1

LENGTH: 3568 words

HEADLINE: RAVENS TO RICHES;
Ravenswood founder Joel Peterson could retire wealthy -- but he still loves making **wine**

BYLINE: W. Blake Gray, Chronicle Staff Writer

BODY:

When Joel Peterson reaped a multimillion-dollar payoff from the sale of **Ravenswood,** the winery he founded, he could have taken the money and run. Most winemakers who strike such gold do.

But five years later, Peterson still loves what he now calls a "brand." He has proven to be surprisingly good at, and interested in, being a corporate executive -- albeit one who wears Hawaiian shirts and cowboy hats.

It would be easy to lump him in with other ex-hippies gone corporate, but Peterson, 59, is not as simple as his famous slogan "No wimpy **wines.**" That suggests big, bold, straightforward **wines** without nuances, but **Ravenswood's** best **wines** have plenty of complexity, and so does Peterson.

He started out as a part-time, small-time winemaker, making single-vineyard Zinfandels in the 1970s when the grape had little respect. He's a microbiologist and adventurer who tells great stories about riding his motorcycle across the country without a dollar in his pocket, or earning meal money in Portugal by arm-wrestling a merchant marine.

He's also the head of an unusual family; his wife and ex-wife are spending the summer together.

Peterson has been into **wine** since he was 10, when his father asked him to take tasting notes for his parents' East Bay **wine** tasting group. In 1976, at the age of 29, he and business partner Reed Foster, whom he met in that group, started **Ravenswood** with $4,000, no vineyards and no winery. For labor, they called all their friends to help for free.

"I went through a lot of friends in the first year," Peterson says.

Thirty years later, Peterson is still an excellent winemaker producing some of the most terroir-driven Zinfandels in California, even though his now much larger winery doesn't appeal to **wine** aficionados the way it once did.

"This is a business. At the end of the day I can't do what Helen Turley does," says Peterson, referring to one of California's most-sought-after winemaking consultants for top-end **wines.** "I can't tell people ... it doesn't matter if we make money. Because it does. Otherwise it becomes a hobby, unless you charge exorbitant prices for it. But I've never wanted to put **wine** up on a pedestal. **Wine** should be part of your everyday life."

In 2001, two years after going public, **Ravenswood** was bought by Constellation Brands for $148 million. Peterson, whose hair reached his hindquarters in the winery's early years, was the largest stockholder, making him that rare bird many students at UC Davis' Department of Viticulture and Enology aspire to become -- a winemaker-turned-multimillionaire.

But instead of retiring or starting over with a tiny winery, Peterson became a senior vice president at Constellation -- now the world's largest **wine** company -- and stayed on as **Ravenswood's** head winemaker.

"Joel really epitomizes one of the greatest leaders and brand champions in our company," says Constellation chairman and chief executive officer Richard Sands. "He really was the heart and soul of that brand up to the point when we bought it. Thereafter,

he has committed himself to the brand. That's quite unusual in our business. But Joel and the brand are merged. They are one."

If it's true that Peterson has become one with **Ravenswood,** he should be Joel the Giant. In five years, Constellation has more than doubled **Ravenswood's** production, putting the company's cool three-raven logo in supermarket aisles nationwide beside wallabies, monkeys and the rest of the menagerie of cheap "critter **wines.**" (Peterson says he's seen the **Ravenswood** logo tattooed on more than 70 visitors to the Sonoma winery.) The slogan "no wimpy **wines**" still excludes White Zinfandel, but there's a **Ravenswood** Chardonnay now, and it's not bad.

From nonconformist to VP

For the first 15 years of the winery, the loquacious Peterson earned his living in a job with almost no conversation required, working in the clinical laboratory at Sonoma Valley Hospital from 1977 through 1992. (He didn't draw his first salary from the winery until 1991.)

"Microbiology is very meditative," Peterson says. "Your only responsibility is to the petri dish in front of you."

He's among the men most responsible for establishing Zinfandel as a world-class grape. The winemaker is a strong advocate of terroir, the French idea of showcasing a vineyard's distinctive climate and soils through the unique flavor of **wine** produced there.

Yet he's best known for the mass-produced, California appellation **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend **wines** found in supermarkets and drugstores across the country. And he's loyal enough to the corporation that, upon Constellation's orders, he fired his wife, who was the company's East Coast broker for 16 years, representing **Ravenswood wines** to distributors and retail accounts.

"That was not fun," Peterson says, though he comforted her by buying a beach house on the New Jersey shore, where she spent summers as a child.

In fact, Peterson's large and somewhat unconventional family is spending much of the summer on the East Coast without him: his wife, their son, his ex-wife, two of her daughters by other men -- one of whom she gave up for adoption and Peterson later tracked down and reintegrated into the family -- and several grandchildren whose provenance is too complex to detail. Only two sons are his biological children, but he talks about them all as his kids.

"The children all think they're only children because they're spaced 10 years apart," Peterson says.

Peterson lavishes attention on them, just as his parents Frances and Walter did for him.

Peterson's mother still lives in the Point Richmond house where he grew up, which his father, who died in 1972, built himself. Both of Peterson's parents were chemists; they were also an influential part of the Berkeley food-and-**wine** scene beginning in the 1950s. His mom once moonlighted as a recipe tester for Chez Panisse chef Alice Waters, and both parents were leaders of the San Francisco **Wine** Sampling Club, a number of whose members became local food and **wine** luminaries. That's where Peterson developed his palate.

"What people say in music is perfect pitch, Joel has that in taste," says Cris Strotz, owner of the Pickberry Vineyards on Sonoma Mountain, from which Peterson makes a delicious Bordeaux-style blend. "He has great taste memory. I've never met anybody like that."

Wine wunderkinds

Peterson believes his early experiences tasting **wine** and discussing it had great impact on his life, so he gives his children similar opportunities. His son Galen, 8, spends a lot of time at the winery in Sonoma but currently is only allowed to taste grapes before they ferment. That puts him far behind his half- brother Morgan, now 25, who made his first **wine** at age 5.

"Morgan wanted to make Pinot Noir. He told (grape grower) Angelo Sangiacomo he was going to make **wine** like Domaine de la Romanee-Conti," Peterson says, of the revered Burgundy producer. "Angelo says, 'If you're going to make Romanee-Conti, I'll give you some grapes, but you're not going to get them for free. You're going to have to give me some of the **wine.**' Morgan thinks for a minute and says, 'That's OK, I can't drink it anyway.' "

Morgan Peterson made **wine** every year at **Ravenswood** until he headed off to study political science and history at Vassar. While there, he held a "library sale" of his old vintages and raised enough money to pay for a semester of college.

Though Zinfandel was not well regarded in 1976, Peterson was interested in it from the beginning; he had prepared for entrepreneurship by helping Zinfandel pioneer Joseph Swan make five vintages.

"Joe told me not to make Pinot Noir," Peterson says. "I'm a Europhile, and I believed that older vines planted in the right location make the great **wines.** The only grape that filled the bill in California in 1976 was Zinfandel. The vines were old. They were dry-farmed, and they had to be planted in the right places to be dry-farmed. Cabernet was expensive, and I wasn't a rich guy. It was better for me to be a tiny fish in a small pond."

Much of Peterson's seemingly boundless energy was spent in the first years on establishing relationships with vineyard owners, which required some interesting negotiation tactics, from running foot races to bacchanalian drinking fests.

"The idea initially was to buy a vineyard when we had cash flow," Peterson says. "It turns out it's a good strategy to not own any vineyards. You get to work with the best vineyards in California. People would never sell you vineyards like that. If you buy a vineyard, you're stuck with it."

Despite the lack of real estate -- **Ravenswood** had no physical winery until 1981 -- and the infusion of $100,000 from limited

partners in 1979, the company's balance sheet was weak in 1983. Foster said **Ravenswood** needed cash flow and couldn't survive only on single-vineyard Zinfandels; he suggested that **Ravenswood** forget its slogan and make a White Zinfandel.

"I said, 'No pink, sweet, wimpy **wine,** no way,'" Peterson says.

Instead, they came up with the concept of the cheaper Vintners Blend line.

1 million cases a year

"In 1983 I made 1,000 cases of Vintners Blend and thought it was an immense amount of **wine,**" Peterson says.

Today, Vintners Blend makes up about 80 percent of the nearly 1 million cases of **wine Ravenswood** makes, according to Peterson. **Ravenswood** had been in Constellation's more prestigious Icon Estates subsidiary, but is now marketed by Centerra, the subsidiary that handles Almaden and Wild Irish Rose, because Icon sales representatives weren't set up to handle the mass-market phenomenon **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend has become.

Vintners Blend **wines,** which may include juice from anywhere in the state, are where the growth is, but that took a toll on Peterson, who says, "I was tasting so much I was getting bloody noses. Also I was going through awful stuff, really terrible stuff."

But ultimately Vintners Blend **wines** are not awful; in fact, for $11 they are decent value, and a number have been recommended in The Chronicle's Bargain **Wines** column during the past three years. They are the bottom of **Ravenswood's** three-tier system.

The middle layer is made of county appellation **wines** like **Ravenswood** Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon. These cost $15 to $20 and are generally better than the less complex Vintners Blend **wines.** These are often found in restaurants at affordable prices.

"They're definitely a great benchmark when it comes to Zinfandel," says Joe Kohn, chef and partner of Izzy's Steaks and Chops. "They're not like some Zinfandels, where you get a lot of heat. It's a sturdy **wine,** and it's consistent. With our food, it's great."

At the top are Peterson's first loves, the single-vineyard **wines,** which start at about $25 and top out at $60 for the Old Hill Sonoma Valley Zinfandel.

These higher-end bottles seem to have lost the cachet they once had, when **Ravenswood** was one of the "three R's" of quality Zinfandel, along with Cupertino's Ridge Vineyards and Rosenblum Cellars in Alameda. Those two wineries have stayed independent and remain sought after by **wine** geeks.

In a February poll of "favorite Zinfandel producers" on erobertparker.com, a site frequented by **wine** fanatics, **Ravenswood** was not even included as a possible choice, and only one person posted a favorable note about it. The buzz has moved from **Ravenswood** to small wineries that are like Peterson's was when he started out. Ridge still has cachet -- it won the poll.

"Compared to our **wines,** Joel tends to make **wines** that are more extracted and more highly structured," says Ridge winemaker and chief executive officer Paul Draper, who first met Peterson at his parents' tasting club. "It's as if he's saying Zinfandel can be Cabernet. I've loved what he's done with the small vineyards and I've been astounded with what he's done with Vintners Blend, which is a very different animal."

Any dismissal of **Ravenswood's** single-vineyard Zins is premature. A recent tasting showed that Peterson hasn't lost his edge; **Ravenswood's** top-end **wines** are not only still well made and good tasting, but also distinctly different from one another. (See "A taste of **Ravenswood,**" Page F2.)

Unfortunately, not one Bay Area restaurant carries more than one of these **wines,** according to Charla Metcalf, director of public relations for Constellation **Wines** U.S. This is a shame: If you want to taste the impact terroir has on a grape, there's no better demonstration than to sample several of these.

"Joel really has approached winemaking from a vineyard basis," says Diane Kenworthy, who oversees grower relations for **Ravenswood.** "All winemakers say they put the vineyard first, but most don't really believe it. They believe it's their yeast selection or their protocols or whatever. Joel really does believe it. When I took this job, people asked me, 'Why are you going to work for **Ravenswood?** They don't have any vineyards?' But they're all about vineyards."

Blending secrets

Over his lunch at Juanita Juanita, a Mexican restaurant near the Sonoma winery that is patronized by **Ravenswood** employees so often that all checks arrive attached to a **Ravenswood** label, Peterson and his vineyard-relations team talk about how he makes final blending decisions. In some cases, grapes can actually be too good for their original purpose; grapes can be promoted to a County Series **wine** or demoted into Vintners Blend.

"You have a good sense of what's good enough," says Kenworthy.

Peterson, a non-dairy vegetarian who enjoys the Garlic Garlic Burrito with mushrooms instead of meat, chuckles. Later, at a tasting session in **Ravenswood's** second winery, a large facility farther south in Sonoma, he explains what he looks for when buying grapes.

"For the Sonoma County series we buy about 150 percent of the grapes we need," he says. "We can just move the grapes that don't make it into Sonoma County into Vintners Blend.

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Vin Extraordinaire: The Good Life in California Wine Country MiMegasite.com July 19, 2006

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SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS - JULY 2006

This month, guests at the 44-room Vintners Inn in Santa Rosa, CA, are enjoying a family-style dinner that includes chilled melon soup and crab with fava bean salad and Meyer lemon syrup; grilled tuna with white bean salad with basil oil; fried green tomatoes with shrimp remoulade; spit-roasted California game hens with organic creamed yellow corn; and the "world's best strawberry ice cream sandwiches" with house-made gelato and a trio of toppings for dessert. The same guests are washing it all down with top Pinot varietals such as Dutton Goldfield, Martinelli, Gary Farrell, and Hanzell* that were selected from 50 Sonoma Valley vintners.

Welcome to the good life, as practiced by California **wine** country, 24/7. With an influx of interest in Vintners Inn and other hotels, inns, and resorts; and wineries like Ferrari Carano (pictured), the Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau features a range of meetings properties and unique viticultural venues like **wine** caves, and offers a handy map on its website, www.sonomavalley.com. Last year, Sonoma County Tourism Bureau was established to bring more meetings business to the county, a diverse region that spans from neighboring Napa to the Pacific coast. "Over the past couple of years more meetings have come into the area, and our properties are responding with more offerings targeted at that audience," says Andrea Carvey, CMP, director of sales.

Like the diminutive Vintners Inn, which completed a new 6,000-sf event & conference center last month, many of Sonoma County's properties and venues are on an intimate scale-even brand properties, like the 97-room Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa, which recently added the $25-million Sonoma Golf Club House, with 2,400 sf of function space at the resort's 18-hole course. Another, the 182-room Lodge at Sonoma, A Renaissance Resort and Spa, offers private groups the experience of "**wine** roulette," a reception featuring a blind tasting, followed by dinner with **wine** pairings, in the winery-like Stone Building, part of the property's 22,000 sf of function space.

"Over the past few years, we have seen a tremendous rise in the number of meetings coming to **wine** country," says Stephen Andrews, director of sales and marketing for Vintage Estate Hotels, two properties in the heart of Napa Valley, near petite, chic Yountville. In June, Vintage Estate Hotels opened the new Vineyard Pavilion among the historic winery buildings between its 80-room French country-style Vintage Inn and the 112-room Tuscan-inspired Villagio Inn & Spa. The new 16,000-sf outdoor venue, with its gardens, event arbor/stage, and kitchens, can serve elaborate gatherings for up to 700 people, augmenting the hotels' existing 10,000 sf of meeting space. For incentives, the boutique, 25-room La Residence has teamed with the Napa Valley **Wine** Train, offering a five-course dinner on board the train, two nights in the property's "mansion suite," and a vinotherapy in-room massage.

Accessing the **wine** country experience is easy for planners to arrange at places like Yountville's Domaine Chandon winery, according to expert Rene Averseng, who has been sharing vintage wisdom with meeting planners from his store, Du Vin **Wine** & Spirits, in West Hollywood, CA, for 27 years. "It is very informative and customer-oriented, and has a great restaurant that has always been ahead in the culinary world," he says. Last month, the restaurant was relaunched as etoile, after the winery's signature **wine.** Chef Chris Manning oversees the new pairing experience with **wines** served to the group at various locations along a private tour, followed by lunch or dinner in the restaurant. "Such events are good for someone who doesn't know anything about **wine,** or for someone who does," says Averseng.

One-on-one opportunities with the winemakers and chefs of Napa and Sonoma are also crowd-pleasers. Peter Griffith, owner of

Sonoma's **Ravenswood,** offers an event for up to 50 people where he helps the group create their own **wine** blend, then bottles the results for them to take home. Gourmet Retreats Culinary School in Calistoga presents hands-on cooking classes where participants go along with the chef to pluck their ingredients from the on-site herb and vegetable garden. And within the grand stone building that began as the Christian Brothers Winery in 1889 and is now the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone, possible culinary events range from cooking (and eating) with the chef in one of CIA's teaching kitchens, or a cooking class in a specialized theater, to lunch in one of the charming rooms at CIA's **Wine** Spectator Greystone Restaurant.

*Robert MacMillan, California **wine** expert for West Hollywood, CA-based Du Win **Wine** & Spirits, selected these from a list of 42 Sonoma Valley Pinots.

LOAD-DATE: September 2, 2008

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Zinfandel maker stood fast against wimpy wines Pittsburgh Tribune Review July 12, 2006 Wednesday

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Pittsburgh Tribune Review

July 12, 2006 Wednesday

LENGTH: 797 words

HEADLINE: Zinfandel maker stood fast against wimpy **wines**

BYLINE: Dave DeSimone

BODY:

The smoky aroma of grilling meats and vegetables invites **wine** drinkers to break out the quintessential American red **wine:** full-flavored red zinfandels, our nation's gift to the **wine** drinking world.

The best red zinfandels reflect the character of California's greatest grape-growing terroirs and the passionate personal stories of the winemakers.

Among the many outstanding zinfandel producers in California, Joel Peterson of **Ravenswood** Winery in Sonoma County stands as a master. His **wines** are at once intense and full-flavored, while balancing the good structure and refreshing acidity necessary for superb food **wines.**

While growing up in northern California, Paterson learned about the world's **wines** at Friday night tastings with his parents -- both chemists -- and developed an appreciation for intense, but well-balanced, red **wines** with food.

"My father was fond of saying that gin is a whole lot faster and cheaper if you want to get drunk," Peterson says. "**Wine,** on the other hand, is all about flavor, taste and history."

After graduating from college, Peterson imagined himself making **wines** to rival the best of the Old World even as he pursued a career in biomedical research.

"I didn't get my first real paycheck from **Ravenswood** until 1987," he says, so he kept his "day job" well into the 1990s. "From the beginning, it was a labor of love focused around red **wine.**"

During his first harvest, Peterson picked 4 tons of grapes himself, filling 50-pound boxes, as the autumn rains loomed and cackling cries of ravens harassed him. In native American lore, he says, the raven is a devilish trickster god as well as a savior who gives humans fire and light.

The harvest proved a success as the first **wines** laid the foundation for Peterson's reputation for red **wines** of uncompromising quality. Shortly thereafter, Peterson named the winery for the ravens and for the tragic figure of Edgardo **Ravenswood** in Gaetano Donizetti's opera, "Lucia di Lammermoor."

"The name fit into what I was doing and with what was happening in my life," Peterson says. "It just felt right."

He also developed his trademark "No Wimpy **Wines**" motto early in his career, when consumers had just begun clamoring for so-called "white zinfandels," off-dry, pink-colored soft **wines.** While pleasant enough in an easy quaffing sort of way, these bland and undistinguished bottles were the antithesis of Peterson's idea of what **wines** should be.

When an accountant urged Peterson to cash in by making a white zinfandel, he declined.

"I said, 'I'm sorry, but I don't do pink, sweet and wimpy,'" says Peterson, laughing. 'We put a sign up over our fermentors saying 'No Wimpy **Wines** Allowed,' and it went from there."

As consumer tastes shifted over the years toward full-flavored red **wines,** Peterson's tenacious passion for great red zinfandels attracted a tremendously loyal following. By the late 1990s, **Ravenswood** stood with Ridge Vineyards and Rosenbloom Cellars as California's premier producers.

In 2001, Constellation Brands acquired **Ravenswood** Winery, leaving Peterson in control of a still relatively modest annual

output of 100,000 cases. Much of the production involves the "Vintner's Blends," for which Peterson plays the role of a traditional negociant and eleveur to create fresh and fruity **wines** with good balance and a modest price for everyday drinking.

His "County" **wines** reflect the distinctive characteristics of "old vines" in Lodi, Napa and Sonoma counties.

Ravenswood's single-vineyard bottles are distinctive, intense **wines** made from grapes grown in superb Sonoma County vineyards with many 100-year-old vines.

Peterson credits Sonoma County's warm days and cool nights for keeping humidity low while the grapes ripen slowly with good acidity and complexity. Planted in volcanic soils that drain well while retaining just enough moisture to permit "dry farming" with no irrigation, many Sonoma vines have grown old gracefully to yield small crops of intense and splendidly balanced grapes with great structure and tannins.

Peterson uses French oak only sparingly to enhance his **wines'** structure and finish.

"Let the fruit and the vineyard's location have their say in the **wine,**" he says

Try the following:

2003 **Ravenswood** Vintner's Blend California Zinfandel (4068, on sale $10.99): This is a full-flavored, fun **wine** with juicy raspberry and black pepper aromas and flavors balanced by fresh acidity, silky tannins and just a touch of oak. Highly recommended.

2003 **Ravenswood** Zinfandel, Barricia Vineyard, Alexander Valley (Special Liquor Order 62987, $31.69): Grapes from vines planted in 1892 in this Sonoma vineyard created a **wine** with exquisite aromas and flavors of blackberries and raspberries with spicy vanilla hints and a big, beautifully balanced texture. Recommended.

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Zins online: a few choice wines for summer, and where to find them; Website list The Atlantic Monthly July 1, 2006

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HEADLINE: Zins online: a few choice **wines** for summer, and where to find them;
Website list

BODY:

Visiting winery Web sites--to find, say, a good Zinfandel, which seems to go with any dish based on vegetables--is a good deal less frustrating than it was before last year, when a Supreme Court ruling eased shipping directly from winery to customer. Here are some informative and entertaining sites to help you find a **wine** that, despite its power, is often the red you want on a summer evening.

Cardinal Zin, Bonny Doon, bonnydoonvineyard.com

Randall Grahm has long been America's wittiest writer on **wine,** as well as the maker of offbeat **wines** that attract cult followings. Likehis famous winery newsletter, written from his home base of Santa Cruz, his Web site merits Most Fun in Class honors (his biographical note is called "The man behind the curtain" and features his head bobbing in front of a green pipe organ with urns shooting flames). Cardinal Zin--"a rich, fragrant chocolate cherry bomb which requires no firesuppression equipment"--has from the start been one of his greatest hits.

Sonoma County Old Vine Zinfandel, **Ravenswood, ravenswood-wine.**com

Since its first vintage, in 1976, **Ravenswood** has made itself practically synonymous with Zinfandel, and was among the first California wineries to make people recognize the name of the grape and to changethe grape's jug-**wine** image (borrowing from Grahm's punning tendencies, it calls its promotional cross-country events this summer the "Zinfomaniac Tour"). Sonoma County Old Vine Zinfandel gives a pure sense of the character that drew Joel Peterson, the winemaker, to a little-known and little-esteemed grape.

Amador Zinfandel, Tulocay Winery, available from crushwineandspirits.com

Neal Rosenthal, a New York **wine** importer whose taste in **wine** and food I trust completely (his own site is madrose.com), calls Bill Cadman, who began his small and purposely modest Napa Valley winery in 1975, an "unheralded genius." Cadman's straightforward but subtle winesare the only California ones Rosenthal will sell. This is a ripe, powerful, high-alcohol **wine**--but like all good Zinfandels, it has enough acidity to cut through the jammy fruit.

ZAP, zinfandel.org

Zinfandel Advocates & Producers is a nonprofit group for winemakers and "advocates" who love the grape. It provides ample information on Zinfandel and is sponsoring a seminar in Napa, July 7-9--called, naturally, the Zinposium.

LOAD-DATE: November 4, 2006

Fine whine; The sound of NASCAR's engines brings wine marketers running THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (California) June 29, 2006 Thursday

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The sound of NASCAR's engines brings **wine** marketers running

BYLINE: Linda Murphy, Chronicle **Wine** Editor

BODY:

Hell froze over, pigs flew, the 12th of never came and now the good ol' boys of stock car racin' are drinking **wine.**

They're making it too -- legally -- and NASCAR fans steeped in the beer and bourbon culture of the South are starting to break out the stemware and pop as many corks as they do burnouts.

Budweiser may be "the official beer of NASCAR," and Coors Light, Miller Lite, Jack Daniel's and Jim Beam sponsor cars, yet **wine** is slowly weaving its way through traffic and into NASCAR.

In the most American of motor sports, U.S. drivers get behind the wheels of American-made cars advertising mostly American-made products, and put on exhibitions of speed, power, burning tires and spectacular crashes.

Wineries are forming racing teams. Drivers are making **wine** and visiting tasting rooms. A North Carolina NASCAR team chief, a moonshine runner in his youth, planted **wine** grapes on land that once grew tobacco. At Infineon Raceway in Sonoma, the site of Sunday's Dodge/Save Mart 350 Nextel Cup Series race, Pinot Noir vines are planted around the track and may produce an Infineon-branded **wine** one day. Race winner Jeff Gordon has his own **wine** brand, and took a victory gulp of Cabernet Sauvignon from the trophy cup.

"We're turning beer guzzlers into **wine** sippers, one race at a time," says Randy Lynch, who with his wife, Lisa, owns Bennett Lane Winery in Calistoga and the Bennett Lane Winery Ford that races in NASCAR's Grand National West Series, two rungs removed from Nextel Cup.

As NASCAR's fan base becomes more diverse, so does the product mix that's promoted at the track and on television. At races, Dockers and baby strollers are as common as beer bellies and big hair. Cigarettes have given way to cell phones as the major sponsor of NASCAR. The organization estimates that it has 75 million fans, 40 percent of them female. So it's not too great a stretch to think that **wine's** presence at the track could eventually steal beer's days of thunder.

NASCAR has licensing agreements for Swiss watches, fashion shoes, Halston cologne, swimwear and racing-themed Harlequin Romance novels. Celebrity chef Wolfgang Puck will open a restaurant at California Speedway in Fontana, and "Iron Chef" Mario Batali is the official chef of NASCAR and will judge the Tailgate of a Lifetime Tailgating Championship in August.

Corn dogs, funnel cakes, Skoal, Bud Light and Jagermeister are still popular, yet NASCAR fans can also get shrimp, Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, pink Racer Girl T-shirts, foot massages and a free skin cancer screening, as well as apply for a NASCAR credit card.

And they can chug a glass of Zinfandel.

"It's a new era for NASCAR," says Andrew Giangola, director of business communications for NASCAR. "The average national NASCAR fan is more affluent than other sports fans. In the past five years, for every two new NASCAR fans, one is a woman. NASCAR racing is the second-highest-rated regular-season TV sport (the NFL is No. 1), and it has great attractiveness to

sponsors.

"Ever since a local gas station slapped a sticker on a race car, sponsorship has been a part of NASCAR. We have passionate, loyal fans, and they have a lot of purchasing power. "

Pricey sport

It's expensive to field a racing team, with all the travel, the wrecks and the salaries paid to superstar drivers, so sponsors are needed. They pay to plaster their ad slogans on cars, racing suits, caps, track walls and food stalls. Even the aerial TV cameras have sponsors.

The looks and personality of the drivers are as important as their performances. NASCAR drivers win over female fans with their all-American handsomeness, ultra-white teeth and willingness to sign autographs anywhere they go. Men love the machines, the driving skills and the women who love the drivers. Kids see clean-cut role models, most of whom are in their 20s and early 30s.

Good-looking boys show better than good ol' boys on TV and in advertisements. Poor Sterling Marlin, who's one of the oldest active NASCAR drivers (he turns 49 on Friday), is relegated to driving the No. 14 Chevrolet sponsored by Waste Management. Guys named Kyle, Kirk, Jeremy and Ryan have replaced Junior, Cale and Leroy behind the wheel.

Winery gets on track

Recognizing the mass appeal of NASCAR is **Ravenswood** Winery in Sonoma, a primary sponsor for three races in the 2006 NASCAR Busch Series, which is one level down from the granddaddy Nextel (previously Winston) Cup. When the Brewco Motorsports No. 27 Ford represents **Ravenswood** on the track, its paint scheme is white with red splashes representing Zinfandel.

Ravenswood Racing didn't run at Infineon Raceway last weekend. The winery turned its "No wimpy **wines**" slogan into "No wimpy wahns y'all," and was the naming sponsor of the Nextel Cup Pole Day at Infineon on Friday.

On the hill overlooking turns 7 and 8, the winery set up its Zinfomaniacs Tour trailer, complete with two 10-foot-tall plastic **Ravenswood** Zinfandel bottles on the roof that could be seen from the opposite side of the track and on certain TV camera angles.

Visitors to the trailer were given complimentary 1-ounce tastes of Zinfandel and Chardonnay, buttons and bumper stickers, and could have their photo taken next to the **Ravenswood** Racing show car.

On Sunday, **Ravenswood wines** were sold at the trailer and concession stands, and served in and hospitality suites.

"**Ravenswood** built a great brand on grassroots marketing," says Jeff Lubin, marketing director for the winery that is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. "Now we've gone into event marketing, with our Zinfomaniacs Tour around the country, and the Busch Series races in Phoenix, Bristol, Conn., and Watkins Glen (N.Y.).

"It will take some time to make an impression on race fans, but so far we've gotten very positive response. We sampled 3,000 consumers on Sunday and took 507 photos of fans with the **Ravenswood** car. We sold four cases of **wine** on Sunday (the only day it was available), and it was great to see fans take their bottles to the **Ravenswood Wine** Garden and watch the race from there. The momentum is starting, and we'll definitely do this again next year."

The cost to **Ravenswood:** Approximately $100,000 per race, Lubin says.

James Wilson of Reno, wearing a beat-up ball cap and scruffy beard, tasted the 2003 **Ravenswood** Old Vine Lodi Zinfandel ($15) and said somewhat professorially, "NASCAR fans are becoming so much more diversified. People think we're a bunch of rednecks."

His Reno buddy, Mike Sweeney -- bare-chested, muscled, tattooed and with a shaved head -- expressed his love of Pinot Noir, described by many as the most feminine of red **wines.**

"I used to drink a lot of Cabernet and Syrah," Sweeney said, "but now I'm into Pinot Noir. James and I went to Roche Winery yesterday and tried their **wines.** Do you like Roche **wine?** I thought the 2004 Pinot Noir was better than the 2003."

No upturned pinkies on these guys.

Andy Konkle, director of operations for Levy Restaurants, the Infineon Raceway catering company, says 102 cases of **wine** were poured at the track over three days -- 1,224 bottles -- and 22,896 cans/bottles of beer. Beer is comfortably ahead in the adult beverage race, but **wine** is in its rearview mirror.

With his roots on Tobacco Road, in the heart of North Carolina, Richard Childress, owner of three Nextel Cup teams, surprised many by founding Childress Vineyards in Lexington, N.C. Last year, he produced and sold 28,000 cases of **wine.**

"Ninety percent of our business online is with race fans," Childress, 60, says. "Yet a survey we took showed that only 45 percent of the people who come into the tasting room are racing people. The others hear about us through word of mouth and pull off the interstate. People are just curious and eager to try the **wines.**"

Childress, whose cars are driven by Clint Bowyer, Kevin Harvick and Jeff Burton, became interested in **wine** after racing in Southern California in the 1970s, when there was a thriving **wine** industry there. "That was before Napa became Napa," he says.

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IF IT'S THIS GOOD, IT MUST BE A ZIN Stratford Beacon Herald (Ontario) April 13, 2006 Thursday

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HEADLINE: IF IT'S THIS GOOD, IT MUST BE A ZIN

BYLINE: BY JUDY ATCHISON AND ALEX GOOD

BODY:

The focus of the upcoming Vintages release on Saturday, April 15 is the signature **wines** of California, with an emphasis on Zinfandel, arguably California's specialty.

Just as Nebbiolo is to Northern Italy, "Zin" triumphs in California. It first appeared in the United States in the 1830s. Some original Zin vineyards, planted in the 1850s, still exist today. Yet, there is some confusion as to the true origins of the grape. Tests reveal that the Zinfandel vine is directly related to the Primitivo grape, found in southern Italy. Further tests indicate that the origins of Zinfandel and Primitivo may in fact be traced back to Crljenak Kastelanski, a grape from the Dalmation coast of Croatia.

One of Zinfandel's most unique features is that it is essentially a one-region **wine.** There are miniature pockets of Zinfandel in other parts of the world -- South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and even an experimental plot on the famous hill of Hermitage in France, and, surprisingly, Canada, in both the Niagara Peninsula and in the Okanagan Valley.

Regardless of the birthplace, Zinfandel vines grown in the U.S. have established themselves as a Californian specialty. While planted throughout California in all of its major **wine**-growing regions, it is in the Sonoma Valley where it really shines.

At its best, it is known for its ability to produce massive red **wines** with intrinsic briar, bramble, boysenberry, spice and earthy characteristics. Zinfandel never fails to impress with its unabashed concentration and complexity.

Onto this weeks' picks:

The late Tim Murphy of the legendary Murphy-Goode winery in Sonoma County was the designer of the Zinfandel program in a plan conceived over 20 years of breakfasts and "liar's dice" games at a local cafe in Geyserville. Tim's circle of friends at those early morning meetings were some of the finest Zin growers in Sonoma County and now are the fruit source for Liar's Dice Zinfandel.

It was hard to pull my nose out of the glass -- the bouquet on this Zinfandel was absolutely brimming with juicy black cherry, spice, briar, and pepper aromas. The flavours were rich and ripe, showing notes of bright raspberry, strawberry jam and pepper on the muscular, full-bodied palate.

Ravenswood is a name long-associated with some of the oldest and best Zinfandel producers in California. In fact, they are fondly referred to as one of "The Three R's" alongside Rosenblum and Ridge.

Their 2002 'Teldeschi' Zinfandel, sourced from the vineyard of the same name in the famous Dry Creek Valley, is a lush and concentrated version, bringing forward a plethora of powerful, brooding aromas. Equally enticing are the massive flavours, with licorice, tar, black raspberry, Christmas cake spices, coffee, bing cherry and bramble, beautifully balanced on the full-bodied, firmly tannic palate. While this is drinking beautifully now, this would benefit even more from one to three years on its side.

I don't tend to make a point of looking for the alcoholic content on a **wine** label, but after tasting the impressive 'Annette's Reserve' 2003 Zinfandel from Rosenblum, I was compelled ... at a substantial 16.2 per cent alc/vol, this **wine** has considerable clout. When a **wine** has this much alcohol, there is a danger that the alcoholic 'heat' will annihilate any fruit nuances in the **wine.** Remarkably enough, there is enough bold, ripe fruit in this **wine** to produce a formidable and balanced partnership. Excellent concentration and depth of flavour are the trademarks of this red **wine.** There are creamy blackberry, cocoa, toast, vanilla and strawberry jam flavours on the silky palate. The hefty price tag doesn't seem so bad when you consider that this

wine is so concentrated, it feels like the equivalent of three bottles in one.

Finally, for the best Zinfandel value on the release, look no further than the 2003 Kenwood Zinfandel. Using grapes sourced from Zinfandel's best appellations, the Sonoma and Dry Creek Valleys, it features flavours of ripe blueberries, raspberries, black cherries, toasty oak and spices. Full-bodied and well-balanced, it is a perennial favourite in Vintages, and a great place to start when discovering the joys of California's signature grape.

Until next time, drink well!

-Murphy-Goode 2003 'Liar's Dice' Zinfandel, Sonoma County, 747824, $28.95

-**Ravenswood** 2002 'Teldeschi' Zinfandel, Dry Creek Valley, 684589, $44.95

-Rosenblum 2003 'Annette's Reserve' Zinfandel, Redwood Valley, 686204, $44.95

-Kenwood 2003 Zinfandel, Sonoma, 983577, $21.95

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A majestic way to tickle the tastebuds The Sentinel (Stoke) April 1, 2006 Saturday

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April 1, 2006 Saturday

SECTION: Pg. 21

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HEADLINE: A majestic way to tickle the tastebuds

BODY:

If You are a lover of German **wines,** or merely curious to try some of the most exciting flavours in the world, make for the nearest Majestic **Wine** Warehouse (or log on to www.majestic.co.uk).

A new range is on sale from the beginning of May, and if past experience is anything to go by, all the **wines** will sell out very quickly indeed.

I have just tasted several of the new arrivals, all made from the great Riesling grape, and know that quantity is limited. Quality, on the other hand, is phenomenal.

And the prices seem insanely low for seriously good, mature **wines** of a kind you will find in no other high street merchant, and certainly never in any supermarket.

Start with Dorsheimer Pittermanchen Riesling Spatlese 2000 from the Nahe region. It has a gold colour, an aroma of apple blossom with a good whiff of nectar about it and an equally alluring flavour with racy, appley Riesling fruit and the trace of richness suggested by the designation 'Spatlese', which means the grapes were picked late and generously ripe in the glorious harvest of 2000. Alcohol level is just 7.5 per cent, but at no cost to intensity of flavour or weight, although, of course, it is commensurately light in calories.

The price is £5.29, about half of what a **wine** of this kind is really worth.

Next, Burg-Layer Schlosskapelle Riesling Kabinett, Michael Schafer, 1992. Look at the date. This is a wonderfully mature Nahe **wine** with that irresistible 'petrolly' perfume of old Riesling and lush, ripe fruit with hints of caramel, yet still vividly fresh.

It is a modest 9.5 per cent alcohol and an even more modest £5.49 in price.

And don't miss another great **wine** from maker Michael Schafer, this time Burg-Layer Schlossberg Riesling Spatlese 1989. In its seventeenth year, this is still daisy fresh, with a beautiful lemon-gold colour, less 'petrol' than its 1992 counterpart but rich with ripe orchard-fruit flavours. Again it's 9.5 per cent alcohol and risibly priced at £5.99.

A third Michael Schafer **wine** is Burg-Layer Schlosskappelle Riesling Auslese 1992, at £5.49. The designation 'Auslese' means the **wine** is from grapes very carefully selected from late-picked bunches so they have maximum natural sugar levels, and the result is a luxuriously honeyed but perfectly balanced apple-fresh **wine** tasting superb even in its relative youth, with 8.5 per cent alcohol.

Every one of these **wines** is a great bargain, and there a few more among Majestic's new range well worth trying. As you need to buy at least 12 bottles (any mix) at the stores, you should be able to put together a pretty good selection. And if there's no branch conveniently close, you can always look up the nearest one, ring and ask for the new price list and order for home delivery. Or visit their website.

Wine of the week **Ravenswood** is a well-known Californian **wine** brand let down, I think, by its naff label design. But this should not put you off trying **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend Chardonnay 2003 this week from Somerfield. It is a remarkably lavish yet briskly refreshing example of the sunny Californian style, and all the more attractive at the price of £5.53, reduced from £6.99, until May 9.

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and so to z Daily Mail (London) March 25, 2006 Saturday

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Daily Mail (London)

March 25, 2006 Saturday

SECTION: WKD; Pg. 83

LENGTH: 657 words

HEADLINE: and so to z

BYLINE: MATTHEW JUKES

BODY:

The final part of my modern A-Z of **wines** covers some serious ground and another unusual and eclectic line up of **wines.** I hope you've enjoyed not only drinking these gems, but also running through the most up-to-date alphabet of vinous expressions.

Sainsbury's Taste the Difference 12 year old Oloroso Sherry, Spain (Pounds 6.99, 50cl bottle, Sainsbury's). S is for Saint Emilion (in Bordeaux); Sancerre (in the Loire); Sangiovese (the Chianti grape); Sauternes (the heavenly sweet **wine** from Bordeaux); Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon (both famous white grapes); South Africa; Spain, and Syrah (or Shiraz grape). 'T' is for Tasmania (starting to make waves) and Trentino (northern Italy's underrated region).

My pick is Sherry.

This one, made by Lustau, is an older style with burnt toffee and nut flavours.

2003 Landmark Overlook Chardonnay, Sonoma County, California (Pounds 16.20, Jeroboams of London, tel: 020 7259 6716). 'U' is for Umbria (important Italian region); Ugni Blanc (a grape that forms the backbone of Cognac and Armagnac): UK (good fizz and white **wine** producer), and U.S., where my chosen **wine** comes from. This incredibly smart chardonnay is a stunner. The 2004 vintage arrives next month and it is awesome, too. Put it up against the best from Burgundy and Australia and you'll see that Overlook shouldn't be overlooked.

2005 Brampton Viognier, Stellenbosch, South Africa (Pounds 7.99, Waitrose). V is a big one in the **wine** world. Verdicchio, Valpolicella, Vin Santo and Veneto are all Italian Vs - a white **wine,** a red, a sweet **wine** and the region that Valpol comes from. Vinho Verde is the Portuguese holiday glugger.

Verdelho and Viognier are both aromatic white grapes. Volnay and Vosne-RomanEe are two of Burgundy's most famous red producing villages.

Vouvray is making some of the world's greatest chenin blancs. Verdelho and Viognier are both aromatic white grapes and it is Viognier that makes my chosen **wine.** With an exotic apricot and peach blossom nose and a sleek palate this is an alluring **wine.** Dry and long, this is a fine substitute for chardonnay.

2004 Goundrey Homestead Unwooded Chardonnay, Western Australia (Pounds 6.99, Somerfield). W is for Waiheke Island and Wellington in New Zealand and Western Australia, which has some very smart **wines** made within its boundaries. This unoaked chardonnay is crisp and dry and lively, and just the ticket for unwinding after a hard day in the office. This is also a multitalented food-matching **wine,** which can cope with just about anything other than red meat and game.

2004 Yalumba Y Series Shiraz/Viognier, South Australia (Pounds 6.99, Waitrose). X is for X-factor (and I hope you'll agree that all my recommendations have it!); 'Y' is for the Yarra Valley (where stunning chardonnays, pinot noirs and shirazs come from), and Yalumba, a beacon in Australian **wine** production.

The 'Y' Series is a faultless line up of incredibly good value **wines** and my current favourite is this shiraz/viognier. Juicy, briary, spicy and glossy, this is a very sexy **wine** indeed. Drink it with meaty dishes and marvel at the velvety fruit and jaw-dropping aftertaste.

Matthew Jukes's The **Wine** List 2006 is published by Headline, Pounds 9.99. You can email Matthew at

matthew@matthewjukes.com. The **Wine** Book (Pounds 18.99, Headline) is available in good bookshops now.

This week's WOW

2001 **Ravenswood** Amador Zinfandel, California (Pounds 10.03, selected Somerfield). Z is for one word only - Zinfandel, my **Wine** of the Week. This mighty red grape is planted in a number of countries, but its home is California.

Ravenswood is a legendary producer of Zin, and Amador is one of the best **wines** that they make. Huge, inky, brooding and spicy, this is a monstrous **wine,** with a devil-may-care attitude.

Charge your glasses and sink into the sofa with a grin on your face. This is one of the most languid, laid-back **wines** on the planet. You will melt, I can assure you, when you fall under the spell of this **wine.**

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Not for wimps The Irish Times January 7, 2006 Saturday

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January 7, 2006 Saturday

SECTION: MAGAZINE; Food and **Wine**

LENGTH: 923 words

HEADLINE: Not for wimps

BODY:

Joe Breen talks to Joel Peterson, founder of leading Californian winery, **Ravenswood,** famous for making **wines** that aren t "wimpy"

"Let s just say I was very entrepreneurial." Joel Peterson, the very picture of a Californian winemaker, is reflecting on the business which he started almost 30 years ago and which has grown to become one of the leading labels in California, especially renowned for its championing of the state s great grape, Zinfandel.

"I started a **wine** company with no money, no reputation but with a great deal of passion and desire. And I lived in a **wine** world that had a lot big hitters around me. So to be the little tiny guy trying to elbow your way in does mean that you can t be shy."

Peterson, the son of two **wine**-loving chemists, grew up in San Francisco, protested against the Vietnam war and generally behaved "in counter-cultural ways" before becoming a scientist and working in immunology research. But the **wine** bug bit him and although he had no formal training, he apprenticed himself to Joseph Swan, an artist and pilot turned winemaker. In 1976, he made 300 cases of Zinfandel under Swan s supervision. And he has not looked back.

He still has that passion and desire to spread the news about his **wines.** "There s no doubt about it. A selling proposition these days has to be making an identity for your **wines,** giving people a reason to try your **wines,** and there probably is no better motivating factor than people meeting other people.

"I m learning more about the people who are drinking my **wines.** And that s really valuable. And I get to meet some of the greatest people in the world. It is remarkable. It seems only nice, educated, interesting people drink **wine.** In terms of the winery, of how I express myself with my **wines,** the answer is no, I don t really change my approach. I have an idea of what I am trying to produce, so that is essentially the **Ravenswood** house style, and if I diverge from that style then no-one is going to know what they ll get when they buy a bottle of **Ravenswood.**

"Ravenswood stands for **wine** that comes from a definitive place, and is made to a very high level. Simple as that." Peterson makes what he calls "non-wimpy" **wines.** "A non-wimpy **wine** is a **wine** that is expressive, that is not mucked up with too much sugar, too much oak and is not processed."

Peterson has seen many changes in his 30 years in the business. "When I got into it, it was relatively provincial. I m not saying there weren t the Gallos of this world, because there were, but there were a lot of small companies and they were all very supportive of one another. In some ways that s still true, but with the advent of **wine** companies like Kendall Jackson, **wine** has become big business. That shift has continued. Instead of **wine** companies being looked upon as wineries, they are looked upon as brands. And sometimes there isn t even a winery there. There are just 17 brands coming out of one large tank essentially, with variations on a theme, and they pass them off with marketing sleight-of-hand as something unique and wonderful."

Ravenswood is now part of the giant Constellation stable. The problem was that to grow his company Peterson needed money, but then, a few years later, his investors wanted to cash in their investment and he had no choice. However, he did get to choose who bought **Ravenswood.** "As it worked out, Constellation, which is probably the largest **wine** company in the world, turned out to be the best choice. They just said we love what you do, just keep doing it. I still run **Ravenswood** as I did, and they provide marketing and sales support and they also provide money for development whenever we need it."

As for what is happening in California today, he believes there is a distinct return to "handcraft **wines,** to smaller formats, to organic formats, and the rise of biodynamics.

"Hundreds of millions of dollars have been wasted planting the wrong grapes or planting the right grapes in the wrong place. And I think the time is also coming when we are going to see focusing of certain varietals. The obvious example is the Napa Valley, which is going to become the Cabernet centre of California. And that s because the Cabernets which come out of there are very good. And the area around Monterey is focusing on Pinot Noir because that particular location with its daytime/night-time temperature variations is perfect for developing and preserving the delicacy of Pinot Noir.

"I myself am going in a totally different direction from anybody else," he says. He is "looking at the possibility of doing a Californian claret which would be a Zinfandel, Cabernet, Merlot and Carignan blend, without one of those varietals being dominant." He doesn t believe that the best **wine** California can make is always varietals "the Bordelais realised that a long time ago." He says that perhaps in a given year "my best **wine** would not be 100 per cent Zinfandel, but Zinfandel with other varietals blended in."

The **Ravenswood Wines** available in Ireland are: **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend Chardonnay (EUR 11.99-EUR 12.99). From: Dunnes, O Briens, Spar, Londis, Next Door; **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend Zinfandel (EUR 11.99-EUR 12.99). From: Tesco, Dunnes, O Briens, Spar, Londis, Next Door; **Ravenswood** County Old Vine Zinfandel,Lodi County (EUR 12.99-EUR 13.99). From: O Briens, Londis, Next Door; **Ravenswood** County Old Vine Zinfandel, Amador County (EUR 14.99-EUR 16.99). From: O Briens and selected off-licences; **Ravenswood** County Zinfandel, Mendocino County (EUR 16.00-EUR 18.50). From: Selected off-licences.

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SOME SURPRISINGLY SUPER SIPS OFF THE GROCERY SHELF The Arizona Republic (Phoenix) December 14, 2005 Wednesday Final chaser Edition

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December 14, 2005 Wednesday Final chaser Edition

SECTION: FOOD&DRINK; on **wine;** Pg. 5F

LENGTH: 751 words

HEADLINE: SOME SURPRISINGLY SUPER SIPS OFF THE GROCERY SHELF

BYLINE: mark tarbell, Special for The Republic

BODY:
A friend and reader commented that although the **wines** mentioned in this column are interesting, he could not find them at his local Bashas'.

I take great pains to ensure that the **wines** reviewed are available at the distributor level in Arizona, but I can't ensure they'll be in every **wine** shop and grocery store.

While this column will always feature "off the wall" **wines** that offer the greatest values and most interesting flavors (and maybe a trip to the specialty store), there are many surprises on the shelves at grocery stores.

Grocery stores have a reputation for carrying bulk **wines** of average quality, and there are plenty of those to buy. But when I took my friend on a personal shopping tour of a Bashas' in Fountain Hills, we found a surprising number of good **wines** available for around $10.

Use a store's discount card to bring the price down even more; some offer the added benefit of an additional discount when buying six or more bottles per purchase.

We left the store with 10 bottles (and a baguette) for under $100. On the way home, we stopped by the local butcher for some freshly made sausage and called another friend to join the adventure.

This turned out to be one of my most interesting tastings of the year. Lined up on the kitchen table were five whites and five reds, our tasting glasses and our spittoons. One guitar player, an automobile artist (master mechanic) and moi were charged to find the most interesting **wine** less than $10. Our reward was sharing that **wine** with the Bratwurst soaking in beer and garlic on the stove. The **wines** with double asterisks (**) were the favorites.

** 2003 Canyon Road Sauvignon Blanc, California ($4.99) -- I have not tasted a greater value in a Sauvignon Blanc all year. It's astounding to me that this **wine** can be made, bottled and shipped for this low price.

And it's good! The aroma is like a citrus bale of hay. The taste has some ripeness with grapefruit rind, and the finish is clean and simple.

85 points.

2004 Brancott Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, New Zealand ($9.99) -- I love New Zealand SBs, and this is a fine example of the typical style at a good price.

The aroma is very very green, like Tropicana Pink Grapefruit Juice. The flavor has sharp acid or tartness, and focused, concentrated fruit. 85 points.

2004 Yellow Tail Chardonnay, South Eastern Australia ($5.99) -- Now I can see what all the hubbub is about over easy-drinking, tasty **wine.**

The aroma has a little honeydew melon. The taste is lemon butter, sweet and lush. It's a little crowd pleaser at a great price. 83 points.

** 2003 Rodney Strong Chardonnay, Sonoma County, California ($9.99) -- This has all the smoky butter-on-toast yumminess that made people fall in love with Chardonnay in the first place. Close your eyes and you might think you're tasting a more

"important" **wine.**

It's not for food but is easily doable with some freshness on the finish. 86 points.

2003 Mirassou, Pinot Noir, Monterey County, California ($7.99) -- OK, you can call it a Pinot or just a nice little red that tastes good. Either way, you'll be happy.

The aroma is grapey with red cherry-berry. The flavor has vibrant and light fresh fruit. It's a quaffer. 84 points

2004 Gabbiano Chianti, Italy ($8.99) -- This is a spaghetti red with some style. It's light enough to go with food and tasty enough to sip on its own -- a good, all-around red.

The aroma has red raspberry and strawberry jam with wood. The taste is dry and the fruit feels like it's powder sprayed on your tongue. 86 points.

2003 **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend, Zinfandel, California ($9.99) -- **Ravenswood** is one of the earliest and most important names in California Zinfandel. Recently it's taken a new direction, toward the more affordable wide-distribution market, and I was happy to find that it's still tasty and it's still "**Ravenswood.**"

The aroma is pure blackberry-out-in-the-sun-on-a-summer-day. The flavor is lush but dry. What's especially nice is that if there is no food around it's a meal unto itself. 86 points.

/

Key to the ratings

(100): A perfect **wine.**

(95-99): Excellent. Worth looking for.

(90-94): Extremely good. A standout in its class.

(85-89): Very good. A solid, well-made **wine** and a good value.

(80-84): Good. Fine for everyday entertaining and large parties.

(75-79): A soundly made **wine** for everyday drinking.

/

Tarbell, owner of Tarbell's restaurant in Phoenix, can be reached at **wine**@tarbells.com.

LOAD-DATE: December 16, 2005

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A true allegiance to zinfandels; Winemaker meticulously tends to the zins of Ravenswood The Houston Chronicle December 14, 2005 Wednesday

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December 14, 2005 Wednesday
2 STAR EDITION

SECTION: FLAVOR; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 869 words

HEADLINE: A true allegiance to zinfandels;
Winemaker meticulously tends to the zins of **Ravenswood**

BYLINE: MICHAEL LONSFORD, STAFF

BODY:

The rain, in the main, was plainly a pain for the young California winemaker.

The year was 1976, and young Joel Peterson was trying to make his first commercial **wine.** And he was going "mano a mano "with Mother Nature, racing to get his grapes in before the rain came. Amidst all the scurry and hurry, he could hear some nearby black birds giving him the business.

Peterson beat the rain, got his grapes in - and made 300-plus cases.

He decided to name his winemaking operation - he had no winery, per se - Ravens- wood, both for those peckish black birds and also because of the character of Lord Ravens- wood from the Donizetti opera "Lucia di ""Lammermoor"". "His logo: a wheel of three interlocking ravens.

Over the years Peterson made several different kinds of **wines** - still does - but his specialty has been zinfandel, that most Californian of all varietals. And as the years went by, he would find a particular vineyard whose fruit he liked and eventually would get a contract for that fruit. If the **wine** was sufficiently individualistic, he would bottle it separately and vineyard-designate it.

Because Sonoma County is the mother lode for California zin, almost all of the Ravens- wood single-vineyard zins originate there except the Dickerson, which is from Napa and has the trademark Napa leanness.

Around 10-12 years ago Peterson came up with a motto for **Ravenswood:** "No wimpy **wines**", which he promptly put on bumper stickers. My favorite is one geared for this part of the country: "No wimpy wahns, y'all."

The peripatetic Peterson took his winery public in 1999, then sold it in 2001 to the giant Constellation Brands, which also owns the Franciscan Oakville Estate, Simi, Estancia, Mount Veeder, Almaden, Arbor Mist and Paul Masson brands.

But Peterson remains the winemaker. The bread-and-butter **wine of Ravenswood** has always been its Vintners Blend zin, which retails for around $10. Production of this particular **wine** has grown enormously over the years, pushing the **Ravenswood** total to around half a million cases.

The bad news: The Vintners Blend zin seems to have gotten a bit, well, wimpy in recent years. The good news is: Those single-vineyard zins are still very fine **wines.**

And they do reflect their individual "terroirs", that elusive amalgam of sun, soil and site that makes a **wine** what it is.

In 1976, Peterson probably thought those black birds were laughing at him.

But after 25 years of work and sweat, it was Peterson who was laughing - all the way to the bank.

5 stars Outstanding

4 stars Fine

3 stars Good

2 stars Fair"

1 star Poor

( ) indicates ageability"

...

WINE FIND

History:" Arneis is a white-**wine** grape from the Piedmont region of northwestern Italy that traditionally has been used to soften the big red **wines** made from the nebbiolo grape. But in recent years, arneis has gained a following, and now some producers are giving it the care that it deserves. The top arneis **wine** by law is the Roero Arneis from the southern Piedmont ("Roero" probably comes from a family in Asti that ruled the region for generations). One quality producer of Roero Arneis is Cascina Chicco, and the "2004 Cascina Chicco Roero Arneis "Anterisio" "- "* * * *" - is a good, solid, well-made white **wine,** surprisingly full-bodied and with laudable complexity.

Pairings: Mild cheeses, fish with a cream sauce, roast chicken.

Retail:" about $23.

From: Vinifera Imports (281-451-8868).

-M.L.

...

IN THE **WINE** CART

Here are seven of the 2003 single-vineyard **Ravenswood** zinfandels handled locally by Republic Beverage.

2003 **Ravenswood** "Belloni" Zinfandel "- 3 stars 1/2 - pretty fair fruit (there's some petite sirah, alicante bouschet and carignane) and some spice; flat Russian River vineyard has some vines around 100 years old; $30.

2003 **Ravenswood** "Teldeschi" Zinfandel "- 4 stars - from an ancient Dry Creek Valley vineyard, also with a little petite sirah and carignane, this is intense zin, with some briary notes and hints of black and blue fruit; $30.

2003 **Ravenswood** "Barricia" Zinfandel "- "* * * *" - Barricia is a contraction of owners Patricia Herron and Barbara Olesen; it also means barrel in Portuguese; the **wine** has a classic zin nose and ripe fruit (including a little petite sirah); about $30.

2003 **Ravenswood** "Big River" Zinfandel "- 4 stars- good, bright fruit, straightforward and tasty, with nuances of chocolate and a faint hint of mint; from a vineyard straddling the Russian River and Alexander Valley appellations; about $30.

2003 **Ravenswood** "Old Hill" Zinfandel "- 3 stars 1/2 ("*") - from a vineyard well over 100 years old in Sonoma Valley, it's 76 percent zin, with more than a dozen other varietals in the field blend; this is a **wine** of great intensity, and it's very tannic right now; about $60.

2003 **Ravenswood** "Dickerson" Zinfandel "- 4 stars- from a vineyard on Napa Valley's Zinfandel Lane, nice, ripe black fruit, with telltale hints of mint and eucalyptus; this bottling honors Bill and Jane Dickerson, who died in the December 2004 tsunami that struck Thailand; $30.

2003 **Ravenswood** "Cooke" Zinfandel "- 4 stars 1/2 - always my favorite because of the meaty, classic, briary quality; from a vineyard that produces only about half a ton of grapes per acre; only 220 cases made; about $50.

-M.L.

NOTES: michael.lonsford@chron.com

GRAPHIC: Photos: 1. ZIN-FLUENTIAL: Joel Peterson started **Ravenswood** Winery in 1976, making a scant 300 cases. Today the winery is owned by Constellation Brands and is producing half a million cases, with Peterson still making the **wines.** His pride and joy is the single-vineyard zinfandels; Mug: 2. JOEL PETERSON; 3. Roero Arneis (**Wine** Label)
1. **RAVENSWOOD** WINERY

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Wine, etc. Ravenswood grows out of cult status The Capital (Annapolis, MD) November 30, 2005 Wednesday

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The Capital (Annapolis, MD)

November 30, 2005 Wednesday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. D1

LENGTH: 793 words

HEADLINE: Wine, etc. **Ravenswood** grows out of cult status

BYLINE: Tom Marquardt Patrick Darr

BODY:

It seems long ago when **Ravenswood's** fabled winemaker Joel Peterson was climbing barrels with a **wine** thief to show off his exceptional **wines** to us. It was in the 1980s when the zinfandel cult stood in line for a bottle of this hand-crafted Sonoma County elixir.

That was when Mr. Peterson had to scrap for money and grapes. Then, he produced his haymaker - Vintners Blend that for the money was the best zinfandel around. And money started to come in.

Ravenswood has changed ownership since then, although Mr. Peterson is still there to concentrate on his love of the zinfandel grape. He took the brand public in 1999 and two years later it was sold to Constellation Brands which put it in its fine **wine** portfolio. Although its production level puts it beyond the cult status, the infusion of money has helped to bring **Ravenswood** to the masses.

The foundation of this operation is built on several single-vineyard **wines** that allow Mr. Peterson to highlight the unique characteristics of small lots. Less than 2,000 cases is made of each vineyard-designated **wine.**

We tasted through the 2003 single-vineyard **wines** and found several to recommend:

Ravenswood Teldeschi Zinfandel 2003 ($30). Blended with carignane and petite sirah, this version is a blast of jammy pepper and blackberry aromas followed by complex plum flavors with hints of coffee and smoke.

Ravenswood Cooke Zinfandel 2003 ($50). This may sound like a lot of money for zinfandel, but made in small quantities it lives up to expectations. Bold, concentrated, dense as tar, and loaded with opulent blackberry flavors and doses of chcolate and black pepper. This one will coat your teeth.

Ravenswood Dickerson Zinfandel 2003 ($30). The Dickerson Vineyard has been with Mr. Peterson longer than we can remember but we do remember its sweet, mouthfilling flavors. Big oak, ripe tannins and coffee notes. The 2003 bottle commemorates Bill and Jane Dickerson, who died in the tsunami that struck Thailand last year.

Ravenswood Belloni Zinfandel 2003 ($30). Intense blackberry fruit flavors with a broad palate of cassis, plum, spice and a sweet, jammy finish.**Ravenswood** Belloni Zinfandel 2003 ($30). Intense blackberry fruit flavors with a broad palate of cassis, plum, spice and a sweet, jammy finish.

Wine picks

Banfi Rosso di Montalcino 2003 ($22). Jammy berry and plum flavors with a hint of tobacco and sweet vanilla. Very quaffable.

Beckman Vineyards Syrah Cone 1 Purisima Mountain Vineyard 2002 ($40). Only 300 cases are made, so good luck finding this gem. Very intense syrah flavors. Grown in a moderate climate to combine the best of the cool-climate Rhones and hot climate Australian syrahs. Plum and deep berry flavors, great structure and a hint of mocha.

Paraduxx 2001 ($43). Made by the well-respected Duckhorn Vineyards, this is an intreresting blend of zinfandel and cabernet sauvignon. Blackberry and raspberry essence and soft tannins. Drinkable now but will age 2-3 years.

Hess Select Cabernet Sauvignon 2003 ($15). This California producer continues to make one of the most consistent, great

values in almost all categories. We like the cabernet sauvignon for its generous black cherry aromas and flavors. Nice nuances of cedar and white pepper. It is blended with syrah, merlot and petite sirah to give it more dimension.

Frank Family Napa Valley Zinfandel 2003 ($32.50). Dense, jammy **wine** redolent of plums and dark berries with easy tannins. This producer is making very impressive **wines.**

Dancing Bull Zinfandel 2003 ($15). With **wine** from the hot Lodi region, this good value zinfandel has bright fruit flavors reminiscent of dark berries on the nose and strawberries in the mouth. Simple, fruity and cheap.

Earthquake Zin 2003 ($25). Lodi is one of the common regions for zinfandel because the grape variety craves heat and sun. This one has tantalizing flavors of plum and cassis and brambly tannins. Blended with petite sirah and cabernet franc.

Z-52 Clockspring Vineyard Old Vine Zinfandel 2003 ($20). Veteran winemaker Philip Zorn and Brent Shortridge are trying to make distinctive zins with their boutique winery in Amador County. Z is for Zorn and 52 refers to the weeks in a year and the number of rows in the vineyard. This zinfandel has rich raspberry fruit with an earthy texture and a spicy finish.

Kendall-Jackson Sauvignon Blanc 2004 ($10). Here's a good value for you. Nice citrus and melon notes with a mineraly backbone and crisp finish.

Rodney Strong Vineyards Charlotte's Home Sauvignon Blanc 2004 ($14). There is a lot of complexity for the price here. Understated aromas but bold ripe pear and melon flavors with moderate grassiness and herbs.

Do you have a question or suggestion for a topic? Write to the authors in care of this newspaper or e-mail tmarquardt@capitalgazette.com.

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PALATABLE SUMMER; FRUITFUL FLAVOURS PERFECT FOR BEATING THE HEAT Calgary Sun (Alberta) August 14, 2005 Sunday

Copyright 2005 Sun Media Corporation
Calgary Sun (Alberta)

August 14, 2005 Sunday
FINAL EDITION

SECTION: SHOWTIME; **Wine**; Pg. SH11

LENGTH: 722 words

HEADLINE: PALATABLE SUMMER;
FRUITFUL FLAVOURS PERFECT FOR BEATING THE HEAT

BYLINE: BY RICK VANSICKLE, SUN MEDIA

BODY:

This has been a summer of seeking shade, lying low and sipping plenty of liquids on a big, comfortable deck chair.

It has required a full arsenal of backyard sippin' **wine,** which usually means fruity and cheap (as in affordable, easy to find and value for your dollar).

I've enjoyed many a good **wine** this summer and wanted to pass on a few for your drinking pleasure. So here goes:

WYNNS COONAWARRA ESTATE CHARDONNAY 2003 ($18): Aromas of peach, lemon and a hint of vanilla in this Aussie stalwart. In the mouth the generous stone fruits shine through the oak backbone. On the creamy side but nicely balanced.

WYNNS COONAWARRA ESTATE CABERNET SHIRAZ MERLOT 2002 ($19): Plums, blackberries and dark spices in this aromatic and inviting nose. The mouth reveals juicy cherry and other rich, red fruits with a bead of gorgeous eucalypt. Finishes on an earthy/herb/spice note.

ERRAZURIZ MAX RESERVA CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2003 ($20): Rich aromas of blackberry, cedar, anise, herbs and a bevy of spices. Mouth filling and delicious, you'll love this pedigree Chilean **wine** from a great vintage.

RAVENSWOOD VINTNER'S BLEND ZINFANDEL 2003 ($20): The credo for this zin specialist from California is: No Wimpy **Wines. And Ravenswood** holds true to that with this forward, frisky and bold zin. Ripe and lively red fruits carry through to the palate adding blueberry, dark spices and plenty of heft. Just add a juicy barbecued steak and you're set for the evening.

PENASCAL TEMPRANILLO CASTILLA Y LEON 2001 ($12): Sweet cherry and smoke on the nose with touches of herbs and spice. Pleasant mouth feel with some funky spices and dash of pepper in this Spanish quaffer.

PENASCAL ROSE CASTILLA Y LEON 2004 ($10): A lovely summer drink. Aromas of strawberry and cherry with a bit of minty herbs. Completely dry rose and quite refreshing on the palate with gorgeous summer strawberries dominating the palate. Serve this good and cold.

CALITERRA SAUVIGNON BLANC 2004 ($13): A wide array of wonderful aromas from white peach to melon and herbs all the way to island tropical fruits. The palate brings out the natural herbaceous qualities but it's backed up with lively fresh fruits. A touch of smoke on the finish of this Chilean white.

- - -

I've also been enjoying a vast amount of Okanagan vino this summer. It's the perfect time to visit our little piece of heaven next door. Here are a few **wines** from the region I've enjoyed lately.

SANDHILL BURROWING OWL VINEYARD CHARDONNAY 2004 ($18): Wonderful job on this **wine,** chock full of seasoned apples, nuts and vanilla aromas. It's creamy and rich on the palate and built on a sturdy backbone of toasty French oak with plenty of apple and pear fruit in balance.

SANDHILL BURROWING OWL VINEYARD CABERNET FRANC 2003 ($20): Winemaker Howard Soon's creations are not wallflowers. His **wines** are in your face with full fruit and liberal use of fine, new oak. This varietal can be pretty and delicate

and most often used as a blender to add violets and other fragrances. But Soon has done brilliantly with cabernet franc as a single varietal and this follow-up to the award-winning 2002 vintage is a stunner. Certainly rife with violets but only in support of the copious amounts of wild berries and spice. In the mouth it's supple yet bursting with berries, oak and wonderful spices. The red fruits coat the palate leaving chocolate and expresso in its wake. A drink for **wine** lovers.

SANDHILL BURROWING OWL VINEYARD MERLOT 2003 ($20): Thick, juicy, jammy aromas fill the nose with black cherries, spice and none-too-shy oak. Big, gorgeous, earthy fruit and vanilla coat the palate, adding touches of tar, mocha and licorice.

CALONA VINEYARDS ARTIST SERIES RESERVE SOVEREIGN OPAL 2004 ($12): Apples, honey and white summer flowers on the nose of this uniquely Canadian white **wine** grape. The mouth delivers white peach, honeydew and a tangerine twist in this slightly off-dry **wine.**

CALONA VINEYARDS ARTIST SERIES RESERVE PINOT BLANC 2004 ($12): A delicate nose of pear and vanilla. The fruit shines on the palate with pear, lemon and some tropical notes. A white with a little weight and a lot of flavour on the palate.

GRAY MONK LATITUDE FIFTY WHITE 2004 ($14): A nifty little white blend that delivers melon, peach, lychee and a hint of nutmeg on the nose. Good tropical fruit and ripe grapefruit echoes on the finish. Very nice.

Enjoy!

GRAPHIC: photo

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What's new Pacific Sun (Mill Valley, California) August 5, 2005 - August 11, 2005

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Pacific Sun (Mill Valley, California)

August 5, 2005 - August 11, 2005

SECTION: Pg. 17 Vol. 43 No. 31 ISSN: 0048-2641

ACC-NO: 58541

LENGTH: 824 words

HEADLINE: What's new

BODY:

ABSTRACT

FAMILY FUN FARE. It's often hard to find outdoor events fine for all ages, but two big celebrations scheduled for the weekend of Aug. 6-7 fill the bill. If a drive south appeals, head for Watsonville, where the annual Monterey Bay Strawberry Festival will be staged (10am-6pm each day). It received an award as "family favorite" from Bay Area Parent Magazine. There's no admission fee to this appreciation of the berry with pie-eating contests, sweet strawberry treats, live music and carnival foods. Information: www.mbsf.com...In San Francisco this weekend, the Aloha Festival at the Presidio Park main parade ground will showcase exotic music and dance, with a corner for children's activities and even an outrigger canoe race around Alcatraz. Sponsored by the Pacific Islanders Cultural Association, the event is alcohol free, with an emphasis on food. The theme is: "You don't eat until you're full, you eat until you're tired." Details are available at www.sanfranciscoalohafestival.org or 415/289-0221.

FULL TEXT

Restaurants on the move, outdoor fun

ROCKIN' GOOD TIMES. You know summer is really here when Rancho Nicasio hosts its BBQs On The Lawn. The (only) hot spot in the hamlet pulls out all the stops with foods like barbecued oysters, tri-tip, chicken and ribs to enjoy while listening to some of the best live music around these parts. Coming up Aug. 7 are Bill Kirchen and The Hacienda Brothers; Asleep At The Wheel rolls in Aug. 14; the Elvin Bishop Band appears Aug. 21. The lawn "opens" at 3; showtime is 4 o'clock. Reservations are strongly advised--call 415/662-2219.

CHANGE IS THE ONLY CONSTANT. Restaurant-go-round is the theme of the day. Fans who used to drive to a commercial neighborhood in San Rafael for some well-turned-out meals can now enjoy their favorites in a more upscale atmosphere. A branch of The Pleasure is Mine is now located at the Harbor Point Tennis & Beach Club (475 E. Strawberry Dr., Mill Valley), where there is a full bar and far more interesting views. Reserve at 415/381-6400. The original Pleasure is still open at 3060 Kerner Blvd...Cinq, the charming small restaurant in Corte Madera, has closed. Word is that there will be another eatery opening on the site. Stay tuned...New owners at Sakana Bistro & Sushi Bar in Corte Madera (59 Tamal Vista Blvd., 415/927-2697) have created a new menu, adding more appetizers and specialty rolls along with a larger selection of premium sakes. Sakana is open for lunch Mon.-Fri. and nightly for dinner...There's more room now to enjoy the eclectic specialties at Laura and Glenn Miwa's popular Comforts, in San Anselmo. The design enhances its cafe ambiance while there is still a large area for choosing takeout foods. Breakfast and lunch are covered daily--Mon.-Fri.; 8:30am-3pm--with a weekend brunch--8:30am-2:30pm, Sat.-Sun. (335 San Anselmo Ave., 415/454-9840)

FAMILY FUN FARE. It's often hard to find outdoor events fine for all ages, but two big celebrations scheduled for the weekend of Aug. 6-7 fill the bill. If a drive south appeals, head for Watsonville, where the annual Monterey Bay Strawberry Festival will be staged (10am-6pm each day). It received an award as "family favorite" from Bay Area Parent Magazine. There's no admission fee to this appreciation of the berry with pie-eating contests, sweet strawberry treats, live music and carnival foods. Information: www.mbsf.com...In San Francisco this weekend, the Aloha Festival at the Presidio Park main parade ground will showcase exotic music and dance, with a corner for children's activities and even an outrigger canoe race around Alcatraz. Sponsored by the Pacific Islanders Cultural Association, the event is alcohol free, with an emphasis on food. The theme is: "You don't eat until you're full, you eat until you're tired." Details are available at www.sanfranciscoalohafestival.org or 415/289-0221.

ROLL OUT THE BARREL. **Ravenswood** Winery, almost as famous for its barbecues as for its big reds, will be marking the release of its 2003 Vineyard Designate Zinfandels in Sonoma on Aug. 6 (noon-4pm). The Bordeaux type **wine** will be sampled from the barrels as guests mingle with growers and winemakers. Food and live music will be served up all afternoon. Cost is $25; reserve at 888/669-4679 or e-mail lperlas@ravenswoodwine.com

TRADE SECRETS. Insider information of the most intimate kind will be revealed at Book Passage in Corte Madera on Aug. 11 (7pm) when Mike Weiss appears. This is **wine** talk, you understand, from the author of A Very Good Year: The Journey of a California **Wine** from Vine to Table. In his book he follows one vintage--a 2002 Fumé Blanc--sharing the romance as well as the commercial aspects of creating something we often take for granted. Information: 415/927-0960.

WORDS TO LIVE BY. My favorite ad quote of the week is from Noonan's Bar & Grill at Larkspur Landing: "Sucker Someone Else Into Driving!"

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DECISION CLARIFIES, CLOUDS WINE WORLD The Boston Globe May 25, 2005, Wednesday

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The Boston Globe

May 25, 2005, Wednesday THIRD EDITION

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. E3

LENGTH: 645 words

HEADLINE: DECISION CLARIFIES, CLOUDS **WINE** WORLD

BYLINE: By Stephen Meuse Globe Correspondent

BODY:
Last week's Supreme Court decision settled one matter related to the question of whether states can continue to prohibit direct-to-consumer **wine** sales, but left a host of others up in the air.

States that permit wineries to ship bottles directly to consumers in other states while at the same time prohibit their own residents from receiving shipments from out-of-state suppliers violate the constitution's Commerce Clause.

Corks popped in celebration of the news and wineries from California to Rhode Island were busy fielding calls from consumers trying to place orders. But hold on. While the court has ordered that the 23 states that currently restrict direct shipment Massachusetts among them stop discriminating against out-of-state wineries, it did not say how this should be done. One approach would be to end all direct shipment of **wine** (whether originating in-state or out), an outcome that would be the nightmare scenario for small wineries that desperately need unfettered access to consumers.

"You absolutely have to have the retail dollar to survive," says Nancy Parker Wilson, co-owner of Greenvale Vineyards in Portsmouth, R.I. Small producers like Greenvale have trouble operating profitably within a three-tier distribution system established in many states in the wake of Prohibition's repeal. Under the system, wineries sell to wholesalers, who in turn sell to retailers who deal with the public. In order to break even, small wineries need to get retail prices for at least 75 percent of their **wine.** Selling through a wholesaler gives the producer only about one-third of the shelf price.

And while the wholesaler's job is to create demand for the **wines** in its portfolio, he isn't always interested in representing peewee properties. So if wholesalers don't want to bother with smaller properties anyway, why are their trade organizations putting up such stiff opposition to direct sales?

According to industry veteran and consultant Blake Allison, wholesalers fear direct sales will provide future opportunities for suppliers to nibble away at their profits or even displace them altogether. "They're thinking about what happens when a Costco or a Wal-Mart gets the right to deal directly with Constellation Brands, whose massive holdings include giants like Almaden, **Ravenswood,** and Robert Mondavi," says Allison. One example is Joseph Phelps Vineyards, maker of an elite Bordeaux-style blend called Insignia. The label, which has limited supply and high demand, is typically used by wholesalers as leverage to persuade retailers to take less desirable inventory off their hands. Lately, the prestigious Napa winery has been selling Insignia direct over the Internet a practice that deprives wholesalers not only of revenue, but also of a powerful marketing tool. Top California wineries see direct sales as an opportunity to cut out a middleman and boost margins. Kip Kumler, of tiny Turtle Creek Winery in Lincoln, wonders who, in this battle of the titans, is looking out for the interests of the consumer.

Even if the three-tier system eventually goes the way of $4 Lafite, it doesn't mean the wholesaler is also a candidate for extinction. Properties located outside the US will probably always require representation here, for one thing. For another, as long as it costs $25 or $30 to ship a case of **wine** from California to Massachusetts, the economies of scale made possible by volume freight consolidation (as little as $4 a case) will make sense, according to Allison.

Meanwhile, smaller wineries are left to wait and see which path the outlaw states decide to take in conforming to the high court ruling, and to wonder whether the genie of direct shipment will be put back in the bottle.

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Briefs: 'Zinfomania' to visit arts festival Pittsburgh Tribune Review May 18, 2005 Wednesday

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Pittsburgh Tribune Review

May 18, 2005 Wednesday

LENGTH: 1329 words

HEADLINE: Briefs: 'Zinfomania' to visit arts festival

BYLINE: Staff and wire reports

BODY:

Ravenswood Winery of Sonoma County, Calif., will visit the 2005 Three Rivers Arts Festival from June 10 to 12 at Point State Park. The "tour" is part of the winery's annual celebration of zinfandel **wine,** called the Zinfomania Tour.

The arts festival runs from June 3 to 19.

Guests 21 and older are invited under the awning of **Ravenswood's** high-tech urban cruiser for a zinfandel tasting and other "diversions." The cruiser is replete with bottles of **Ravenswood's** signature Zinfandel, made famous by winemaker and co-founder Joel Peterson.

Last year's tour poured more than 30,000 glasses of the **wine** at events on the East Coast; it is expanding to the West Coast this year with hopes of reaching more than 100,000 zinfandel fans.

Details: www.ravenswoodwinery.com.

Salad dressings spotlight area chefs

Four Pittsburgh chefs have been selected to bottle signature dressings under 4CHEFS of Pittsburgh Brand Dressings, available at Giant Eagle supermarkets.

The products are made by Cleveland-based New Day Enterprises, which also offers dressings from four chefs in that Ohio city.

Its owner is James B. Cox, who personally selected the Pittsburgh chefs.

Locally, the culinarians are Franco Gaccetta of Franco's Ristorante, Aspinwall; Kevin Hunninen of Isabella on Grandview, Mt. Washington; Sabatino DiBattista of Vivo, Bellevue; and Tom Rebstock of Bruschetta's, South Side.

Their dressings are:

Gaccetta's Italian balsamic vinaigrette, a mix of fresh herbs, lemon and vinegar, for salads or as a marinade for meats and vegetables.

DiBattista's artichoke balsamic -- made with ripe artichokes -- a mainstay on the menu at Vivo. This works well with tossed fresh pasta and zucchini or as a dip for crusty bread.

Hunninen's herbs de Provence vinaigrette, which includes toasted garlic and a variety of herbs. The dressing is ideal with mixed green salads, pasta, fresh vegetables, fish, and lighter meats such as veal, pork and chicken.

Rebstock's lemon vinaigrette is Bruschetta's house dressing, appropriate with salads and as a marinade for fish, chicken and pork.

Details: 440-899-7257 or www.4chefsof.com

The Carlton plans **wine** dinners

Kevin Joyce, proprietor of The Carlton Downtown, has announced two **wine** dinners at the Downtown restaurant, One Mellon Bank Center. The five-course meals begin at 6:30 p.m.

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Lots of choices, wide price range Sacramento Bee (California) April 13, 2005 Wednesday

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Sacramento Bee (California)

April 13, 2005 Wednesday
METRO FINAL EDITION

SECTION: TASTE; Pg. F4

LENGTH: 827 words

HEADLINE: Lots of choices, wide price range

BYLINE: Mike Dunne

BODY:

From tastings blind and open, here's our favorite Australian **wines** of late: Saturday dinner party

* Peter Lehmann 1998 Stonewell Barossa Valley Shiraz ($75): Andrew Wigan, winemaker at Peter Lehmann since 1980, says this is the best red **wine** he's made. It's a massively concentrated interpretation of Barossa Valley shiraz, bold with ripe fruit and spiced generously with black pepper, fitting for only the richest of red meats.

* The Gate 2002 McLaren Vale Shiraz ($32): During the first round of the Dallas Morning News International **Wine** Competition earlier this year, I wasn't crazy about this shiraz, finding it a touch bitter in the finish. During the medal round the next day, however, I concurred that its intense pipe-tobacco and eucalyptus smells and smooth texture warranted a gold medal ... and a place at any table when short ribs of beef or rack of lamb are on the menu.

* Origin Reserve Series 2002 Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon ($19): One release in a series of **wines** being imported by the Albertsons chain of supermarkets, the Origin cabernet sauvignon is a spunky, medium-bodied take on the varietal. Its bright fruit and herb flavors run to green olives, eucalyptus and mint, while its razory acidity and supple texture make it a fitting companion with lightly seasoned steaks.

* D'Arenberg **Wines** 2002 McLaren Vale "The Footbolt" Shiraz ($18): Vintage after vintage, this is perhaps the most reliable shiraz out of Australia. At Dallas, we didn't have to struggle to give it a medal, and it got a rare unanimous gold. I loved its subtle complexity, meatiness, eucalyptus and spice, and am pleased to see it in so many **wine** outlets hereabouts.

* Piping Shrike 2003 Barossa Valley Shiraz ($16): Fat and warm with mature berry, cherry and plum flavors, the Piping Shrike is a splendid example of the earthiness, spice and length the Barossa Valley brings to shiraz. The piping shrike is another name for the Australian magpie, celebrated by vineyardists for protecting **wine** grapes "from marauding gangs of thieving blackbirds," notes the back label.

Everyday drinking

* **Ravenswood** Winery 2003 Vintners Blend Southeastern Australia Shiraz ($10): A California winery best known for forthright zinfandels, **Ravenswood** went to southeastern Australia to tap into the region's exceptional shiraz. After adding a little grenache and a little cabernet sauvignon, winemaker Joel Peterson released this pleasantly exuberant, meaty and supple take on the varietal, just the ticket for rib-eye steak right off the spring grill.

* Stephen John 2002 Watervale Clare Valley Riesling ($12.50): The more Clare Valley riesling I taste, the more impressed I am. This is a terrific representative of the genre, redolent with the scent of ripe melons and peaches drizzled with honey, tasting of tart green apples with a fittingly crisp finish.

* Peter Lehmann 2002 Clancy's ($15): Named for an Outback folk hero, Clancy's is a beefy but smooth and accessible blend of shiraz, cabernet sauvignon, merlot and cabernet franc. It's a prime candidate for pouring at backyard parties when beef or lamb is on the grill.

* Penfolds 2003 Bin 2 South Eastern Australia Shiraz Mourvèdre ($15): Give it 10 or 15 minutes to open, but expect it to live forever, or at least for a couple of days, on the kitchen counter. A blend of 81 percent shiraz and 19 percent mourvèdre, the Bin 2 kept rewarding us with fresh dark-fruit depth, persistent peppery spice and a supple texture.

* Peter Lehmann 2003 Eden Valley Riesling ($15): A genuine Australian **wine** folk hero, Peter Lehmann produces a consistently reliable portfolio of varietal **wines,** including this aromatically floral and structurally wiry riesling, lively with youthful peach, apple and apricot fruit and refreshing with zippy acidity.

Best buys

* Black Swan Vineyards 2003 South Eastern Australia Shiraz ($8): The long arm of E.&J. Gallo Winery of Modesto stretches all the way to Australia, where the company's Black Swan line of **wines** includes this lean and frisky take on the continent's most popular varietal. Shiraz is characterized by ripe and bright cherry fruit spiced with a dash of black pepper, and all that is here in a readily accessible format.

* Four Emus 2004 Western Australia Sauvignon Blanc Semillon ($10): Keep an eye on Western Australia. In discussions of Australian **wine** regions, Western Australia is the afterthought. The thing about afterthought **wine** regions, however, is that they generally offer a disproportionate number of bargain **wines,** and the Four Emus sauvignon blanc semillon is a perfect example. Its dry and zesty grapefruit, peach and lime fruit will remind you of New Zealand's racy sauvignon blancs, but with a touch more mineral underpinning. As a measure of Australia's marketing genius, note the small tear-off tab on the back label; it includes only brand name, varietal and vintage but it's perfect for slipping into your pocketbook to remind you of that delightful **wine** next time you're shopping.

NOTES: MIKE DUNNE ON AUSTRALIAN **WINES**

GRAPHIC: Piping Shrike's grapes are protected by magpies.
This Penfolds **wine** is part shiraz, part mourvèdre.
Peter Lehmann 2003 Eden Valley Riesling has echoes of peach, apple and apricot.

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REDS WINES ON THE HIGHLIGHT REEL Stratford Beacon Herald (Ontario) March 4, 2005 Friday

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Stratford Beacon Herald (Ontario)

March 4, 2005 Friday
FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FOOD; Vine Lines; Pg. 16

LENGTH: 699 words

HEADLINE: REDS **WINES** ON THE HIGHLIGHT REEL

BYLINE: BY JUDY ATCHISON AND ALEX GOOD

BODY:

Tomorrow marks the first half of a very strong release through the LCBO's Vintages program. The strength of this release shone through in the red **wine** selections, which we will focus on.

Without further ado, here are our top picks for Saturday:

Starting with the new world, and a grape that seemingly everybody loves to indulge on, comes the 2002 "Lodi Zinfandel" from **Ravenswood** in California. **Ravenswood** is famous for their super-ripe, rich, luscious Zinfandels, and this 'old vine' version represents fabulous value in their extensive portfolio.

Look for telltale Zinfandel flavours of soft and juicy cherry puree, strawberry jam, Christmas cake spices and white pepper.

An instantly gratifying **wine,** this would be a great match for spicy ribs or just when you are in need of a hug from your glass of red.

Petit Verdot is one of the grapes used to make the serious red **wines** of Bordeaux -- when Australia gets to play with it, however, it begins to strut its stuff as a single varietal.

Those familiar with the name Pirramimma will remember their Petit Verdot from vintages past, and this 2001 is no disappointment. On the nose, look for enticing aromas of red Nibs, blueberry, and cocoa; on the palate, flavours of creamy cherry, blueberry crisp, vanilla stick, and cocoa. It is well-balanced, with firm tannins supporting the sweet center. A real beauty.

Greg Norman, while famous for pursuits other than **wine,** is proud owner of Greg Norman Estates in Australia. His Shiraz/Cabernet Sauvignon 2002 is one of the **Wines** of the Month.

A blend of 80 per cent Shiraz, and 20 per cent Cabernet Sauvignon, it features a toasty nose, with full bodied notes of creamy red berry fruit, milk chocolate, vanilla, and licorice. It is designed to appeal to as many palates as possible, so look for an easy-drinking style, one that would suit any occasion.

Two **wines** from Chile make the grade this time around: Errazuriz Estate Carmenere 2003, and Carmen Syrah Reserve 2002.

The Carmenere, from the spectacular 2003 vintage, is a heavy-hitter, especially at dinner-time. Around a core of bright red fruit, plum and cassis flavours, are subtle oak influences and a gentle herbaceousness.

This reminded us a little bit of Bordeaux-styled **wine,** and would shine with food. The Syrah, on the other hand, was much more whimsical, showing notes of candied currants and lively spice on the nose, and then a surprising smoky dark fruit and pepper element on the palate.

In the old-world 'luxury' category comes the 2001 Chateau Leoville Poyferre, a 2nd growth Bordeaux based on Cabernet Sauvignon.

Silky and luscious, it is a fine example of the elegance and power of Bordeaux. Substantial flavours of black currant, clove, licorice, mocha, and cedar layered overtop of charming plum, cherry and hints of creamy raspberry.

The tannins are silky, and the palate is ripe and medium-full bodied. This **wine** begs for steak and frites and good company.

Drink now or hold in the cellar for a special occasion for up to 10 years.

One can't mention old-world elegance without mentioning Burgundy.

A Pinot Noir not to be missed at a very fair price is the Savigny-Les-Beaune 2002 from Joseph Drouhin. 2002 has been regarded as one of Burgundy's finest vintages, and this offering does not disappoint.

Bright cranberry and cherry notes dance over mint and clove nuances, with just a hint of telltale earthy beetroot. Svelt and sexy, this medium-bodied red would fare well with a classic Pinot Noir match, confit of duck or grilled salmon.

These selections are just a sampling of a much broader release with too many good **wines** to mention, so why not drop over to the Vintages section nearest you and see what tickles your fancy?

Until next time, drink well!

Recommended reds

- **Ravenswood** Lodi Zinfandel 2002 'Old Vine', California, 942599 $22.95

- Pirramimma Petit Verdot 2001, South Australia, 986752, $24.95

- Greg Norman Shiraz/Cabernet Sauvignon 2002, South Australia, 586156, $19.95

- Errazuriz Estate Carmenere 2003, Aconcagua Valley, Chile, 905430, $16.95

- Carmen Syrah Reserve 2002, Maipo Valley, Chile, 590737, $19.95

- Chateau Leoville Poyferre 2001, Bordeaux, 989582, $79.95

- Joseph Drouhin Savigny-Les-Beaune 2002, Burgundy, 986406, $31.95

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WINES SPARKLE;FOR LOVERS ON VALENTINE'S DAY Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania) February 10, 2005 Thursday

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February 10, 2005 Thursday SOONER EDITION

SECTION: FOOD, Pg.D-1 TASTINGS

LENGTH: 854 words

HEADLINE: WINES SPARKLE;
FOR LOVERS ON VALENTINE'S DAY

BODY:
Domaine Chandon produces some of my favorite sparkling **wines** from California with a wide range of styles. The winery was started in 1973, but it was not until 1977 that the visitor center was completed. From the beginning, Domaine Chandon gained a national reputation for producing outstanding sparkling **wines.** Its non-vintage brut and blanc de noirs have maintained a consistent level of high quality while offering good value for the consumer. Completion of the visitor center included the Restaurant at Domaine Chandon, one of the most romantic restaurants in Napa Valley. Dining on the patio at Domaine Chandon is a must on any trip to Napa Valley.

We have selected several sparkling **wines** from Domaine Chandon to enjoy with your Valentine's Day celebration.

Recommended

Very good (85-89)

*Chandon Extra-Dry Riche ($19.59, PLCB Special Liquor Order 51191):

The extra-dry Riche is a new style sparkling **wine** from Chandon. The **wine** opens with lovely floral and nectarine aromas. The flavors of honey and nectarine lead to an off dry and soft finish. Match with a fresh fruit tart.

Highly recommended

Outstanding (90-94)

*Chandon toile Brut ($33.49, PLCB Specialty 29235):

Aged a minimum of five years on the yeast, the Chandon toile yields creamy yeast and citrus aromas. A steady stream of small bubbles adds to the excitement as you enjoy the complex flavors of minerals, buttered toast and citrus fruit. Enjoy with sauteed crab cakes.

* Chandon Reserve Brut ($39.99 for a 1.5-liter bottle, PLCB Specialty 29218):

Aged a minimum of three years on the yeast, the Chandon Reserve has a foamy mousse with tiny bubbles. Green appley fruit aromas give way to wonderful creamy and yeasty flavors. A pour from a magnum-size bottle is impressive. Serve with roasted pork tenderloin.

Chairman's picks

Jonathan Newman, chairman of the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board, continues to offer top-quality **wines** to consumers at substantial savings with his "Chairman's Selection" program.

I have selected several of my favorite **wines** from the latest offering for your consideration.

Highly recommended

Outstanding (90-94)

* 1998 Domaine Carneros Le Reve Brut ($27.99, PLCB Specialty 29207):

Domaine Carneros continues to produce outstanding sparkling **wines** from the Carneros District of Napa Valley. Its 1998 luxury cuvee, Le Reve, has an endless stream of tiny bubbles with complex aromas of yeast and lemon blossoms. The flavors are a nice combination of biscuit and citrus fruit. Enjoy as an aperitif or with sea bass in a light butter and lemon sauce.

* 2001 **Ravenswood** Teldeschi Zinfandel -- Dry Creek Valley ($17.99, PLCB Specialty 13795):

Ravenswood is one of the top producers of red zinfandel and its 2001 Teldeschi release is a massive **wine** with typical ripe blackberry and black raspberry fruit aromas. The rich fruit flavors are complemented with a touch of pepper and spice in the finish. Perfect match with leg of lamb.

* 2001 Ridge Home Ranch -- Santa Cruz Mountains ($29.99, PLCB Specialty 15124):

Ridge is noted for making powerful red **wines,** and the 2001 Home Ranch release does not disappoint. A blend of cabernet sauvignon and merlot fruit, the **wine** tends toward cabernet sauvignon characteristics with its ripe black currant and black raspberry fruit aromas. The fruit flavors are dominant with a touch of vanilla oak and ample tannins in the finish. Serve with grilled New York strip steak.

PLCB Chairman's Selection's

Wine Savings

%% .....Regular Price....Sale Price....Savings

1999 Atalon Mountain Estate Merlot....$45.00.....$19.99.....$25.01

2000 Cambria Bench Break Pinot Noir....42.00.....17.99.....24.01

2000 Cambria Estate Pinot Noir.....50.00.....21.99.....28.01

2001 Carmel Road High Tier Chardonnay..35.00.....17.99.....17.01

1998 Domaine Carneros Le Reve Brut.....55.00.....27.99.....27.01

2002 Flora Springs Soliloquy.....25.00.....12.99.....12.01

2001 Flora Springs Trilogy.....60.00.....24.99.....35.01

2001 Monticello Jefferson Cuvee

Cabernet Sauvignon.....34.00.....17.99.....16.01

2001 Pedroncelli Reserve Cabernet

Sauvignon.....21.99.....10.99.....11.00

2000 Pine Ridge Andrus Reserve.....135.00.....49.99.....85.01

2001 **Ravenswood** Teldeschi Zinfandel....39.99.....17.99.....22.00

2001 Ridge Home Ranch.....66.49.....29.99.....36.50

2000 Saintsburg Reserve Pinot Noir.....47.99.....19.99.....28.00

2001 Sequoia Grove Reserve Cabernet

Sauvignon.....55.00.....19.99.....35.01

1999 Silvio Nardi Brunello di Montalcino.....5 5.00.....29.99.....25.01

1999 St. Francis Behler Reserve Merlot.45.00.....12.99.....32.01

1999 St. Francis Nuns Canyon Reserve

Cabernet Sauvignon.....45.00.....14.99.....30.01

2001 St. Supery Limited Edition

Cabernet Sauvignon.....70.00.....29.99.....40.01 %%

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Oakland to Auckland;Former Ravenswood vintner transplants himself -- and some of California's best Zinfandel The San Francisco Chronicle JANUARY 13, 2005, THURSDAY,

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Former **Ravenswood** vintner transplants himself -- and some of California's best Zinfandel

SOURCE: Chronicle **Wine** Editor

BYLINE: Linda Murphy

BODY:
After 15 years at **Ravenswood** Winery in Sonoma, John Kemble quit his job as assistant winemaker , boarded an airplane and flew to New Zealand. He never looked back -- except with longing for the ancient Zinfandel vines planted on the Old Hill Ranch in Sonoma Valley, the source for arguably **Ravenswood's** finest Zins.

New Zealand shouted "move here" like a flashing neon sign when Kemble, then 33, arrived in Auckland in 1992 to look for a place to build his own winery. He and business partner Kaar Field -- a fellow Oakland native and longtime friend -- were priced out of the Napa Valley and Sonoma County vineyard markets, yet burned to produce red **wines** other than Pinot Noir, using grapes they grew themselves.

Kemble chose Hawkes Bay, on the eastern coast of New Zealand's North Island, for its well-drained soils and warm Mediterranean climate for ripening Bordeaux varieties like Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Kemble and Field also dodged the price-elevating land grab that was going on in the Marlborough and Central Otago regions, home to New Zealand's famed Sauvignon Blancs and Pinot Noirs, respectively.

The partners purchased 500 acres on sweeping terraces overlooking the Ngaruroro River, west of the city of Hastings, and called it Kemblefield Estate. They planted Cabernet and Merlot, plus Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay, and by 1993 had constructed a winery and released their first **wines.**

Still, Old Hill and its 1870s-era vines called to Kemble, reminding him of those intense yet elegant **wines,** with classic old-vine Zinfandel characteristics of fresh berries, briar and black pepper. So the thickset, driven bloke with the distinctive mop of curly hair satisfied his thirst for Zin by making his own -- from Old Hill vine cuttings collected by Field, an Oakland tax attorney, and propagated in New Zealand.

'Unlimited potential'

Put the Kemblefield Zinfandel in a tasting with California Zins and one would be hard-pressed to pick it out. In just its second bottling, the 2002 Kemblefield The Reserve Hawkes Bay Zinfandel ($25) is quite good, with an interesting past and unlimited potential -- if the weather gods don't conspire against Kemble. With good distribution in Northern California, this Zin is worth a search.

The 2002 (1,500 cases) is not the jammy, 16-percent-alcohol-monster that is popular is some circles, but rather lighter, more versatile and wonderfully balanced, with aromas and flavors of fresh-crushed blackberry and raspberry fruit and spicy black pepper. It's a slice of berry pie a la mode, with the juicy berries enhanced by sweet vanilla, baking spice and toast, plus a briary note. There is no mistaking that it's Zinfandel.

Kemblefield Estate Winery became the first to plant Zin in New Zealand, in 1997, and the second (after Stonecroft **Wines)** to sell the varietal commercially. While they didn't set off a mad rush of Zinfandel plantings -- Kemblefield and Stonecroft remain a membership of just two in the unofficial New Zealand chapter of Zinfandel Advocates & Producers -- they won over doubters about the viability of Zinfandel in Hawkes Bay.

Field acquired cuttings from old-vine Zinfandel vineyards (Old Hill and Cooke in Sonoma Valley, and Dickerson in Napa Valley)

from which Kemble had made **wines** at **Ravenswood.** Field delivered the cuttings to officials in Auckland, who placed them in a mandatory quarantine spanning two growing seasons.

Someone goofed and propagated only the Old Hill; Dickerson and Cooke were destroyed in error. So Kemble put his Old Hill clones in his nursery and grew enough vines to plant what is now 10 acres of Zinfandel (out of a total 220 planted acres). Alan Limmer of Stonecroft rushed out an experimental Zin from the 1999 vintage; Kemblefield's first release was 500 cases of the 2000 Kemblefield The Reserve Hawkes Bay Zinfandel.

"I didn't come to Hawkes Bay to make Zinfandel," says Kemble, now 46. "It wasn't part of the original plan, but it later became a logical extension of what we do. After I got here, I couldn't see any reason why Zinfandel wouldn't be successful here."

The grapes are hand-harvested -- when many vineyards are picked by mechanical harvesters due to the slim labor pool in the country -- fermented in open-top fermenters, hand-punched to keep the floating cap of skins in contact with the fermenting juice, and aged in French oak.

From an informal tasting alongside the 2002 **Ravenswood** Old Hill Sonoma Valley Zinfandel ($50) -- admittedly an unfair comparison, as old-vine Zins have a character, depth and integrity that youngsters simply can't match -- the lineage is clear. The **Ravenswood** Old Hill is deeper and smoother, yet the Kemblefield Zin's fruit is similar, with the telltale cracked black pepper quality.

Zin sets winery apart

Zinfandel is a small part of the Kemblefield production, yet it's what helps set the winery apart. My visit to Kemblefield in 2002 coincided with a local journalist's stop to interview Kemble about "the Zinfandel that isn't pink." A Texas couple came to the tasting room after a Napier restaurant sommelier suggested they "go see the American who makes Zinfandel."

That American has found New Zealand very much to his liking.

Kemble found comfort in the Hawkes Bay landscape, with its orchards, row crops and livestock pastures. "It looked like Alexander Valley (in Sonoma County), with a river running through it," he says. "I chose it because it's more suited to growing Bordeaux varieties like Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon -- and it allowed us to pull Zinfandel into the game.

"I had a lot to learn about Hawkes Bay. The climate is sunny and warm, yet is more changeable than Sonoma, both year to year and within the year. We're on a small island surrounded by the sea, so there is no continental land mass to moderate the climate. The weather blows right through and we get rainfall throughout the year. California has great vintages every year because there isn't a lot of variability."

Frost is a major concern. In 2001, Hawkes Bay growers lost 55 percent of their crop, and Kemblefield more than that, when frost damaged the tender young buds. No Kemblefield Zin was made from this vintage.

"Our first few vintages were a problem because we were planting the vineyard and had to buy all of our fruit," Kemble says. "It wasn't always the best quality."

Kemble wins over locals

Kemble's doggedness and good humor won over the locals, many of whom offered help and advice. The financial wisdom came from Field. Now Kemblefield produces approximately 30,000 cases of **wine** a year -- Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon in addition to Zinfandel; currently, the Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and Zinfandel are available in California.

Hawkes Bay is a long way from middle-class Ascot Drive in Oakland, where Kemble grew up and attended Joaquin Miller (elementary) School and Montera Middle School with Field. Both played center on the Skyline High School football team in Oakland -- Field in the class of 1973, Kemble in the '76 class. Reed Foster, co-founder of **Ravenswood** with Joel Peterson, lived nearby and attended the same schools.

"The Fosters, Kembles and Fields have been together for 40 years, thought not officially," Field says. "As we got older, the pickup basketball games and beer became something more serious."

It became winemaking.

Foster and Peterson started **Ravenswood** in 1976. That summer, Kemble worked with Peterson in the cellar, despite having little interest in **wine** at the time. It was just a job. Field, 49, graduated from UC Berkeley with a law degree and began doing Ravenwood's financial planning and taxes.

"**Ravenswood** was Joel's gig, and John knew he was never going to be the winemaker," says Field. "He wanted to have his own marquee. About five or six years before he left **Ravenswood,** we talked about doing something in California, but it didn't pencil out. We weren't 'write-you-a-check guys' ... that wasn't our upbringing. So we looked at New Zealand, where at the time, the U.S. dollar bought a lot more than it did in the U.S. Our money would go a lot farther in our effort to grow our own grapes."

After his first harvest at **Ravenswood,** Kemble enrolled at UC Berkeley and "studied" civil engineering for two years.

"He got caught up in the fraternity lifestyle," **Ravenswood's** Peterson says, "and dropped out before he flunked out."

"I'm the son of a son of a contractor," Kemble says, "but I broke that mold."

He returned to **Ravenswood** in 1978, worked his way up to assistant winemaker and as a more serious student, earned a plant

science degree from UC Davis in 1983.

"He's an intense guy, hard-driven to say the least," Peterson says. "He's hard on himself and determined, and about as stubborn a human being as I've ever met."

Peterson recalls a Boy Scouts backpacking trip he and Foster led in the Sierra, when Kemble was in high school.

"John had memorized the words to every TV commercial -- Oscar Mayer wieners, cosmetics, you name it -- and was repeating them on the trail," Peterson says. "He was a big kid even then, and he kept falling farther behind, still trudging. He slowed but he never stopped. That's typical of John."

He's also a clean freak, Peterson says, fastidious about keeping the winery tidy. Before Peterson and Foster turned an old toilet seat factory in Sonoma into the current **Ravenswood** winery, they made their **wines** at the Topolos at Russian River winery in Forestville.

"We had a new press on wheels, which we would roll to the edge of a 10- to 12-foot drop to concrete below," Peterson says. "We would back up a truck on the concrete and empty the pomace (skins, seeds and stems) from the press from above into the truck bed.

"One night, the press was full with pomace and I told John he could take care of it in the morning. He said OK and I left. But he's a compulsive cleaner and decided to empty the press himself. He rolled it to the edge and, well, the press and precipice became one. The press went over the side and was crushed on one end. So John borrowed a tractor lift, got the press back on the stand, and spent an hour getting it unbent. The next morning, there was the slightly twisted press that still worked -- and it was clean."

Hawkes Bay suits Kemble. He loves its beauty, clean air and absence of traffic. He and Field have the vineyards and winery they could not have afforded in Napa or Sonoma. Kemble lives near the winery with his wife, Linda, a Hawkes Bay nurse, her son Brennan and the couple's two young daughters, Isabella and Francesca. In order to gain a work permit, the burly Kemble was told he had to lose "a certain amount of weight," he says, which he did by riding a bicycle from his home to the winery every day.

He enjoys returning to California, for sales work and to visit family, yet calls Hawkes Bay home.

"I made the move and I wouldn't change it," he says. "I'm a fifth-generation Californian, but when I got off the plane in Auckland, I felt like I'd found my home."

Kemblefield **wines** in the Bay Area

Three Kemblefield Estate Winery **wines** are currently available in the Bay Area. Each is very well-made and highly recommended -- offering familiar varietals with a New Zealand twist.

2004 Kemblefield Winemaker's Signature Hawkes Bay Sauvignon Blanc ($13) -- Juicy lime, mandarin orange and melon flavors lead to passion fruit, ripe tropical fruit and citrus peel notes on the finish. Clean and brisk, it has mouthwatering acidity and excellent balance.

2002 Kemblefield The Distinction Hawkes Bay Chardonnay ($16) -- Ripe pear and golden apple aromas and flavors; complexity comes from subtle hints of vanilla and baking spice, and the citrusy natural acidity refreshes the palate. It's an elegant, even-handed Chardonnay, not at all a butter-and-oak bomb.

2002 Kemblefield The Reserve Hawkes Bay Zinfandel ($25) -- A balanced, claret-style (not jammy) Zin with aromas and flavors of fresh-crushed blackberry and raspberry fruit and spicy black pepper. It's berry pie a la mode, with a juicy, fresh-berry character enhanced by sweet vanilla, baking spice and toast notes.

-- L.M.

E-mail Linda Murphy at lmurphy@sfchronicle.com.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO (3): GRAPHIC, (1) John Kemble (right) holds a bottle of Kemblefield Zinfandel at the Taste of New Zealand event at San Francisco's Museum of Modern Art last June. Kemble's partner, Karr Field, stands behind him. / Craig Lee / The Chronicle 2004, (2) Kemblefield Winery and its vineyards, below, are located in the Hawkes Bay region of New Zealand's North Island. / Courtesy Kemblefield Winery, (3) Left to right: **Ravenswood** Winery's Thijs Van Stigt, John Kemble, Joel Peterson, Clyde Crawford and Reed Foster Jr. (legs only) are more fun than a barrel of monkeys. Kemble now makes **wine** in New Zealand. / Courtesy **Ravenswood** Winery 1982

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Big Gulp Forbes January 10, 2005

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Forbes

January 10, 2005

SECTION: Pg. 68 Vol. 175 No. 1

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BYLINE: Lea Goldman

HIGHLIGHT:

How Richard Sands has turned Constellation Brands into the world's biggest **wine** producer.

BODY:

In just over a decade Richard Sands has turned Constellation Brands from an outcast seller of twist-offs to the biggest--and most diverse--producer of **wine** on the planet.

St. Emilion it isn't. But from his third-floor office in Fairport, N.Y., 20 miles from the nearest vineyards, Richard Sands, 53, keeps a watchful eye on the world's vast grape-growing regions. It's from here, in a nondescript exurb of Rochester, that the chief executive of Constellation Brands has constructed, piece by piece, a $3.8 billion (sales) **wine**-and-spirits Godzilla. For breadth and sheer number of brands, the company is unlike anything else in its industry, an alcoholic emporium that has become all things to all drinkers.

That's thanks to strategic temporizing, timely acquisitions and the recent snatching of a crown jewel--the Robert Mondavi Co. As so often during his decade-plus of stewardship, Sands has deftly exploited others' misfortunes. The legendary Mondavi, almost singlehandedly responsible for turning the Napa Valley into a source of classic vintages, was falling apart, buffeted by very public family squabbles, declining sales and mediocre reviews. Still, the company wasn't for sale--not on any terms. Sands had other ideas and hired Merrill Lynch in June 2004 to analyze a potential purchase.

By the NumbersThere's the SpiritsAmericans are drinking more and more hard liquor, **wine** and imported beer. $3.6 billion The amount of **wine** sold in U.S. supermarkets last year.90% The share of domestic **wine** produced in California.25.4 million The number of Americans who are regular **wine** drinkers. Sources: ACNielsen; USDA; **Wine** Market Council.

The plan lay idle until September, when Mondavi announced a draconian recapitalization project to raise $850 million by selling off the storied premium labels. That would leave the winemaker with the lucrative supermarket-ready brands like Woodbridge. The hush-hush takeover project was on. In a flurry of calls Sands convened his brother Robert (Constellation's chief operating officer), Merrill investment bankers and takeover lawyers from Wachtell, Lipton to come up with the money (mostly bank debt through a syndicated loan) and execute the bid. Three weeks later Sands fired off a fax to Ted W. Hall, Mondavi's chairman, offering $970 million for his company. Hall shrugged it off. That inspired another round of missives and phone calls. At the end of October, over a tense dinner at Harmony Club in Manhattan, Sands informed Hall that if a deal was not reached, he would proceed with a hostile takeover--his first ever. Hall caved, and a week later, amid almost audible gasps from California, Sands announced he was buying Mondavi for $1 billion, plus the assumption of $325 million in debt. Says he: "It was like a high-stakes chess game."

And it provided another vital piece in the vast jigsaw puzzle that is Constellation. With the deal, Constellation will control booze on the low and the high ends and a vast spectrum in between. That's everything from cheapo **wines,** most notably the $4 vagabond classic Richard's Wild Irish Rose to the $100-a-bottle of Quintessa Cabernet. To regard this latest acquisition as a face-lift is to misunderstand Constellation's intentions. "I'm not ashamed of Wild Irish Rose," says Sands. Indeed, what's shameful about a gross margin of 33%? "But it's just one product." And he wants to sell to them all--to the cash-strapped, the

ultraflush, cocktail lovers and suds guzzlers. The supermarket approach hasn't worked terribly well in financial services or auto manufacturing. But it's been a winning formula for Constellation.

Mondavi is Sands' 15th acquisition since 1991. But Constellation isn't just bulking up. With its network of 1,000 distributors worldwide, the company can quickly leverage its 200-plus brands and steadily improve its operating margins. Its debt-to-capital ratio is a manageable 46%. Every year over the last decade top-line growth has averaged 25%. Net profits, an expected $300 million for the fiscal year ending Feb. 28, have jumped an average of 30% annually for the same period. Betting against Sands isn't smart. A hundred dollars invested in Constellation in 1993, the year he became chief executive, is today worth $979--roughly the same price as a case of Robert Mondavi Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon bottled that same year. The S&P 500 would have gotten you just $395.

Sands joined the family business, founded by father Marvin as Canandaigua Brands in 1945, shortly after he received a doctorate in social psychology from the University of North Carolina in 1979. He spent his first two years jumping around departments, learning how **wine** is bottled and mastering the elaborate archives--taxes, promotions, pricing and the like--that spirits companies must keep to fulfill onerous regulations in place since the repeal of Prohibition in 1933. (A case now before the Supreme Court, brought by small wineries in New York and Michigan, is challenging the states' right to govern the distribution of alcohol.) At 28 he still lived with his parents in Rochester, each night returning from work to dissect the **wine** business with his dad. He became president in 1986.

By the time Richard Sands took over the company, Constellation was a profitable, if middling, maker of low-price **wines,** including J. Roget "champagne," Old Duke and the ultrasweet kosher **wine** Manischewitz, all together hauling in $306 million in sales in 1993. The company had already tried its hand at homegrown innovation, launching the **wine** cooler, Sun Country, which bombed, thanks to the much more successful marketing blitz of Seagram's Bartles & Jaymes. Buying, rather than inventing, Sands decided, was the way to grow. He saw opportunity as distributors were consolidating, with national companies like Southern **Wine** & Spirits squeezing out regional players. Small vintners were feeling the pinch--there just weren't enough distributors, restaurants and liquor stores to handle the proliferation of tiny vineyards that had cropped up over the decade. "The bigger you are, the more attention you command," Sands says.

First order of business was breaking into beer and spirits, new territory for the company. Just before becoming chief, Sands paid $125 million for Barton, which he saw as "a perfect fit," since both companies targeted the same price-conscious drinkers. Barton was the fourth-largest distributor of beer in the U.S., with domestic rights to Corona, Modelo Especial and St. Pauli Girl. Barton also had a diverse line of affordable spirits like Barton gin and vodka and Montezuma tequila. (Those offerings have been expanded with the purchase of United Distillers of Glenmore, whose brands included Kentucky Tavern, Fleischmann's and Black Velvet Canadian whiskey.) "[The Barton] buy singlehandedly doubled the size of our international presence," says Robert Sands. Biggest hit from the acquisition: Corona, the most popular imported beer in the U.S., representing 75% of Constellation's $863 million in annual beer sales.

Next on the list--buying into California, by far the biggest producer of **wines** in America. Four months after picking up Barton, Sands put up $150 million, mostly in debt, for Vintners International, the nation's fifth-largest winemaker and ripe for the plucking. Though the company owned the hugely popular table-**wine** labels Paul Masson and Taylor California Cellar, it had scaled back advertising and promotion, falling out of favor with distributors, with a resulting drop in sales. Sands jazzed up the labels and ordered a reformulation of a Paul Masson hard liquor, dubbing the new concoction Paul Masson Grande Amber Brandy and jacking up the price. Now the number two brandy in America, the label sells 1.6 million cases a year, an eightfold jump since the makeover.

But Sands wasn't done in California (did Alexander stop at Persia?). Although he had just nabbed two of the state's five so-called "gamut brands," popularly priced **wines,** he wanted complete domination. So in August 1994 the company picked off a significant, if lower-end, stake in varietal and nonvarietal categories, buying the mid-tier Inglenook and Almaden brands, respectively, the fifth- and sixth-largest-selling jug **wines** in the U.S. That $120 million purchase did more than cement Constellation's presence in California: It transformed the company into the nation's second-largest **wine** supplier, behind Ernest & Julio Gallo, boosting its sale of table **wines** to 68.4 million gallons from 10.4 million gallons just two years earlier.

During what he straight-facedly calls "dry spells"--those rare periods when he wasn't shopping--Sands worked on his organization. In the mid-1990s the company had five divisions, split among types of alcohol and price range. Each had its own chief executive and marketing groups. And while the units all reported to Robert Sands, they ran their labels autonomously, planning their own advertising and promotions. "They have very, very good people in place running all their divisions," says Eileen Fredrikson, a principal at Gomberg, Fredrikson & Associates, a San Francisco **wine** consultancy. "And so they can be real hands-off managers."

That cozy arrangement worked just fine--until the company's first foray into Europe. (Today Constellation is cut into two big pieces: Stephen Millar runs Constellation **Wines;** Alexander Berk heads the beers and spirits unit.) The $475 million grab in 1998 of Matthew Clark at once delivered a leading U.K. producer of **wine** and cider and the largest wholesale liquor distributor in that country, with 16,000 restaurants and bars as clients. Sands had coveted the company for three years, biding his time until the stock hit a soft spot. Soon enough the London stock market became disillusioned with Matthew Clark for its costly acquisitions and flat sales. Once the company's market value (including debt) sank to five times operating income (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization), Sands jumped.

Opportunistic stealth still hadn't netted Sands the prize he wanted most of all: a high-end California winery. Cases of so-called super-premium California **wines** account for 30% of all unit sales, but 62% of revenues to the U.S. **wine** industry. And yet Sands felt locked out of the club. "Constellation was known for lesser **wines,**" says Fredrikson, who was then advising a Napa Valley family-owned winery looking for buyers. "This family just refused to talk to those guys."

His break came in 1999. Agustin Huneeus, founder of Franciscan Estates, a premium Napa Valley winemaker with $70 million in sales, was looking to cash out. He had met Sands a couple of years before and found him inquisitive and trustworthy. While Constellation had no experience marketing fine **wines,** and Franciscan was already negotiating with other buyers, Huneeus called Sands. Ten days later Sands had amassed $243 million in financing. "It was evident to me that he would get Franciscan

and protect it from being mixed with the lower-end stuff," Huneeus recalls. "Richard is a master at buying companies," he continues. "It's his real game--not selling **wine.**"

That's not quite fair. With Franciscan at its core, Constellation created a fine-**wine** division, run by Huneeus' son, which gobbled up a string of high-end labels in 2001. Its biggest snag: **Ravenswood,** a winery with what is now the bestselling red zinfandel in America.

No question but that Sands loves to hunt--and if that sometimes means thwarting a larger rival, so much the better. Constellation knew that Diageo was stalking BRL Hardy, Australia's largest **wine** producer. **Wines** from Down Under are winning palates around the globe and sold $1.5 billion in exports last year, just behind the mighty triumvirate of France, Italy and Spain. "There's a major shift taking place in the world," says Robert Nicholson, principal of International **Wine** Associates, a Healdsburg, Calif. **wine** financing firm. "It's gotten to the point that if customers see a kangaroo on the label, they'll buy it." Particularly in the U.S., where the Aussies have a 24% hold on the import market and Hardy's Yellow Tail label is the most popular of all Australian **wines.**

Sands waited as he thought Diageo was deep into due diligence. He also watched as the grape glut in Australia forced massive price-cutting in 2001, whacking Hardy's stock from $8.30 to $5.10 over eight months. That's when he made an offer to buy at $7.90 a share, or $1.4 billion, in cash and stock. The acquisition added 20% to Constellation's sales, turning the company into the world's biggest **wine** producer.

What's left to conquer? The Sands brothers can't seem to agree. Robert says the company will make a play for the cloistered European **wine** market. There are 230,000 individual wineries in France, and centuries-old regulations governing land ownership and production don't welcome newcomers. "We're number one in the New World but don't have any presence in Europe," he gripes. That's why he pushed a deal, announced in December, to buy a 40% interest in Ruffino, an Italian fine-**wine** producer, for $80 million. Richard went along but clearly has other things on his mind. "My more immediate priority is to fill out our spirits portfolio." He's also eager for more Corona business from its owner, Grupo Modelo, to be able to sell the brew to all 50 states. "Bigger," he says, "is always better."

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Zin lovers gather for activities in San Francisco The News Journal January 5, 2005 Wednesday

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The News Journal

January 5, 2005 Wednesday

SECTION: LIFE & LEISURE; Roger Morris; Pg. 3E

LENGTH: 442 words

HEADLINE: Zin lovers gather for activities in San Francisco

BODY:
ROGER MORRIS

FINE **WINE**

Few drinkers are as fanatic as those who have selected zinfandel as their **wine** of choice. Comparisons have been made to Dead Heads, HBO Sunday night devotees and those who think carbs have something to do with NASCAR.

For those of you who have been thus zapped, you might be interested in attending the ZAP - Zinfandel Advocates & Producers - tasting Jan. 29 in San Francisco. Amazingly, about 300 wineries, some of them from abroad, will be pouring zins, so you may want to set aside a full afternoon.

Actually, there will be various zin dinners and activities the whole week of Jan. 24. You can find more info at www.zinfandel.org.

Among the wineries that produce multiple, serious zinfandels, two of the best and best-known are **Ravenswood** and Renwood. I had the opportunity recently to taste several zinfandels from both wineries.

Renwood is in the Sierra Mountains east of Sacramento and stakes its reputation on zinfandel grown in the region's legendary Shenandoah Valley, where many of the truly old-vine vineyards exist.

Renwood makes six - some blends, some vineyard-designated - and of the five I tasted, I preferred the 2001 Grandp re (about $32) with its lovely, creamy raspberry flavors. I also liked the contrast between the '01 Fiddletown ($25) - earthy and minerally - and the '01 D'Agostino ($30), which featured the brambly nature of zins.

Ravenswood seems to get better and better each year and can arguably claim the crown of the best zinfandel winery. It has around a dozen single-vineyard labels in addition to its blend, and most of them are in Sonoma Valley and most sell for around $30.

My favorites among the eight I tasted - and not all are available locally - were the Monte Rosso ($30) and the Cooke ($50). The Monte Rosso combined brambly, peppery fruit with minerals and mountain earthy flavors and pecan-shell tannins. The Cooke had pencil-lead aromas, the dark flavors of elderberries, and was ripe, rich and bold.

The variety among the other vineyards was fascinating - eucalyptus and vanilla in the Old Hill, blueberries and anise in the Belloni, Bordeaux leanness in the Barricia, and dark cherries and chocolate in the Teledeschi. Only the Dickerson was slightly disappointing, with its heavy eucalyptus, leaning toward a medical-salve aroma.

Whether you drink at home or in San Francisco, "Zanuary" is a good time to get zapped on zins.

Roger Morris, who was nominated for the 2002 James Beard journalism awards, has written about **wine** for years. Contact him at features@delaware online.com or The News Journal, Box 15505, Wilmington, DE 19850.

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Wine, Etc.:West Coast pinot noirs are worth taste The Capital (Annapolis, MD) November 24, 2004 Wednesday

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The Capital (Annapolis, MD)

November 24, 2004 Wednesday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. C1

LENGTH: 959 words

HEADLINE: Wine, Etc.:West Coast pinot noirs are worth taste

BYLINE: Tom Marquardt and Patrick Darr

BODY:
While we're celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday, let's give thanks to a good grape - pinot noir.

Pinot noir is the grape that makes French burgundy so great. It is here where all compasses point when it comes to making seductive pinot noirs. The French say it's in the terroir , which has credibility. But that's not to say **wine** producers in this country cannot make good pinot noir. Oregon in particular has demonstrated an ability to make burgundian-like pinot noirs.

We've been tasting a few of these **wines** over the past month and thought we would pass along our favorites:

Belle Glas Clark & Telephone Vineyard Pinot Noir 2002 ($38).New on the market, this Santa Maria Valley pinot noir was a pleasant introduction for us. Cranberry and pepper aromas give way to forward strawberry and space flavors. It has a terrific mouthfeel and a hint of anise on the finish. Great depth and silky texture.

Sanford & Benedict La Rinconada Pinot Noir 2001 ($50).This Santa Barbara County pinot noir producer is one of the best in California and certainly one of the most reliable, as this **wine** will confirm. Deep color and notes of black cherry and chocolate flavors. This is a big pinot noir with excellent balance and a lingering finish. The estate-bottled pinot noir from Santa Rita Hills is also a superb **wine** for a few dollars less, but we like this one because of its unique characteristics.

MacMurray Ranch Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 2002 ($32). Dense black cherry fruit with forest-bottom character and notes of vanillin oak. Full body.

Frei Brothers Reserve Pinot Noir 2002 ($24). Here is a good value from the Russian River Valley, a good region for pinot noir. Medium body, black cherry and raspberry flavors with silky tannins.

Chumeia Vineyards Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir 2002 ($30). This Paso Robles producer, launched in 1999, is scoring hits with its pinot noir. The Santa Lucia Highlands version from Monterey County has dense, rich mouthfeel and notes of raspberries and strawberries with a touch of spice. For less money, the Central Coast version is a very nice **wine** with jammy cherry fruit.

Morgan Rosella's Vineyard Pinot Noir 2002 ($38).Here's a showy pinot noir with lots of ripe black cherry flavors and a soft, luscious texture that makes it very enjoyable by itself or with food. Medium in body, it's drinkable now. Although all of Morgan's pinot noirs show well on release, the 2002 Gary's Vineyard pinot noir has more subtle and tight flavors that will blossom with a little more time. In general, 2002 it an excellent vintage in the Santa Lucia Highlands.

Babcock Grand Cuvee Pinot Noir 2002 ($35).With grapes from the Santa Rita Hills appellation, this softly textured **wine** shows off excellent color and ripe cherry fruit with floral aromas and a touch of mineral and sweet vanillin oak. The cuvee is a blend of grapes from estate vineyards and the Cargasacchi Vineyard. Another fine **wine** from Babcock.

R. Stuart Big Fire Pinot Noir 2002 ($18).Talk about a fruit basket. This one has an orchard of cherries, plums, blueberries and raspberries with nice spice notes to boot. Good mouthfeel make it an Oregon winner.

Etude Pinot Noir 2002 ($40). In a flight of several California pinot noirs, the Etude from Carneros stood out as a winner. Concentrated, extracted fruit with ripe cherry flavors and a bit of oak make for an excellent **wine.**

Goldeneye Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 2001 ($48).Made by Duckhorn, this fruit-driven pinot offers a lot of ripe black cherry flavors and shows good depth. Light oak. Great now but will age well for 3-5 years. Worth the money.

Ravenswood

As we head into colder weather, there is no better time than now to get reacquainted with zinfandel. The high-alcohol and

brawny texture of this American grape variety is a good foil to cold weather and hearty winter food. Chili and stews, for instance, almost demand zinfandel.

Ravenswood is known for its vineyard-designate zinfandels and we had the opportunity to taste through eight of them during a recent Navy tailgate barbecue. Winemaker Joel Peterson, one of the most reputable zinfandel winemakers in California, has been at this helm since he founded **Ravenswood** in 1976. It is now under the ownership of Franciscan Estates, another reputable producer in California.

Key to **Ravenswood** style is its insistence on natural yeasts, open-tank fermenting and small oak-barrell aging.

Here were our favorites of the 2002 zinfandels:

Ravenswood Belloni Zinfandel 2002 ($30).A field blend of zinfandel (78 percent), petite sirah, alicante and carignane, this zin bursts with black fruit flavors, plums, allspice and vanillin oak. Soft mouthfeel.

Ravenswood Monte Rosso Zinfandel 2002 ($30).Made entirely from zinfandel, this **wine** has been aged in new and old French oak for 24 months. Raspberry and black cherry flavors about with silky tannin and long finish.

Ravenswood Dickerson Zinfandel 2002 ($30).With grapes from the Dickerson Vineyard in Napa Valley, this zinfandel has a violet aroma and ripe blackberry flavors with hints of mocha and mint. Very layered fruit that will challenge your tasting vocabulary. Always a perennial favorite of ours, we highly recommend it.

Ravenswood Cooke Zinfandel 2002 ($50). Our favorite of the tasting, the Cooke vineyard is located on rocky slopes in Sonoma. The tough growing conditions make for a big and brambly zinfandel with dense black berry flavors, spice and pepper. The **wine** can be acquired only through the winery because it is made in small quantities.

Do you have a question or suggestion for a topic? Write to the authors in care of this newspaper or e-mail tmarquardt

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Favorite little wine may be from a mega-winery Scripps Howard News Service November 14, 2004, Sunday

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November 14, 2004, Sunday

ADVANCED-DATE: November 13, 2004

SECTION: LIFE STYLE

LENGTH: 601 words

HEADLINE: Favorite little **wine** may be from a mega-winery

SOURCE: Modesto Bee

BYLINE: TIM MORAN

BODY:
Here's a philosophical question: Is a good **wine** a good **wine** regardless of who made it?

Some consumers have a deep prejudice against one or more of the giant **wine** companies and refuse to buy their products.

That's why blind tastings are used in **wine** competitions. Judges are evaluating the color, aroma and taste of the **wine,** and aren't influenced by the label.

But choosing a **wine** in a retail store can also be "blind." What appears to be a vast array of different **wine** brands may be produced by a handful of huge **wine** companies.

What a consumer might think is a new trendy **wine** from a boutique winery may in fact be a new label from one of the mega-wineries.

The topic came up with the acquisition of Robert Mondavi Co. by Constellation Brands, a New York-based company that is the biggest **wine** producer in the world.

A reader e-mailed that he was startled to discover that Constellation owned **Ravenswood,** a premium producer of zinfandel. He wondered what other labels are owned by what wineries.

It's a listing that would consume a lot of newsprint, and one that is constantly changing. But I can give a sampling.

Constellation Brands, which surpassed E.&J. Gallo Winery as the world's biggest **wine** producer a year or two ago, has grown mainly by acquisition.

In addition to **Ravenswood** and the pending Robert Mondavi purchase, Constellation's labels include (deep breath):

Almaden, Inglenook, Vendange, Nathanson Creek, Talus, Turner Road Vintners, Covey Run, Ste. Chapelle, La Terre, Coastal Vintners, Alice White, Manischewitz, Cook's, Mondoro, Taylor California Cellars, Cribari, Wild Irish Rose, Cisco, Paul Masson, Arbor Mist, Widmer, Estate Cellars, Heritage, Dunnewood, Farallon, Belaire Creek, Blackstone, Black Box, Hardys, Banrock Station, Nobilo, Franciscan Oakville Estate, Estancia, Mount Veeder, Quintessa and Simi.

There's more, but my fingers are getting tired.

Gallo has a similarly daunting list of labels, although most of them were created by Gallo, rather than purchased.

In addition to the labels with Gallo in the name, the portfolio includes:

Anapamu, Bridlewood, Frei Brothers, Indigo Hills, Louis M. Martini, Marcelina, Mirassou, Napa Valley Vineyards, Rancho Zabaco, MacMurray Ranch, Turning Leaf, Bella Sera, Black Swan, Da Vinci, Ecco Domani, Red Bicyclette, Redwood Creek, Gossamer Bay, Livingston Cellars, Carlo Rossi, Peter Vella, Wild Vines, Burlwood, Copperidge, Liberty Creek, William Wycliff, Tott's, Ballatore Spumante, Andr, Thunderbird and Night Train Express.

Bronco **Wine** Co. in Ceres, Calif., also has an extensive portfolio, including the illustrious Charles Shaw.

Other Bronco labels include ForestVille, Forest Glen, Estrella, Montpellier, Grand Cru, Silver Ridge, Rutherford Vintners, Hacienda, FoxHollow, Foxbrook, SeaRidge, Crane Lake and Napa Ridge. And probably several others I don't know about - the folks at Bronco can be a bit secretive.

The **Wine** Group is another big player with San Joaquin Valley roots, and it makes Franzia boxed **wine,** Concannon, Glen Ellen, Corbett Canyon, MG Vallejo, Foxhorn, Mogen David, Austin Vale, Vista Point, Costa Vera, Altamonte and Morassutti.

There are other **wine** conglomerates with multiple labels, but I'm running out of space here. If you are curious about a **wine,** try an Internet search on it. That doesn't always work, because some of the players like Bronco and The **Wine** Group don't have Web sites, but most do.

Of course, sometimes ignorance is bliss. If you buy the **wine** and like it, who cares who makes it?

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Nothing 'girlie' about this sauvignon blanc from Styria Sacramento Bee (California) October 20, 2004 Wednesday

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Sacramento Bee (California)

October 20, 2004 Wednesday
METRO FINAL EDITION

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HEADLINE: Nothing 'girlie' about this sauvignon blanc from Styria

BYLINE: Mike Dunne Bee Food Editor

BODY:

In his native Austria, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has a stadium named after him and a postage stamp in his honor. Can a **wine** label with the governor's likeness be far behind?

If any Austrian vintner were to release a Schwarzenegger **wine,** it likely would be Gerhard Wohlmuth.

And Wohlmuth has some ideas on just what kind of **wine** he would make in tribute to the governor. A muscular cabernet sauvignon? A husky blaufränkisch? A fit and energetic pinot noir?

He makes them all, but none would be his first choice. Instead, he says, a Schwarzenegger **wine** would have to be sauvignon blanc, which no doubt will stun some **wine** enthusiasts, as well as the governor's fans.

Sauvignon blanc, after all, tends to yield a **wine** lean and light. It can be nicely sculpted, refreshing and frisky, but generally lacks the bulk and power of other **wines.** Some think it, well, a girlie-man **wine.**

But Wohlmuth is firm in his view that if he were to make a Schwarzenegger **wine** it would be a sauvignon blanc, and his reasoning is persuasive.

"It's the most typical **wine** of Styria. It has the best fruit. It clearly stands out among the world's best **wines,**" Wohlmuth says.

We're chatting in a conference room at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in downtown Sacramento, where Wohlmuth has convened a tasting of a few of his **wines.**

He was in town for the Styria Ball, an annual gathering during which some 200 American and Austrian business leaders ponder and discuss issues concerning development, trade and the like.

An Austrian chef was brought in from New York to prepare dinner, and Wohlmuth's **wines** were poured during the banquet. Schwarzenegger, however, didn't attend.

Doesn't matter, for Wohlmuth says he knows the governor already and knows that he likes his **wines,** especially his sauvignon blanc, which he says he's poured for Schwarzenegger at earlier dinners. (The governor's press representatives didn't respond to requests for information on his **wine** preferences.)

Wohlmuth and Schwarzenegger both are from Styria, a mountainous region in southeastern Austria, with Vienna to the north and Slovenia and Italy to the south. It's an industrial area, but it's also recognized for its Alpine resorts and farming, including winemaking.

Last year, Wohlmuth's family celebrated its 200th year of winemaking. The 110-acre estate is both traditional and progressive, as Wohlmuth tends historic indigenous varieties such as blaufränkisch and riesling and international grapes such as cabernet sauvignon, chardonnay and pinot noir.

But sauvignon blanc, which the winery has been growing the past 40 years, is Wohlmuth's flagship varietal. Last fall, the prestigious British **wine** magazine Decanter declared Wohlmuth's 2002 sauvignon blanc one of the nine best examples of the varietal in the world, just the latest in a long string of successes for the estate's way with the **wine.**

The Wohlmuth 2003 Steinriegel Sauvignon Blanc ($35) looks to be another winner. Made from grapes grown on "the only flat surface in Austria," says Wohlmuth, the **wine** is dry, steely, fruity and elegant, with a surprisingly persistent finish for such a finely structured **wine.** It expresses sauvignon blanc's characteristic herbal notes, with fresh fruit and a mineral underpinning bringing captivating complexity to the **wine.**

If the governor himself wants some, however, he's going to have to twist some arms. Wohlmuth **wines** are virtually impossible to find in California outside the Styria Ball.

That's a shame, to judge by two other **wines** Wohlmuth brought with him, the thick, viscous, honeyed and smoky Wohlmuth 2001 Elite Chardonnay ($35), a truly Schwarzeneggerian take on the varietal, and the very accessible Wohlmuth 2002 Aristos ($26), a youthful, herbal, spicy and harmonious blend of blaufränkisch and cabernet sauvignon.

An art enthusiast, Wohlmuth retains established European artists to create the authoritative paintings that dress up his labels. Almost invariably, they are intensely colored, in contrast to Wohlmuth's own style. He always dresses entirely in black out of admiration for another American icon, Johnny Cash.

"For me, it's great music," Wohlmuth says. "And when you work with red **wine,** it's best to wear black."

An animal of another stripe: And speaking of **wine** labels, one of the more dramatic, effective and historic in California is **Ravenswood** Winery's bold interlocking circle of ravens, designed by Berkeley artist David Lance Goines, a former Sacramentan.

But the next time you reach for a bottle of **Ravenswood,** take a closer look at that iconographic label. The ravens just might have been replaced by kangaroos.

This is winemaker Joel Peterson's way of letting consumers know the winery has gone international.

The kangaroo label is on the Ravens-wood Winery 2003 Vintners Blend Southeastern Australia Shiraz ($10). **Ravenswood** is best known for its California zinfandels, but Peterson had been thinking of adding a syrah to his Vintners Blend lineup when he decided to check out what Australia had to offer. In Australia, syrah is more commonly known as shiraz.

Down Under, Peterson tasted his way through some "80 or 90" shirazes from vineyards throughout southeastern Australia, including Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale, two regions whose way with the varietal are being increasingly recognized.

After picking lots he best liked, he added a little grenache and a little cabernet sauvignon, aged the **wine** a little more than a year in French and American oak barrels, and asked **Ravenswood's** in-house graphic designer, Kendra Spencer, to tweak the winery's traditional label. (They first asked Goines, but his schedule and their timetable for getting the **wine** released didn't mesh.)

It wasn't the label that first caught my attention, however. I'd ordered a glass of the **wine** to accompany rib-eye steak at the Sacramento restaurant 4th Street Grille. The match was outstanding, with the meaty richness, supple tannins and peppery spice of the shiraz standing up perfectly to the sweet succulence of the beef. The **wine** was refreshingly exuberant, youthful and true. I didn't know **Ravenswood** made a shiraz, and asked to see the bottle, and then learned of the sly label. The **wine** is just being released and, at $10 a bottle, it's an extraordinary bargain, sure to sell out quickly.

| | |

Reach Mike Dunne at (916) 321-1143 or mdunne@sacbee.com Back columns: www.sacbee.com/dunne.

NOTES: DUNNE ON **WINE**

GRAPHIC: bluedanubewine.com
Gerhard Wohlmuth's family has been making **wine** for 200 years. Its sauvignon blancs are among the best in the world.

LOAD-DATE: September 9, 2008

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Think you'e tough enough to handle the Zin at Ravenswood ? The San Francisco Chronicle SEPTEMBER 23, 2004, THURSDAY,

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San Francisco Chronicle

The San Francisco Chronicle

SEPTEMBER 23, 2004, THURSDAY, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: WINE; Pg. F8; THE TASTING ROOM

LENGTH: 650 words

HEADLINE: Think you'e tough enough to handle the Zin at **Ravenswood** ?

SOURCE: Chronicle Staff Writer

BYLINE: W. Blake Gray

BODY:
Ravenswood's Web site promises "no pinkie raising, brie eating, **wine** spitting wimpiness" if you visit the winery. And in fact, there is no brie.

But you can raise your pinkie surreptitiously without drawing disdain. And there are spit buckets -- conveniently large, attractively designed metallic ones.

The company's main slogan -- No Wimpy **Wines** -- holds true. I tasted 15 **wines** during my visit, and all were muy macho.

With a slogan like that, you might fear the tasting-room attendants will be tattooed bikers who won't take any guff. I did see just a bit of attitude when one visitor complained that only one white **wine** was included among the eight tastes offered for $5.

"No, I only have one Chardonnay. We're a Zin company," said the attendant.

So be forewarned: If you don't like big-bodied, potent Zinfandels, **Ravenswood** isn't for you. But for Zin fans, few wineries are a better visit.

Teresa, an attendant in the main room on the day of my visit, was extremely knowledgeable and patient, telling anecdotes about specific vineyard owners and answering basic questions about the difference between reds and whites. She said she only works one day each week in the tasting room; perhaps her patience comes from her full-time job as a teacher of English as a second language.

Among the eight **wines** offered in the main tasting room, three were county-designate Zinfandels and one, the 2003 Sonoma County Rosato of Zinfandel ($12), was a winery-only dry ros that has since sold out. The attendant also poured a bonus taste from an single-vineyard Zinfandel, the 2000 Teldeschi Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel ($30).

Connected to the main room is a smaller reserve tasting room where for $10 visitors can taste six **wines:** four single-vineyard Zinfandels, a single-vineyard Merlot and the complex, spicy 2001 Pickberry, a Merlot-based Bordeaux blend.

Dave, who runs the reserve tasting room full time, has a perpetual grin and an easy manner.

The $5 main tasting fee can be applied to a bottle purchase. Pay the $10 reserve tasting fee, and deduct $5 from a bottle purchase. For the best value, get the reserve tasting for $5 if you pay the main tasting fee first -- so you can taste 15 **wines** for $10, and still deduct $5 of that from a bottle, if you buy one.

Ravenswood offers tours every day at 10:30 a.m. for $5, and barbecue outside on weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

The winery also offers two intriguing opportunities. There's a Sensory Seminar daily "assisted by the all-nosing U.C. Davis Aroma Wheel" at 2 p.m. for $20. And for $25, you can blend your own 375-ml bottle of **wine** using Zinfandel, Petite Sirah and Carignane. Call ahead to reserve -- Teresa says blending is usually done at 2 p.m.

In addition to the usual **Wine** Country selection of shirts, sun hats, jams and chutneys at the gift counter you could acquire a pepper grinder made from a **wine** bottle ($45) or a kid-size T-shirt that says "No whimpy whines."

Might as well indoctrinate them early in the no-brie, pleasantly straightforward **Ravenswood** way.

Ravenswood Winery

18701 Gehricke Road, Sonoma

(707) 933-2332 or (888) 669-4679

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily (closes at 4:30 p.m. October through April)

Rating: TWO AN A HALF STARS

RATING KEY

FOUR STARS.....Extraordinary

THREE STARS.....Excellent

TWO STARS.....Good

ONE STAR.....Fair

BOX .....Poor

Ratings are based on an anonymous visit by a Chronicle staff member, and include atmosphere, value, staff attitude and the variety of activities available to the public.

E-mail W. Blake Gray at wbgray@sfchronicle.com. He will teach a sake-tasting class at The Chronicle Cooking School Nov. 29. For more information visit sfgate.com/food.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, Not a raised pinkie in sight: Peter Griffith pours for visitors at the **Ravenswood** Winery tasting room in Sonoma. / Craig Lee / The Chronicle

LOAD-DATE: September 23, 2004

Source: News & Business > Combined Sources > **News, All (English, Full Text)**
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Wine of the week; 2002 Ravenswood Vintners Blend Shiraz; Southeastern Australia Gambit Weekly August 10, 2004 Tuesday

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August 10, 2004 Tuesday

SECTION: Pg. 53 Vol. 25 No. 32 ISSN: 1089-3520

ACC-NO: 58656

LENGTH: 187 words

HEADLINE: **Wine** of the week; 2002 **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend Shiraz; Southeastern Australia

BODY:

ABSTRACT

Ravenswood's California winemaker went Down Under to produce this bold, fruit-forward **wine** in the classic Aussie style. Made from 97 percent Shiraz and 3 percent Cabernet and Grenache, the **wine** offers violet and spice bouquets with dark, ripe berry flavors and smoky notes.

FULL TEXT

Ravenswood's California winemaker went Down Under to produce this bold, fruit-forward **wine** in the classic Aussie style. Made from 97 percent Shiraz and 3 percent Cabernet and Grenache, the **wine** offers violet and spice bouquets with dark, ripe berry flavors and smoky notes. Available at Sav-A-Centers, Whole Foods Market, some Winn-Dixie locations, Meme's Market, Lakeview Fine Foods, Williams Supermarket, Zara's Supermarkets, Calhoun Superette, Robert's Fresh Markets on Annunciation and West Esplanade, Dorignac's, Langenstein's (Metairie location), Zuppardo's Family Super Market, Breaux Marts on Lapalco and General Meyer, Piggly Wiggly in Westwego, Casey Jones Supermarket, and Acquistapace's Covington Supermarket. (Store listings current at press time.)

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Photograph (A bottle of **wine)**

GRAPHIC: Photograph

LOAD-DATE: July 31, 2007

Source: News & Business > Combined Sources > News, All (English, Full Text)
Terms: ravenswood and wine and date(geq (1/1/2004) and leq (12/31/2004)) (Edit Search | Suggest Terms for My Search)
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Vintage buses return to Catalina Island Ventura County Star (California) June 6, 2004 Sunday

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Ventura County Star (California)

June 6, 2004 Sunday

SECTION: ESCAPES; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 493 words

HEADLINE: Vintage buses return to Catalina Island

BYLINE: vsnyder

BODY:

Visitors to Catalina Island this summer will spot a familiar sight from years ago -- the Flex buses, or "Flxibles" tour buses, that were popular with tourists in the 1950s.

Discovery Tours, part of the Santa Catalina Island Co., has begun using the buses on its Skyline Tours of Avalon and Inland Tours of Catalina Island.

The first five Flxible models were ordered by William Wrigley Jr. and arrived on the island in the 1930s.

For more information on the buses, call Gwen Bronson at 1-310-510-7649.

For additional information about the island, contact the Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau at 1-310-510-1520 or go to http://www.CatalinaChamber.com.

Winery offers music and food for summer

Ravenswood Winery in Sonoma has kicked off the summer season with weekend barbecues and music.

Every Saturday and Sunday until Oct. 17 the Sonoma winery will offer food, music and **wine** from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Saturday's entertainment will center on local artists, poets and musicians, with Sunday geared toward jazz, blues, bluegrass and swing.

Prices for food, which varies by the weekend, range from $9 to $14 for adults. Children's meals are $5.

Ravenswood Winery is at 18701 Gehricke Road in Sonoma.

Call 1-707-933-2332 or go to http://www.**ravenswood-wine**.com.

Cruise line offers summer discounts

Costa Cruises is offering discounts of up to 30 percent on cruises to the eastern and western Mediterranean, the Baltics and Russia, Fjords/North Cape and trans-Atlantic this summer.

Cruises range from three to 17 nights.

For more information on specific itineraries, call 1-800-33-26782 or go online to http://www.costacruises.com.

State beaches, parks call out to couples

Malibu's Adamson House and Leo Carrillo State Beach and San Buenaventura State Beach in Ventura are among the venues the California State Parks system hopes prospective brides and grooms will consider as a site for their nuptials.

Other sites, which range from historical adobes and stately mansions to redwood forests and sandy beaches are Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park in Chico, Crystal Cove State Park in Laguna Beach, Andrew Molera State Park and Julia Pfeiffer Burns State

Park in the Big Sur area and Old Town San Diego State Historic Park.

For information about state park sites that can be used for weddings, request a copy of California Escapes magazine, a free publication that includes facts about all state parks and beaches by region.

Copies can be requested by writing to California State Parks, Communications Office, P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001.

Information is also available online at http://www.parks.ca.gov.

Top 10 travel list: Don't even think about it

The most common things you might not be allowed to lug home, from Caribbean Travel & Life:

- Cultural artifacts, fine art and antiquities.

- Knockoffs of trademarked/copyrighted articles.

- Flora.

- Fauna.

- Animal products.

- Food.

- "Enemy" goods.

- Firearms.

- Medications.

- Illegal drugs and paraphernalia.

LOAD-DATE: December 15, 2004

Source: News & Business > Combined Sources > **News, All (English, Full Text)**
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Ravenswood, Zinfandel, Lodi, 2001, $14 The Washington Times May 26, 2004, Wednesday, Final Edition

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May 26, 2004, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: FOOD; **WINE** OF THE WEEK; Pg. E03

LENGTH: 187 words

HEADLINE: Ravenswood, Zinfandel, Lodi, 2001, $14

BYLINE: By Paul Lukacs, SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

BODY:
Crafted from low-yielding vineyards in the Lodi region of California, near Sacramento, this zinfandel offers plenty of bang for not all that many bucks. Bright and lively, with nary a trace of astringency or heat, it tastes of fresh red berries and sweet spice, and so would be a great choice to drink with burgers, chicken or ribs at a Memorial Day barbecue.

The **Ravenswood** winery produces a host of zinfandels - from small-lot, single-vineyard bottlings to mass-produced, blended **wines.** Although some of the big-volume ones can seem nondescript, the regional **wines** frequently prove exciting. Of the current offerings, this Lodi zin offers particularly vibrant flavors and represents an especially fine value.

Good Lodi zins tend to come from old vines, many planted before Prohibition by Italian and other immigrants. Vine age gives the fruit added depth and prevents the **wines** from tasting sappy or simple.

Ravenswood sources the majority of the fruit for this **wine** from a 100-year-old vineyard. The result is a zinfandel that tastes simultaneously spirited and substantial - a delectable combination.

GRAPHIC: Ravenswood, Zinfandel, Lodi, 2001, $14 [NO CREDIT]

LOAD-DATE: May 26, 2004

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Ravenswood County Series Zinfandels have own flavor The News-Star (Monroe, LA) May 12, 2004 Wednesday

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The News-Star (Monroe, LA)

May 12, 2004 Wednesday

SECTION: ACCENT; Patrick Gerl; Pg. 2B

LENGTH: 832 words

HEADLINE: Ravenswood County Series Zinfandels have own flavor

BYLINE: Freelance OK

BODY:
A circle of three ravens clutching at each other's legs is the symbol of **Ravenswood** Winery.

Their motto is "No wimpy **wines.**" Joel Peterson and Reed Foster started the winery in 1976 with the intention of handcrafting **wines** of quality.

The first vintage produced a meager 327 cases of Zinfandel. The Zinfandel is still the mainstay of the production from this winery. In July 2001, Constellations Brands (the Franciscan group of **wines)** purchased **Ravenswood** to complement its existing portfolio.

The winery uses 13 different growers to source grapes for their production. They are spread out throughout the **wine** country of California. In addition to Zinfandel, the winery produces Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Gewurztraminer, Petite Sirah, Muscat, Carignon, Syrah, Grenache, Mourvedre and Chardonnay **wines** as varietals or as blends. The winery produces more than 30 different **wines** on varying quality levels.

One group of **wines** that is created at the winery is known as the "County Series." The series offers Zinfandels from Amador, Lodi, Mendocino, Sonoma and Napa counties along with Napa and Sonoma Merlots, Sonoma Cabernet Sauvignon, Sonoma Cabernet Franc and a Sonoma Petite Sirah.

Our group recently tasted the County Series Zinfandels. The 2001 Lodi Old Vine Zinfandel ($15-20) produced aromas of jam-like berry and concentrated fig. The **wine** is fruit forward on the tongue with cherry, mandarin orange and a sweet/tart sensation. It's very full and luscious in the mouth with a rather long finish.

A lighter sense of jam-like berry was found in the 2000 Amador Zinfandel ($15-20). It's a little musty on the nose with berry, dill pickle and cherry appearing in the aromas. Faint traces of the expected spice and pepper were present, but covered by the cherry, cranberry and mint in the flavors.

A light steely impression was noticed in the 2000 Mendocino Zinfandel ($15-20). Aromas of dark fruit faded rather quickly and left earthy notes with floral highlights in the bouquet. The **wine** sits nicely in the mouth and creates a great mouth feel. Citrus, tea, cocoa and plum made up the palate.

The 2000 Sonoma Old Vines Zinfandel ($15-20) emitted earthy aromas that lasted the evening. Mushroom, cranberry, citrus, cream, licorice and Pekoe tea made up the bouquet. Citrus and mint overpowered the cherry fruit in the flavors with tea and licorice joining in the mix.

The earthy aromas were found in the 2000 Napa Zinfandel ($15-20). Dates, figs, green bell pepper, cranberry, vanilla, licorice and oak showed up in the aromas of this **wine.** Subdued spice sat on top of a base of chocolate cherry in the flavors of this offering.

Our group votes for their favorite **wine** at the end of each session. The results of the voting for this tasting were rather remarkable. Each of the **wines** received first-, second-, third-, fourth- and last-place votes. The final tally showed only four points different between the first and fifth **wine.**

There are times when the difference is greater than 20 points from first to last. One of the reasons for this close vote was that these **wines** were all similar in their qualities. Small differences were found between them but not enough to make them truly different from one another. This prompted Jerry Fontenot to ask if one winemaker made all of the **wines.**

Joel Patterson is the co-founder/general manager/head winemaker of **Ravenswood.** He learned the art of Zinfandel-making

from the master of Zinfandel, Joseph Swan. The **Ravenswood** Web site states that Patterson has an extraordinary palate. It also states that his talent "... enables him to produce **wines** that consistently bear the distinctive **Ravenswood** stamp."

Could it be that his goal is to produce **wines** that are very easily recognizable as "**Ravenswood**" and not to produce distinctively different offerings? If this is so, he has certainly succeeded with the County Series Zinfandels.

One point that I find to be interesting is the term "Old Vine." here is no standard definition of the terms "Old Vine," "Ancient Vine," "Knarly Vine," etc. The BATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms) does not provide a definition for the term even though it is responsible for **wine** label approval and the truth of the information on the label. Some wineries use the term for **wines** produced from vines as young as 25 years old. Others try to maintain a 50-year requirement. If these are "old," what would you call the 125- to 150-year-old vines?

The **Wine** Spectator has an issue that focuses on Zinfandels this month. I have received my copy but have refrained from reading it until after I have submitted this piece. It will be interesting to pick up the issue and see what is said about the **Ravenswood wines.**

Grab a bottle of one of these **wines,** read both reviews and make your own judgment.

Write to Patrick Gerl at The News-Star, 411 N. Fourth St., Monroe, La., 71201; or e-mail questions, suggestions and comments to patrick@tonoreswine.com.

LOAD-DATE: May 20, 2004

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LIFESTYLE: THE RICH TASTE OF A ZINFANDEL GRAPE . . . Belfast News Letter (Northern Ireland) April 10, 2004, Saturday

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Belfast News Letter (Northern Ireland)

April 10, 2004, Saturday

SECTION: 1st Edition; FEATURES; Pg. 27

LENGTH: 440 words

HEADLINE: LIFESTYLE: THE RICH TASTE OF A ZINFANDEL GRAPE . . .

BYLINE: JONATHAN DAVIS

BODY:
ZINFANDEL has had a checkered history to date.

Although California's most famous grape, it has generally been overlooked by the rest of the world as one of the great grapes.

Zinfandel has undoubtedly been a phenomenon for America and California, without ever having any pretensions to greatness, unlike Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz/Syrah or pinot noir.

Sutter Home created the 'Blue Nun' of California with Zinfandel using a very successful marketing strategy like the cult 70s brand with their white or blush Zinfandel.

The phenomenon was created by fermenting the grape juice from this red grape, like a dry white **wine** with only very little contact with the skins of the grape.

The resultant **wine** was light (bland), slightly sweet and easy drinking.

Although white or blush Zinfandel was never a critical success, it was, unquestionably, a financial and marketing success.

Zinfandel though is much more than the blush craze that hit our shores during the eighties and nineties.

It is also responsible for powerful, brambly, spicy reds with a huge cult following.

In the right hands, this has become California's trademark grape. Although it has not had the acclaim or respect that Cabernet or Chardonnay have achieved, in California it has undoubtedly been a success both as the 'peoples grape' but also as a quality grape capable of showing 'terroir'.

The success of Zinfandel as a red grape in California has enabled the Italians to jump on the bandwagon, having proven that Primitivo from Puglia is another clone of the same grape.

Primitivo in the right hands also results in very powerful, spicy flavours, although it develops a much more savoury and rustic characteristic than its Californian twin.

Ravenswood, a serious producer of Californian zinfandel, have limited their exposure in the UK and Irish markets to this one grape.

Ravenswood offer one of the best examples of this fine grape at a reasonable price (Tesco pounds 6.99).

It is rich, full, peppery with lots of brambly dark red fruit flavours. It is great with strong red meat flavours, and a perfect **wine** for those hopefully imminent barbeques.

Some of the finest worldclass offerings of this fine grape are also available from Jim Nicholson (Ridge) and Compendium (Seghesio).

One note of warning from this grape. As with most winemakers, big and bold seems to be the norm, and seeing 15 per cent alcohol **wines** is now quite common, especially with this bruiser of a grape.

So you have been warned! As they say, tread carefully.

Happy Easter, a great time to try out a new **wine.**

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RAVENSWOOD ZINS BOUND TO PLEASE Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, FL) January 22, 2004 Thursday Broward Metro Edition

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January 22, 2004 Thursday Broward Metro Edition

SECTION: FOOD; BOB HOSMON **WINE;** Pg. 3

LENGTH: 471 words

HEADLINE: RAVENSWOOD ZINS BOUND TO PLEASE

BYLINE: BOB HOSMON **WINE**

BODY:
Although zinfandel **wine** first showed up in this country in the 1820s, it wasn't until December 2001 that scientists, using DNA, discovered the grape's genetic origins are in Croatia.

In the interim, zinfandel planted in California in the 1850s had, within 30 years, become the state's most popular grape. And it wasn't until more than a century later that anyone thought of it as anything other than a truly unique American delight.

Since no one else seems to want to do anything with it (including the Croatians), it seems fair to think of zinfandel as American as, well, apple pie. It's been around a long time, and even though most Americans know it as a pale pink, slightly sweet **wine,** it's the robust red zins that show just how good **wines** from the grape can be.

While there are lots of very good red zins, one winery virtually synonymous with the grape is Sonoma County-based **Ravenswood.** Any **Ravenswood** zinfandel is bound to please. But particular favorites include the 2001 **Ravenswood** Dickerson Zinfandel, a classic zin produced in Napa Valley; the 2001 **Ravenswood** Belloni Zinfandel, made from grapes harvested in the Russian River Valley yielding an intense fruit flavor; the 2001 **Ravenswood** Barricia Zinfandel, from Sonoma Valley, where the grapes show a cabernet-like structure and character; the 2001 **Ravenswood** Teldeschi Zinfandel, produced from Dry Creek fruit filled with flavors of Bing cherries and sweet plums; the 2001 **Ravenswood** Monte Rosse Zinfandel, produced from an old vineyard on Moon Mountain in Sonoma and showing refined fruit flavors of black cherry and raspberry; and the 2001 **Ravenswood** Old Hill Zinfandel, produced from century-old vines that yield a Rhone-like red with powerful black fruit flavors.

Each **wine** is produced in small quantities, but these **wines** are worth the search and the price. Indeed, few others can aspire to **Ravenswood's** reputation. You are in for a treat.

SERVE WITH: Turkey, grilled steaks, Yankee pot roast, barbecued ribs, game and popular Italian foods such as pizza and spaghetti.

AVAILABILITY/ SUGGESTED RETAIL: Sold in better **wine** shops, the Dickerson, Belloni, Barricia, Teldeschi and Monte Rosse each retails for $30; the Old Hill is about $60 a bottle.

Wine of the week

SELECTION: A perfect party white, the 2001 Sanford Central Coast Sauvignon Blanc delivers crisp, intense fruit flavor.

SERVE WITH: Spicy Chinese dumplings, seafood tacos or chicken Caesar salad.

AVAILABILITY/ SUGGESTED RETAIL: Sold in **wine** and food shops for about $13 a bottle.

Have a question about **wine?** Write to **Wine,** Sun-Sentinel, 200 E. Las Olas Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301-2293. Or send an e-mail with your full name, address and telephone number to dhartz@sun-sentinel.com with "**Wine** Column" in the subject line. Sorry, no personal replies.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO; Label: 2001 Sanford Central Coast Sauvignon Blanc

TYPE: COLUMN

LOAD-DATE: January 22, 2004

Ravenswood's bold zinfandels brim with 'gutsy' flavors The News Journal (Wilmington, DE) January 21, 2004 Wednesday

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The News Journal (Wilmington, DE)

January 21, 2004 Wednesday

SECTION: LIFE & LEISURE; Roger Morris; Pg. 3E

LENGTH: 443 words

HEADLINE: Ravenswood's bold zinfandels brim with 'gutsy' flavors

BYLINE: Freelance OK

BODY:
Fine **Wine**

Roger Morris

Joel Peterson is a zin master. Since 1976, he has been making great zinfandels under his **Ravenswood** label from grapes grown in vineyards across California - in fact, so many different **wines** that almost no one except Peterson gets to taste all of them.

Currently, there are about a dozen different **Ravenswood** zins, from the vintner's blend (basic level) to the county series (Sonoma regular and late harvest, Amador, Lodi, Mendocino) to the creme de la creme, the eight different single-vineyard **wines.**

"None of the vineyard designations are high-volume," Peterson says, "and not every **wine** makes it to every market." Which means that even the best **wine** store may have only two or three different bottles at a time, which is part of the fun of being a **Ravenswood** groupie - searching them all out.

With its one-time slogan ("No wimpy **wines**"), Peterson's self-description of his **wines** as "gothic," "gutsy" and "unapologetic," and the famous dark label of three ravens in a circle, it's not surprising that **Ravenswood** has the image of being the **wine** of choice for Oakland Raiders fans, the Harley crowd and people who hold their cigarettes funny.

Asked to contrast his **wines** with those of his friend Paul Draper of Ridge - the other major vineyard-designated zin guru - Peterson says that Ridge **wines** have more structure ("mine are spicy, high-toned"), are aged on American oak versus French for **Ravenswood,** and are released earlier ("we have more bottle time").

Peterson prefers that his grapes be grown without irrigation (not "hydroponically farmed"). He sometimes adds stems during fermentation, and he does as little filtering and fining as possible.

Although not a groupie, I have enjoyed **Ravenswood** zins (and the occasional cabernet and chardonnay) through the years and recently had the opportunity to taste seven of the eight 2001 vineyard-designated zins at one time.

Although all were similar in their complexity, bold flavors and dark tannins, each bottle was different, reflecting the personality of the place where its grapes were grown. For example, the Old Hill had bright cherry flavors, spicy woodiness and herbal, minty tones, while the Barricia was earthier, woodsier, with a green olive finish.

"If it's vineyard-designated, then it should show something special," Peterson says, "and the taste should not be repeatable year after year."

And never should be wimpy.

Roger Morris, who was nominated for the 2002 James Beard journalism awards, has written about **wine** for years. Write to him at The News Journal, Box 15505, Wilmington, DE 19850; fax 324-2415; or e-mail features@delawareonline. com.

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Wine< Etc.:Looking back on 17 years of tasting The Capital (Annapolis, MD) December 31, 2003 Wednesday

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The Capital (Annapolis, MD)

December 31, 2003 Wednesday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. B1

LENGTH: 792 words

HEADLINE: Wine< Etc.:Looking back on 17 years of tasting

BYLINE: Tom Marquardt and Patrick Darr

BODY:
With this column we begin our 17th year writing about **wine.** It's a journey that began in 1983 when we found ourselves in the same **wine** appreciation class at Anne Arundel Community College. Besides the education, we gained a real enthusiasm for **wine.** Not wanting the education to end, we continued class in our homes and eventually that led us to write a **wine** column.

We can't count how many **wines** we have sampled during that time or how much **wine** we've consumed. But we suspect it's more than most livers experience.

Many people say they envy us as we go about the business of tasting **wines** and writing about them. But, like anything else, the process can quickly become old hat once you realize that so many **wines** taste alike. Plowing through a half-dozen chardonnays in 15 minutes - not an unusual midweek experience - puts tasting on an assembly line more than we like. Still, the tasting process - we dump a lot of **wine** or give leftovers to eager neighbors - offers a tremendous education that we are lucky to have.

Other than the AACC classes, we have had little formal training in **wine** tasting. However, the education process has ranged from a tremendous amount of reading to conversations with winemakers who patiently taught us a lot about the process. We have traveled extensively to California, France and Italy, although never together. We subscribe to many **wine** journals, share tasting notes with other professionals in the field, and pick the brains of every winemaker who passes through the area.

Pat is even growing grapes for **wine** production at a vineyard in Baltimore County. Hands-on experience like this gives him a greater appreciation of a grape grower's struggle.

Our philosophy in writing always has been to write about **wines** we like. We don't have the space to tell you what we didn't like, which leads some of our critics to complain that we are too easy on **wines.** Not so. We recommend less than half of the **wines** we taste.

We both have cellars we started in the late 1970s. They are modest collections of about 400 bottles each and they reflect our prejudices.

Both of us have lots of Bordeaux. Tom likes Burgundy but has grown tired of its inconsistency and high prices. You won't find any German **wines** in our cellar, but we save a corner for California zinfandel and another corner for Rhone Valley **wines.** Tom especially likes aged champagne. And, yes, there are quite a few California cabernet sauvignons maturing in our cellars too.

We both like to cook - our wives do not complain - and have found that such culinary experiences help with **wine** appreciation. How can you identify the herbs in merlot or lychee in gewurztraminer unless you have added them them to some recipe?

We look down on no **wine,** because behind the label is someone who truly cares about the business. Zinfandel will never be considered a noble grape, but that doesn't stop us from enjoying its unique all-American qualities. We'll never forget that 1982 Gruard-Larose we recently had, but neither will we forget that $5 Borsao we discovered a couple of years ago.

We have seen many changes in the **wine** industry since we began writing about it. Having grown up on cold duck and Mateus, we never predicted the arrival of new markets, like Australia and Chile. Neither did we imagine screw tops on expensive **wines,** or California cabernet sauvignons that cost more than a first-growth Bordeaux.

As we think about where we're going in a new year, we pause to remember where we've been. We've had an enriching experience and have been blessed by a strong readership. Thanks for all your questions and flattering comments. Here's to 2004.

Great values

Ravenswood Vintners Blend Cabernet Sauvignon 2001 ($10). An excellent value in the cabernet sauvignon field, this simple but rich **wine** has a bit of merlot, petit verdot and malbec in the blend. Blackberry and currants dominate.

Banfi Centine 2001 ($11). Always a good buy from this reputable Italian producer, Centine is a soft blend of sangiovese (60 percent),

cabernet sauvignon and merlot. A bright aroma of blackberries and raspberries leads to simple berry flavors and a dose of spice. This would go well with pasta.

Hugel Gentil 2002 ($11). If you don't care for riesling or gewurztraminer, this Alsace **wine** offers a great alternative. It's a blend of sylvaner, muscat, riesling, pinot gris and gewurztraminer and offers a broad, lush array of flavors that make it a great sipper or a match with spicy foods. We had it with Chinese takeout and it was great. Perfumy nose, soft texture and long-lasting flavors.

Do you have a question or suggestion for a topic? Write to the authors in care of this newspaper or e-mail tmarquardt

@capitalgazette.com.

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If you're still to get your skates on, here's some help to ensure you get the right festive bottles The Times (London) December 20, 2003, Saturday

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December 20, 2003, Saturday

SECTION: Features; Times Magazine 79

LENGTH: 772 words

HEADLINE: If you're still to get your skates on, here's some help to ensure you get the right festive bottles

BYLINE: Jane MacQuitty

BODY:
Christmas starts earlier and earlier, yet surveys prove that we leave the shopping later and later. So if you are one of those lumpen statistics still to get your skates on, here is my last-minute emergency Christmas kit that can ensure you get the right festive bottles, even at this late hour.

Into injury time, it is too late for most fine **wine** merchants to get eleventh-hour bottles dispatched in time for the big day. Yet once again the deeply wonderful Lay & Wheeler (0845 330 1855) are able to come to the rescue, provided you get to the phone before 1 o'clock today with a credit card and the precise delivery details of what you want sent where. In return, L&W will guarantee pre-Christmas deliveries anywhere on mainland UK. Best bets here include L&W's own plummy Vintage Character Port & Stilton, a £24.50 duo in a wooden box, or their own-label Champagne, 2000 Claret and Vintage Character Port, Classic Selection (£37.95): carriage is £7.95 per delivery address, or free for orders over £150.

With presents hopefully now sorted, most households will need some last-minute Christmassy whites and reds capable of partnering the festive centrepiece - be it turkey, goose or a grand rib of beef - and the odd fizz and fortified to keep the Christmas spirit going before church and the Queen's speech. My advice is to start with a cool glass of champagne on Christmas morning. Good festive fizzes, apart from those mentioned last week, are Roederer's honeyed and biscuity Brut Premier (Majestic **Wine,** £24.99, buy two or more for Pounds 19.99 each), and Taittinger's light, floral bubbly (Tesco, down a fiver to £19.99 until January 6).

Smoked salmon is the traditional festive starter, and while champagne is not impossible with oily, smoked fish, a tart, invigorating sauvignon cuts through the oaky oiliness rather better. Try Nepenthe's zingy, citrus and flowering currant-charged 2002 Lenswood Sauvignon Blanc (Oddbins, £7.64 each for two or more, Waitrose, £7.99), or go for a gentler, more butter and lemon-layered option, the superb 2001 Peter Lehmann Semilion also from Australia and Oddbins (down £1 to £5 each for two).

If it's reds for turkey, then it's California cabernet, or zinfandel at a pinch. I'd go for the dusky, curranty richness of 2001 Fetzer Valley Oaks Cabernet Sauvignon (Waitrose, down £1.50 to £5.49 until January 4). Claret makes a happy alternative Christmas, and this year you can take your pick from the ripe, mocha, cedar and green pepper-spiked cassis fruit of the l999 Chateau Cantemerle (Majestic, £19.99) and the crunchy, green, fat, chocolatey spice of the l997 Chateau Pichon-Longueville Baron (Sainsbury's, down £7 to £22.99).

And so to bed, preferably with a fine, luscious, figgy, nutty glass of Lustau's Old East India Sherry (Waitrose, £10.99, Sainsbury's, £11.19). Give Santa a glass, too.

* 2001 Chateau Segonzac, Premi

res Cotes de Blaye, Bordeaux, France, Waitrose, down £1 to £6.99 until January 4.

This lesser right-bank claret revealed all its red fruits and cedary scents at Waitrose's winter tasting. With so much oak-laden fruit, even turkey will taste good with this.

1999 Cote de Beaune-Villages, Louis Jadot, France, Waitrose, down £2 to £7.99 until January 4, Sainsbury's, £9.99. Just in case you failed to snap up this gorgeous red burgundy a few weeks back, here it is again, in all its sweet, leafy, rose-scented, medium-strength game bird-suitable glory.

2002 The Boulders Viognier, California, Co-op, down £1 to £3.99 until January 4.

Good everyday festive-suitable California gluggers are almost unheard of, so I was amazed when this pair popped up at Co-op, with this seductive, yet bold, musk peach-charged viognier the better half of the duo.

2002 The Boulders Petite Sirah, Co-op down £1 to £3.99 until January 4. Better known as the durif grape in Australia, California's petite sirah can be a blockbuster yawn, yet this burnt, inky, spicy red, with a genuine dollop of the Rhone's syrah in the mix, has lots to say for itself.

2001 **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend Zinfandel, California, Somerfield and Budgens, down £1 to £5.99 until Tuesday and January 4 respectively. So lip-smackingly good, you should buy long of this sweet, fat, creamy, loganberry and blackberry-layered California red.

Campbells Rutherglen Muscat, Australia, Somerfield, £7.49, oddbins, £7.99, both per half-bottle.

Christmas cake, plum pudding and mince pies were made for this smashing, classic Aussie sticky, a raisiny, nuts, honey and caramel-charged fortified **wine** that oozes festive appeal.

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Pinot Noir perfect with turkey Iowa City Press-Citizen November 19, 2003 Wednesday

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November 19, 2003 Wednesday

SECTION: LIFE; Kurt Friese; Pg. 5B

LENGTH: 795 words

HEADLINE: Pinot Noir perfect with turkey

BYLINE: Freelance OK

BODY:
NOTE TO READERS: Table **Wine** is a weekly column about enjoying **wine** with food. There is no pretense here and **wine** snobs need read no further. History and growing notes are offered as background, and tasting notes are offered strictly as opinion. Always remember that each person's palate is different and what you may perceive in **wine** is never incorrect. Like any pastime, **wine** appreciation can be pursued with idleness or vigor, as light refreshment or central preoccupation. Really, all you need to enjoy the basics of **wine** is the willingness and ability to bend your elbow and take a sip.

Pinot Noir

Spicy yet soft tannin, cherry and even cocoa and orange rind are some of the characteristics you may find in your next bottle of California Pinot Noir, especially if that bottle is the Estancia Pinnacles Pinot Noir Monterey, 2001 ($13/bottle, $156/case).

Estancia is one of higher-end estates recently acquired by beverage-brand giant Constellation, along with such well-respected wineries as Franciscan, **Ravenswood** and Simi. While I am not often a proponent of such conglomeration in the food world, Constellation does seem to be allowing a reasonable amount of autonomy, leaving the winemaking up to the winemakers.

Estancia winemaker Ken Shyver used fruit from their Pinnacles vineyard in Monterey to create two current Pinot Noir releases, the other being the 1999 Reserve ($25/bottle, $300/case), which also contains grapes from their Stonewall vineyard. He used techniques mastered centuries ago in France's Burgundy region, such as using only native yeasts, to create a **wine** that truly reflects the terroir, or "sense of place" of the **wine.** The Pinnacles was aged in French oak barrels, which accounts for the soft but spicy tannins I mentioned.

Tannin, by the way, is a naturally occurring substance in **wine** that comes not only from the barrels, but mostly from the seeds, skins and pips of the grape. It acts as a preservative when aging **wines** and can seem somewhat puckering and astringent in younger **wines.**

Monterey has been a popular place to grow Pinot Noir lately, and Estancia has moved all its Pinot vineyards there. It is a registered American Viticultural Area and therefore has requirements that at least 85 percent of the grapes must come from within the AVA named on the bottle. Estancia uses 100 percent Monterey AVA proprietary fruit (that is, they own it all rather than buying it from other growers). Most of the vines are "clones" from original Burgundian vines, like Dijon and Pommard (no relation to the mustards of the same name except that they're from the same towns).

When pairing **wine** with food, never forget that it's a two-way street. The **wine's** characteristics affect those of the food, and the food influences the **wine.** Those who doubt that one flavor can change another should recall the last time they had their morning orange juice right after brushing their teeth. As that example shows, the reaction between flavors can be bad as easily as good.

November is really Pinot Noir's month. It is the **wine** of choice for many who are looking for the right choice with their Thanksgiving turkey, and it is a wonderful companion to all the game birds that hunters will be bringing home this season. It handles smoky flavors well and can be the right match for the traditional accompaniments to game like bitter orange or sweet dried cherry.

Quail in Basque Chocolate (yes, chocolate) Sauce

8 each quail, boned and trussed

Salt and pepper, to taste

' cup olive oil

2 each onions, diced

4 each carrots, diced

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WINE TALK; Scratch an American, Find an Immigrant The New York Times November 19, 2003 Wednesday

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November 19, 2003 Wednesday
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SECTION: Section F; Column 3; Dining In, Dining Out/Style Desk; Pg. 12

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HEADLINE: WINE TALK;
Scratch an American, Find an Immigrant

BYLINE: By Frank J. Prial

BODY:

THANKSGIVING is the quintessential American holiday and deserves to be celebrated, at least occasionally, with the bounty of our fields, our farms, our seas and rivers and, by all means, our vineyards. Hardly anyone is going to argue with that premise. It's when you get down to particulars, especially where the vineyards are concerned, that the trouble starts.

For example, just what do we mean by an American **wine?** The obvious answer is a **wine** from California or Oregon or Long Island, instead of a **wine** from, well, any other country. But cabernet and chardonnay, just to take two, are really European grapes transplanted to our shores. There are so-called native American **wines** like Concord, Delaware and Niagara but they all appear to have some foreign antecedents and, face it, they're not all that great to drink.

There is scuppernong, from the muscadine vine, which has some fans in the Deep South, and is about as American as a **wine** can get. But patriotism goes only so far.

That leaves zinfandel, which has been known for a long time as, yes, the American **wine.** There is only one problem: it is not American. Over the last half century, everyone who has known anything about **wine,** has known, deep down, that zinfandel was not native to this land. It was a vinifera vine, just like cabernet sauvignon and riesling and all the other big names, but there was always hope.

First it was thought to have come from Italy. An Italian grape called the primitivo was said to be identical. Then we were told it wasn't. Next came something called plavac mali, a grape from Croatia. That wasn't it, either, but the geneticists and others who worry about such things were getting warm. Two years ago, in December, 2001, they finally nailed it down. Zinfandel turned out to be identical to another Croatian grape, the crljenak kastelanski, which, as you must already know, is pronounced tsurl-YEN-ak kas-tel-AHN-ski. With that announcement, primitivo got a reprieve; turns out it really was the same as zinfandel all along. Plavac mali is a relative; a brother-in-law, perhaps.

The first known documentation of zinfandel in this country was in the 1820's, when it was offered as a table grape in the catalog of a Flushing, N.Y., nursery. Planted in California in the 1850's, it became the state's most popular grape by the 1880's. Now it is second only to cabernet sauvignon among California red **wine** grapes.

For my money, and in spite of all evidence to the contrary, it is still the American grape. It's been here longer than most of us who think of ourselves as Americans, the Croatians don't seem to want it back and it makes a very American-style **wine:** intense and excessive in all things if it isn't tightly controlled. What's more, it happens to be the perfect **wine** for a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. Turkey is not the most delicate of birds; in fact, even a farm-raised turkey can be stronger tasting than many game birds. It calls for a big, aggressive red **wine.**

Zinfandel specialists have backed away from the hubris of the late 1990's, when vintners like Cecil De Loach were pumping out zins with the alcoholic content of port. Dr. Johnson and Boswell may have downed two bottles of 18 percent alcohol in an evening, but just one bottle of zinfandel of that strength is rather risky these days. Most of the current crop of zinfandels are in the range of 14.5 to 15.5 percent alcohol, high enough when one considers that good Bordeaux rarely pass 13 percent. It's well to bear in mind that the laws allow a 1.5 percent margin in determining the alcohol content of a **wine.** Thus, a **wine** listed at 15.5 may well approach 17 percent alcohol.

Among the top zinfandel producers, like **Ravenswood,** Rosenblum Cellars, Turley Cellars, Storybook Mountain and Ridge Vineyards, alcohol levels range from around 13 percent to 16 percent. Some carry this power better than others. Ridge, for me, has always been the benchmark zinfandel producer, and tasting through a group of Paul Draper's 2001's showed that his **wines** remain at the top of any zinfandel list, or close to it. Some of this vintage's **wines** drop below the 75 percent varietal content necessary to use the grape name. Thus the 2001 Three Valleys is listed as simply a red **wine** although it contains 50 percent zinfandel. The rest is carignane,

petit sirah and other red grapes including mataro (mourvedre) and grenache. The Geyserville and Lytton Springs 2001's are also proprietary reds.

Rosenbium Cellars offers almost a dozen different zinfandels, from vineyards ranging from Paso Robles on the Central Coast to Mendocino in the north. The Richard Sauret Vineyard and the Planchon Vineyard bottlings are worth seeking out.

The winemaker Joel Gott is producing fine zinfandels from various parts of California. A generation ago, his father, Cary Gott, made a name for himself producing striking zinfandels from the Amador County region. Joel Gott's 2002 California Zinfandel, utilizing grapes from Napa, Lodi and Amador, is a delightful **wine.** He adds to its complexity by blending petit sirah, carignane and barbera into the **wine.**

Many of the smaller producers' **wines** never leave California. One not-too-small producer's **wines** can be found almost everywhere. I'm talking about E&J Gallo, which has become a serious fine-**wine** producer in recent years. Under the Gallo of Sonoma label, the Frei Ranch zinfandel is a good buy.

Under the Rancho Zabaco label there are always several zinfandel bottlings worthy of note, beginning with Dancing Bull and moving up to the Chiotti Vineyard bottling from Dry Creek Valley. At around $12, the Dancing Bull zin is a great introduction to this varietal. Not a subtle **wine,** it will hold its own with any hearty Thanksgiving dinner.

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Wines to Be Thankful For;The supporting cast for turkey includes luminous choices Newsday (New York) November 19, 2003 Wednesday

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November 19, 2003 Wednesday NASSAU EDITION

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The supporting cast for turkey includes luminous choices

BYLINE: By Peter M. Gianotti. STAFF WRITER

BODY:
For **wine** drinkers, Thanksgiving is the holiday when turkey may be the star, but the supporting cast is more important.

Pairing a **wine** with turkey itself is a pretty easy choice, with the only real issue being whether you're a white or dark meat devotee.

Generally, everyone should be happy with a fruity, off-dry white **wine,** such as riesling, chenin blanc or viognier, or a light-to-medium-bodied red, starting with versatile, vintage 2002 Beaujolais and a still-lighter, slightly chilled Beaujolais Nouveau.

But when you're piling on the acidity of cranberry sauce and the sweetness of candied yams, with the strength of Brussels sprouts or turnips, the chemistry changes. The type of stuffing also may affect what you'll be drinking. A mild, cornbread affair might need a different **wine** than that hearty, spicy sausage number.

All this said, the main thing is that you drink something you enjoy, whether it's nonvintage apple cider or the last of your '61 Chateau Petrus, at this festival of proteins and carbohydrates.

On the most American of holidays, enthusiasts often go for juicy red zinfandel, which has been grown from Massachusetts to California, where it's the most widely planted grape. Zinfandels range from lighter **wines** to those that are very concentrated and potent. They can have notes of raspberry and, yes, cranberry, and hints of spice. In terms of fullness, generally consider it somewhere between cabernet sauvignon and pinot noir.

Pinot noir, the great grape of red Burgundy and a major one in California and Oregon, also is ideal with the basic Thanksgiving meal. An aromatic, soft pinot noir will amiably announce itself; a tannic, heavyweight cabernet sauvignon won't.

Very good vintages for California pinot noir include 2001, 1999 and 1997; for red zinfandel, 2001, 1999 and 1994.

You can honor the memory of Davy Crockett, and serve a Fess Parker pinot noir. His 1999 Bien Nacido Pinot Noir is about $45; the 1999 Pinot Noir American Tradition Reserve, $22. At the higher end, fine pinots are made by J. Rochioli, Marcassin, Gary Farrell, Kistler, Patz and Hall, Acacia and Dehlinger. More modestly priced: Au Bon Climat, David Bruce, Iron Horse, Handley Cellars. Notable Oregon pinot noir is made by Domaine Drouhin, Ken Wright, Archery Summit, Panther Creek and Rex Hill.

Locally, first-rate pinot noir is made by Wolffer Estate in Sagaponack, The Lenz Winery in Peconic and Castello di Borghese in Cutchogue.

For red zinfandel, the premier cru is Turley Cellars in Napa. Expect to pay $20 to $75-plus for Turley **wines.** The top tier, at several price points, includes Ridge, **Ravenswood,** Martinelli and Storybook Mountain.

Excellent zinfandels are made by Seghesio, Edmeades, St. Francis, Rafanelli, Williams-Selyem, and Robert Biale. Niebaum-Coppola makes a full, rich zinfandel, Edizione Pennino.

Cline, Rosenblum, Rabbit Ridge, Quivira, J. Lohr, Pedroncelli, Bogle and Rancho Zabaco produce reliable, more modestly priced zinfandels, some around $10 or less.

Invariably pleasing Beaujolais is made by Georges Duboeuf, Marcel Lapierre, Chateau de Thivin, Michel Tete, and Domaine Guy Breton. For a local "nouveau," try Castello di Borghese's Novello.

The fragrant chenin blanc is the grape of the Loire Valley, the Touraine, Anjou and South Africa. Vouvray and Saumur are delightful. On Long Island, Paumanok Vineyards in Aquebogue offers a lively chenin blanc. From California, look for the chenin blanc of Dry Creek and Chappelet. A lot of U.S. chenin is less than $12.

Bring on the pumpkin pie.

GRAPHIC: Newsday Photo, 1997 / J. Michael Dombroski - Bright possibilities: zinfandel, pinot noir reds; riesling and chenin blanc whites

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Thanksgiving In Red and White The Washington Post November 12, 2003 Wednesday

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November 12, 2003 Wednesday
Final Edition

SECTION: Food; F07 , **WINE** Ben Giliberti

LENGTH: 989 words

HEADLINE: Thanksgiving In Red and White

BYLINE: Ben Gilliberti

BODY:

With just two weekends left before Thanksgiving Day, the moment has arrived to undertake the enjoyable task of picking out the best **wines** for the holiday bird. While I've never heard of a shortage of 20-pound toms developing in the final days before this quintessentially American harvest feast, **wines** are a different matter. The best **wines** and the best values tend to be gobbled up more quickly than Grandma's candied yams. If you want to pamper your guests and yourself to the max, now is the time to check out the brochures and ads, choose your favorites and then get down to your favorite **wine** shop with your list.

Because turkey is such a versatile fowl, with light and dark meats surrounded by a wide range of trimmings, both red and white **wines** can make for a spectacular match. Revelers who prefer the drier, more delicate white meat from the breast will probably be looking for a refreshing, well-chilled white to fill their holiday cup. Those like me, who grab the drumstick or the moister dark meat from the thigh, will almost certainly be thinking (and drinking) red, the heftier the better, to play a duet with the stronger, gamier flavors of the dark meat. Thus, to anyone who asks me whether they should be stocking up on white **wines** or reds for the holiday feast, my answer is simple -- buy plenty of both.

However, one needn't spend a lot. In fact, spending megabucks makes less sense for this feast than for any other gala dinner during the rest of the year. Though it pains me to say so, it's doubtful anyone will be paying a great deal of attention to the **wine** on Thanksgiving Day (except in the highly improbable event that I happen to be among your guests). The star of the show is the turkey and the trimmings and, with so many guests, so much animated conversation and, truly, so much to be giving thanks for, the **wine** is there mostly to provide a pleasant complement to the festivities. Spending much more than $25 a bottle is certainly quite generous, and spending $10 or less is perfectly fine, given the number of excellent bottlings.

The following are my choices, listed in order of personal preference, for this Thanksgiving holiday season. (My colleague Michael Franz will be giving his Thanksgiving recommendations next week.) Prices are approximate.

TOP CHOICES

Ravenswood 2001 Vintners Blend Cabernet Sauvignon ($8; California): **Ravenswood's** vintners blend Zinfandel has long been one of the best red **wine** values from California, but the newly introduced Vintners Blend Cabernet Sauvignon blew it away in my comparison tasting. In retrospect this shouldn't be too surprising. Although **Ravenswood** has made its reputation on pricey single-vineyard Zinfandels, it has for years produced a top-notch Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot blend from Sonoma's Pickberry vineyard. This has much of the stylishness of the $45 Pickberry Cabernet blend, including the heady violet and cedar-tinged nose that typifies Pickberry. While you should definitely continue to buy the Vintners Blend Zinfandel, this long overdue Vintners Blend Cabernet is a spectacular addition to the entry-level **Ravenswood** line.

Dr. H. Thanisch (Muller-Burggraef) 2002 Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Kabinett ($15); Dr. H. Thanisch (Muller-Burggraef) 2002 Riesling Classic ($13, Germany, Mosel-Saar-Ruwer): Thanisch Muller-Burggraef holds almost a third of the precious six acres of the Mosel's legendary Berncasteler Doctor vineyard. Happily, both its Riesling Kabinett from the nearby Bernkasteler Badstube vineyard, and the drier, multi-vineyard Riesling Classic taste very much like snappier, fruitier versions of the profound Kabinetts from the good Doctor, at about half the price. For traditionalists, the more complex Badstube offers up a wonderfully enticing interplay of moderate, Kabinett-level sweetness and brisk acidity on the finish. My personal preference, however, ran a bit more to the utterly charming Riesling Classic. Though quite dry, it completely avoids the searing austerity of so many trocken and halbtrocken "dry" German **wines.** Regardless, both Thanisch **wines** deliver on the promise of a fine Mosel Riesling. (Imported by Winesellers Ltd; Henry **Wine** Group, 202-635-3600)

OTHER EXCELLENT CHOICES

Rijckaert Pouilly-Fuisse 2001 Vers Chanes Vieilles Vignes ($25; France): While there is a lot of mediocre Pouilly-Fuisse in the market and a few very good ones, such as Cordier from Peter Weygandt and Vincent's Chateau Fuisse, this entry from a former partner in the famous Verget estate is as good as these and costs considerably less. Like the best Pouilly-Fuisse, this old vine, Chardonnay-based **wine** has an opulent Meursault- like texture and a long finish. (Dionysos)

Franciscan Oakville Estate Chardonnay Cuvee Sauvage 2000/2001 ($25-$30; California): If you happen to be lucky enough to be serving wild turkey, which is increasingly available at boutique markets, it's hard to imagine a better choice than Oakville's trend-setting Cuvee Sauvage Chardonnay. In French, "sauvage" means "wild," in this case referring to Franciscan's use of the wild yeasts that occur naturally in the vineyard for fermentation, rather than standardized injected yeasts used by most wineries. Much like the free-range bird, free-range yeasts provide a bolder, more dramatic flavor that can really be special. Both the 2000 and 2001 Franciscan Cuvee Sauvage Chardonnays are outstanding, if a bit pricey.

Bella Sera 2002 Chardonnay ($7; Italy); Bella Sera 2002 Pinot Grigio ($7; Italy): It's hard to beat these bargain whites from the Venize area of Italy as a refreshing accompaniment to the Thanksgiving fowl. Beyond the charming apple-like fruit, the key to both these **wines** is the zip provided by the zesty acidity that typifies the white **wines** of northern Italy. And if you're concerned about going American for Thanksgiving, note that these **wines** are vinified and imported by Ernest and Julio Gallo in mass quantities.

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Zinfandel grapes are American as (but don't pair with) apple pie Tulsa World (Oklahoma) October 22, 2003 Wednesday Final Home Edition

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October 22, 2003 Wednesday Final Home Edition

SECTION: RESTAURANTS, ENTERTAINMENT; Dining, Restaurants; Pg. D6

LENGTH: 467 words

HEADLINE: Zinfandel grapes are American as (but don't pair with) apple pie

BYLINE: SCOTT CHERRY World Staff Writer

BODY:
In the big picture, the zinfandel grape almost is as American as basketball and football. It is the most extensively planted red grape in California and only sparsely found in the remainder of the world, mostly South Africa and Australia.

Although it dates to the 1850s in California, it never has managed to match the popularity of merlot, pinot noir or cabernet sauvignon, other reds from that state.

Perhaps that is because it has had a wide range of styles and quality over the past 150 years. Perhaps it gets confused with the white zinfandels, lower-quality **wines** made from the same grape.

Nonetheless, the good ones are outstanding, usually bold, complex **wines** with berrylike, peppery flavors and high in tannins and alcohol. Zinfandels are similar to the red **wines** of Italy made from the Primitivo grape.

One of the leaders in producing high-quality zinfandels has been **Ravenswood** Winery, founded by winemaker Joel Peterson and Reed Foster in 1976. Although the winery was sold to Constellation Brands in 2001, the co-founders are still around to run the show.

Ravenswood makes a wide range of single-vineyard zins, priced from $20 to $50 or more, but the most commonly available in Tulsa is the winery's most economical zin, Vintners Blend.

Priced at about $10 a bottle, the Vintners Blend is a true bargain. Peterson buys from selected growers small lots of zinfandels and blends them with up to about 40 percent of Ravens-wood's own grapes to make this **wine.**

The Vintners Blend should have aromas of spice and raspberries, flavors of black cherries and vanilla and a slightly astringent finish. It pairs well with red meat (including barbecued ribs), hearty pasta dishes and seasoned poultry.

We also have located a couple of zins in town from **Ravenswood's** County series, each priced at about $17 to $22.

The Mendocino zin is made from grapes from two vineyards -- Bartolomei and Lalanne. It is a peppery **wine** with flavors of black cherries, plums and dark chocolate. It may be consumed young but is even better when aged four to six years.

Most of the grapes for the Sonoma County zin are sourced from 60- to 80-year-old vines in the Dry Creek area west of Healdsburg, Calif., and from a vineyard near Cloverdale that produces small berries with pungent flavors. This **wine** is aged 16 months in French oak and is a rich, full-flavored **wine** that needs about five years of aging to begin to reach its peak.

Another **Ravenswood wine** easily accessible here and not to be ignored is the Vintners Blend merlot. It has plummy aromas, ripe berry flavors and a soft, spicy finish. It pairs well with most meat dishes, including pizza and hamburgers, and is priced at about $10 a bottle.

Scott Cherry 581-8463 scott.cherry@tulsaworld.com

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Brash, All-American Zinfandel Part of Refined Dining Experience; Favorite: The Wasatch Wine Academy featured the wine in its barbecue Salt Lake Tribune (Utah) May 21, 2003, Wednesday

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Salt Lake Tribune (Utah)

May 21, 2003, Wednesday

SECTION: Final; Pg. D1

LENGTH: 676 words

HEADLINE: Brash, All-American Zinfandel Part of Refined Dining Experience; Favorite: The Wasatch **Wine** Academy featured the **wine** in its barbecue

BYLINE: Mary Brown Malouf , The Salt Lake Tribune

BODY:
Thirty of Salt Lake's most refined **wine** palates gathered for a semi-seminar recently. By 7:30 p.m., they all had their faces in Styrofoam plates stacked with slabs of ribs slathered with spicy sauce, sided with slaw and potatoes. Oh yeah, and a glass of red **wine.**

This was not your typical swirl-and-sniff French-style **wine** tasting; the dinner was held at Q4U in West Valley City and the **wine** sloshing down with the barbecue was zinfandel.

Sheryl Schowe, owner and instructor of the floating Wasatch **Wine** Academy, under whose auspices she teaches tasting classes in various locations around the Salt Lake Valley, helped organize the gathering. Sam Leone, one of the tasting group's founders, summed up the evening: "wild, woolly, and messy. Slurps, smears and stains."

The French don't make zin. It is a particularly California grape and style, all-American in its brashness and bigness, perfect with cheeseburgers, brisket and ribs. Fire up the grill and have your own **wine** tasting; 1999-2000 were particularly good for zin in California.

Zinfandel makes big, red, heady **wine,** pushing the 14 percent alcohol limit that defines a **wine.** Joel Peterson, owner and **wine** maker at **Ravenswood,** one of California's pioneer and premier zins, sums it up on a the T-shirts he sells at the winery: "No wimpy **wines.**"

In that spirit, **Ravenswood** serves a patio barbecue to the public every Sunday in the summer.

Zinfandel size and style vary: **Wines** at the Utah tasting ranged from the epitome -- 2000 Turley "Old Vines" -- to the banal -- Sutter Home. In between were dozens of zinfandels, from big and fat to highly finessed, all happily matched with brisket, ribs and pulled pork.

The State **Wine** Store at 255 S. 300 East in Salt Lake City has a good selection of California zinfandels, from $ 7.95 to $ 50 a bottle.

Some can't-miss zinfandel recommendations from **wine** salesman Victor Gener:

$ 10-$ 12:

* Rancho Zabaco's Dancing Bull is a well-known brand, a good beginner zin. You probably will recognize the colorful label when you see it. $ 10.95

* Rancho Zabaco's Heritage Vines from Sonoma is from the same winery, different vineyard. Old vines make a particularly big difference in making zinfandel. For just a little more money you are getting a little more earth and depth. Definitely worth the two bucks extra. $ 12.95

* Cline California Zinfandel is still rich, but just a little grapier, a little softer, than the typical California style. $ 12.95

$ 13-$ 16:

* **Ravenswood** Lodi has all the earth and oak you expect from Joel Peterson, the **Ravenswood** founder who helped define the outlaw California zin style. Lots of cracked pepper, lots of alcohol. $ 13.95

* Seghesio Sonoma Zinfandel is at the opposite end of the spectrum from **Ravenswood. This wine** is leaner, more austere -- although that's relative in zinfandel. More Italian character than the outrageous California style. $ 15.95

$ 15-$ 20 :

* Lake Sonoma Winery's Dry Creek Zinfandel is from an area known for its old zin vines. This **wine** has medium-full body with lots of oak and warm vanilla flavors. And it's always nice to be able to say, "Robert Parker loved this one." $ 17.10.

* Blockheadia Ringossi Lake Sonoma area, slightly more sophisticated. $ 17.20

* Rosenblum Continente has a real California aggressive style: big, rich, dark fruit, oak, cracked pepper. All the clout you expect. $ 12.45

$ 20 and up:

* Ridge Sonoma Station is elegant and hedonistic at the same time. Paul Draper pioneered the zin renaissance in California and this **wine** is as dapper as the winemaker himself. Lush but perfectly balanced. $ 21.95

* Late-Picked York Creek has extra sugar from grapes picked so late they have turned to raisins, making a rich, sweet **wine** like port. $ 30.15

* Chateau Montelena's St. Vincent is a blend of zinfandel, sanglovese and primitivo grapes. The rather Italianate **wine** was originally sold only at the winery but Utah's Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control convinced them to sell it retail. $ 24.45

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ZINS DESERVE SOME RESPECT Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, FL) April 24, 2003 Thursday Broward Metro Edition

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April 24, 2003 Thursday Broward Metro Edition

SECTION: FOOD; BOB HOSMON **WINE;** Pg. 3

LENGTH: 468 words

HEADLINE: ZINS DESERVE SOME RESPECT

BYLINE: BOB HOSMON **WINE**

BODY:
If there's one red **wine** that doesn't get its due respect, it's zinfandel. Perhaps that's because, in early years, California wineries made so many styles of the **wine** that consumers didn't know what they were getting until they uncorked the bottle. Perhaps it's because too many people associate zinfandel with "white" zinfandel, an inferior cousin to the red **wine** but made from the same grapes.

Whatever the reasons, zinfandel can be an exceptional red **wine,** and one winery that proves it is California's **Ravenswood** Winery.

For 25 years, **Ravenswood** has been producing extraordinary zins, mostly from single-vineyard designated grapes. The winery has expanded its offerings to include grapes grown throughout the state. I've never tasted a **Ravenswood** zin that I didn't like, regardless of the price. While some are made in very small quantities and hard to find, each of **Ravenswood's** zins delivers pure satisfaction.

For the budget-conscious, it's hard to beat the 2000 **Ravenswood** Amador Zinfandel produced from premium grapes grown in the Sierra Foothills east of Sacramento, California's capital. From older vineyards near Fiddletown, this delightful red tastes of ripe red cherries and wild berries, with a hint of cracked pepper and aromatic spices in the finish.

Some special favorites include the 2000 **Ravenswood** Teldeschi Zinfandel produced from a blend that includes carignane and petite syrah grapes; the 2000 **Ravenswood** Old Hill Zinfandel, a single-vineyard zin made from vines planted in the 1880s in the Valley of the Moon, just north of Sonoma; the 2000 **Ravenswood** Big River Zinfandel, made from the grapes of 80-year-old vines growing in Sonoma's Alexander Valley; and the 2000 **Ravenswood** Dickerson Zinfandel, a Napa Valley vineyard that produces classic zins with rich concentrated flavors.

SERVE WITH: Zinfandel is the perfect complement for Italian foods from pizza to osso buco. It's also ideal with venison or wild duck, grilled steaks and barbecued ribs.

AVAILABILITY/ SUGGESTED RETAIL: Sold in most **wine** shops, the **Ravenswood** Amador zin retails for about $15. Only well-stocked **wine** shops will have the Teldeschi for $35, the Old Hill for $46, the Big River for $35 and the Dickerson for $35 a bottle.

Wine of the week

SELECTION: Fire up the grill and grab a bottle of 2000 Grant Burge Miamba Shiraz. It's a great single-vineyard red with full-body flavors and a supple finish. In short, the kind of user-friendly red that everyone likes.

SERVE WITH: Grilled lamb chops and steaks are the perfect match.

AVAILABILITY/ SUGGESTED RETAIL: Sold in **wine** shops and some food markets for about $15 a bottle.

Have a question about **wine?** Write to **Wine,** Sun-Sentinel, 200 E. Las Olas Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301-2293. Sorry, no personal replies.

GRAPHIC: ;(color) 2000 Grant Burge Miamba Shiraz.

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Worthy zins, chardonnays flow from California vineyards Scripps Howard News Service December 31, 2002, Tuesday

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December 31, 2002, Tuesday

SECTION: LIFE STYLE

LENGTH: 989 words

HEADLINE: Worthy zins, chardonnays flow from California vineyards

SOURCE: Scripps Howard News Service

BYLINE: FREDRIC KOEPPEL

BODY:
The other day we reviewed a roster of zinfandel **wines from Ravenswood,** one of California's best producers of big-hearted, two-fisted zins. Today, to even the balance a mite, we'll look at zinfandels from other producers and, after those, just to show you that I'm not always a curmudgeon, some California chardonnays that I actually like.

First the zins, all, with one exception, from the splendid 2000 vintage:

- The Cucamonga Cellars Zinfandel 2000, Cucamonga Valley, is made from 75-year-old vines on the Lopez Ranch, one of the few vineyards to survive Southern California's urban sprawl. A deeply spicy zin, redolent of fruitcake and plum pudding, this **wine** radiates the crystalline purity and ripeness of the necessary blackberry, blueberry, boysenberry flavors heightened with a whiff of freshly ground black pepper. 300 cases. Excellent. About $15 and definitely Worth a Search.

- The Francis Coppola Zinfandel 2000, California, is simple and direct but offers plenty of authentic rich black currant and blueberry flavors in a balanced, integrated structure. Quite tasty. About $18.

- A blend of elegance and ruggedness, the Dry Creek Vineyard Old Vines Zinfandel 2000, Sonoma County, is vivid with very ripe classic flavors of blackberry jam, cassis, blueberry and boysenberry, all given a sheen of the sweetness of oak and alcohol (14.5 percent) and the smoothness of polished tannins. Excellent. About $21.

- You would never know that the Clos du Bois Reserve Zinfandel 2000, Dry Creek Valley, tips the scale at 15.5 percent alcohol. This dense, intense but smooth zin shimmers with smoke and black pepper, briars and brambles and absolutely delicious black currant and blueberry flavors seamlessly set in a lovely, luxurious texture. Excellent. About $22.

- Almost cabernetlike in its minerally elegance, the Frog's Leap Zinfandel 2000, Napa Valley, unfolds its zin character in a core of tarry-chocolate-y blueberry and boysenberry flavors that flush through the velvety, burnished texture. Excellent. About $22.

- A suspension of port, cassis and blueberry jam, the Kendall-Jackson Great Estates Zinfandel 2000, Mendocino County, is large-framed without being overwhelming; wrapped around a core of fruitcake, minerals and dried flowers, chocolate, mocha and black pepper. Two or three years. Excellent. About $25.

- A platonic expression of the grape, the Seghesio Old Vine Zinfandel 2000, Sonoma County, is framed by immensities of polished oak and grainy tannin that reach to a scintillating foundation of smoke and minerals. Exceptional. About $29.

- They make **wines** to last at Niebaum-Coppola Estate; the Edizione Pennino Zinfandel 2000, Napa Valley, is a primary example. A huge, dense, chewy zin, surpassingly ripe but delivering a powerful hit of minerals and earthy qualities, this **wine** dredges plum jam and fruitcake from the dark but vibrantly pure depths. Give it three to six years. Excellent. About $44.

- A panoply of sensations, the Chateau Potelle VGS Zinfandel 2000, Mt. Veeder, explodes from the glass in a burst of exotic spice, briars and brambles, minerals, bittersweet chocolate, lavender, dried thyme, coffee and tobacco. What a riot! Yet all these elements balance in order and harmony in a dense, almost furry texture. Excellent. About $45.

- Wow, the layers peel away and add on simultaneously in the incredibly pure and intense Fritz Winery Old Vine Zinfandel 1999, Dry Creek Valley. A bouquet of blueberries, cherries and currants seethes with a huge load of dried spices, oolong tea, dried lavender and violets and a fresh but autumnal cast of dried moss and mushrooms. No **wine** made in Europe is like this. Three to six years. Exceptional. About $25.

Now the chardonnays, all blessedly made in a palatable manner that would actually be appropriate with food. This aspect - that **wine** should be consumed with food - is surprisingly absent from chardonnay production in California these days, when we see far too many examples so packed with oak and alcohol that they not only can't be drunk with food, they don't even taste good by themselves. For some reason, these ungainly, brassy monsters impress judges at fairs and competitions.

Disabled man sues wineries over handicapped access The San Francisco Chronicle DECEMBER 19, 2002, THURSDAY,

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San Francisco Chronicle

The San Francisco Chronicle

DECEMBER 19, 2002, THURSDAY, FINAL EDITION
Correction Appended

SECTION: WINE; Pg. D6

LENGTH: 1270 words

HEADLINE: Disabled man sues wineries over handicapped access

SOURCE: Chronicle Staff Writer

BYLINE: Carol Emert

BODY:
The name George Loule doesn't mean anything to most **wine** drinkers, but it conjures up one very specific idea to Northern California winery owners: lawsuit.

Some 139 wineries in the region, from international conglomerates like Kendall-Jackson to tiny mom and pops in Amador County, have been sued by Loule this year for failure to comply with handicap-access laws.

Using a team of law school volunteers, Loule -- a 56-year-old wheelchair user, convicted felon and nondrinker -- has leveled more than 400 lawsuits against California businesses in the last three years, from department stores to dry cleaners.

But he has gone after wineries with particular gusto.

"The reason we sued wineries is they were just so arrogant," says Loule. "They would pay $1,000 (formerly the minimum personal injury award) and they just wrote it off as a business expense."

On Jan. 1, 2002, however, a state law raised the personal injury floor to $4,000. "Now if you go in with five people, it's $20,000," says Loule. "Now they don't think it's a big joke."

HUNDREDS OF WINERIES VISITED

Loule doesn't drink alcohol because of the diabetes that cost him his leg. But he and friends have visited hundreds of wineries this year in five vans owned by Americans with Disabilities Advocates, a nonprofit Loule founded and runs out of his Oakland apartment.

Loule has hired lawyers in other states to sue, for example, the National Football League for failure to provide handicap facilities at the Superbowl. He has gone after casinos in Las Vegas and banks in New Orleans.

"We didn't sue the casinos, though, because Nevada does not have damage provisions for violations of the disabilities law," says Loule. That means no personal-injury award. The Americans with Disabilities Act does not provide for damages, but some state laws, such as California's Unruh law, do.

Loule's next big foray will be in the Seattle area, where he plans to file more than 300 lawsuits in the next six months against wineries and other businesses.

Loule's strategy of suing without notice has sparked criticism that he is a "bounty hunter," pursuing his cause only for the money.

Other groups, such as Oakland's Disability Rights Advocates, sue as a last resort and demand damages only when businesses do not show a good-faith effort to comply. Loule says his motivation is pure and that the proceeds from the settlements are plowed into more lawsuits -- not his own pocket.

"We feel we're the spokesperson for the disabled community," he says.

DISABILITY ACT IS OLD

Loule notes that the Americans with Disabilities Act, which requires public establishments to provide ramps, enlarged parking spaces and the like for mobility-impaired people, was passed more than 12 years ago.

"What I'm telling people is, you need to get your act together. You can't hide from us -- you're a sitting duck. You go to any winery in

California and they'll give you a map of another 10 or 15. With all these vehicles we have, they're easy to find."

While Loule's tactics have earned him the enmity of vintners, they have clearly helped make **Wine** Country more accessible to mobility-impaired visitors.

Wineries have removed gravel from parking lots and paths, lowered tasting bars, posted signs and wrapped the hot water pipes under their bathroom sinks.

"There has been a big change at wineries, they are more cognizant," said Jim Fallis, an architectural consultant in Sacramento who works with wineries and other clients on disability access.

Typically, Loule files suit with one other plaintiff and settles for $10,700 -- $4,000 for each complainant and $2,700 for legal fees, said Rob Carrol, a senior partner at Littler Mendelson in San Francisco, which has represented about 30 wineries in the suits.

Loule says he has never won more than $11,000 against a winery, although a couple of other cases have netted him more than $100,000. According to IRS documents, Loule's group had revenues of $183,000 in 2000; no other years were available.

Loule says he has no idea how much money he has made, and that he lives off of a life insurance policy on his 10-year-old son's mother, who is dead.

Loule's son, Tarvell Loule, has also been in court; he was a plaintiff in a case opposing bilingual education in Oakland schools.

Loule says he was raised in Sacramento and has twice served time in a federal penitentiary.

CRIMINAL PAST

In the late 1960s, he was caught with forged checks, and in the early 1980s he was imprisoned for "breaking into a dope dealer's house, hitting him overside the head and trying to get him to tell where the money was," says Loule, adding that he is not sorry for either crime.

"Being caught was just a consequence of doing business, of being in the fast lane," says Loule, who subsequently worked as a paralegal for 20 years. "The good thing is that I've been out of prison since the '80s and I haven't been in trouble."

Now, lawsuits are Loule's passion. "I always like to be the first person to file the first case on January 2 of every year," he says. "That's just a little habit of mine."

With approximately 700 wineries in California that have tasting rooms and have not been sued, the **Wine** Institute is negotiating with Loule on a program that would protect wineries while they come into compliance. The plan is sure to be controversial.

The tentative idea is for wineries to pay $200 to $250 to sign up -- money that would go to Loule. Participants would then have six months to hire a disability-access consultant and an additional year to comply.

At the end of that time, Loule's organization would inspect the site, which is the justification for the fee. If problems remain, "we would just blast away and get them," says Loule.

The idea was presented to the **Wine** Institute's board earlier this month and was referred to its public policy committee.

"Some people will look at this deal and say, 'Isn't this extortion, isn't this just a way of paying this guy off?' " says Wendell Lee, the Institute's counsel. "The more pragmatic people will say $200 is better than $10,700."

Regardless of whether the Loule deal pans out, Lee said he hopes the **Wine** Institute will establish a program to help wineries come up to standard.

"They've had a long time to come into compliance and they haven't," Lee said. "If they keep going, they expose themselves to not just George but anyone like George."

Fallis says most wineries can become ADA-compliant for "a couple of thousand dollars," although the cost can be much higher if the tasting room is up a steep hill, for example.

WINERIES THAT FIGHT BACK

While most wineries settle with Loule, one is fighting him, Chateau Rodin in Placerville. Chateau Rodin confirmed its stance but declined to provide additional details.

Maple Creek Winery in Yorkville is also planning a fight, according to a person familiar with the suit, but owner Linda Stutz says, "I can't talk about anything because it's not finished yet."

Ravenswood Winery in Sonoma, a large Zinfandel producer owned by Constellation Brands, is currently in discussions with Loule. General manager Joel Peterson said **Ravenswood,** which hosts more than 10,000 visitors a year, hired disability-access consultants before it had ever heard of George Loule.

"Honestly, we thought we were fully in compliance, and furthermore we want to be in compliance," Peterson says. "These are our customers, too, and we go out of our way to treat our customers very well."

E-mail Carol Emert at cemert@sfchronicle.com.

CORRECTION-DATE: December 20, 2002

CORRECTION:

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WINE PICK OF THE WEEK THE SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER December 4, 2002, Wednesday

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THE SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

December 4, 2002, Wednesday FINAL

SECTION: LIFE AND ARTS, Pg. D4

LENGTH: 284 words

HEADLINE: WINE PICK OF THE WEEK

BODY: 2000 **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend Zinfandel

($10)

I once saw a woman with the logo of the **Ravenswood** winery tattooed to her ankle. Sure, the **wines** are very good but still that's some kind of customer loyalty. The logo, three ravens in an interlocking circle, is one of the most recognizable California **wine** labels. The label also has become synonymous with zinfandel **wines** since **Ravenswood** is perhaps the largest producer of that varietal in California. Some say **Ravenswood** has become successful because of the popularity of zinfandel, but a good argument could be made to the contrary.

In the beginning, back in 1976, **Ravenswood** began forging its reputation by offering some of the best California "vineyard designate" zinfandels. Many were from very old vines growing in some of the most distinctive vineyards in Sonoma. "These were grapes that filled my heart with lust," recalls Joel Peterson, winemaker and co-founder of **Ravenswood.** Now, **Ravenswood** produces about 400,000 cases of zin each year, consisting not only of vineyard designate **wines** but also a range of midpriced county **wines** (from Napa, Lodi, Sonoma, Mendocino and Amador counties) and the 350,000-case workhorse Vintners Blend.

The Vintners Blend is a big friendly **wine,** plush and spicy and bursting with fruit. Peterson calls it "our zin with training wheels" because of its approachable, easy-drinking style. It may not make you want to tattoo your ankle, but it's still one heck of a $10 zinfandel. - Richard KinssiesRichard Kinssies is a free-lance **wine** writer, an instructor at the Seattle Culinary Academy and director of the Seattle **Wine** School. He can be contacted at 206-782-0617 or richardkinssies§msn.com.

GRAPHIC: Photo

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AGELESS AMERICAN WINES PERFECT FOR THE HOLIDAYS Richmond Times Dispatch (Virginia) November 27, 2002 Wednesday City Edition

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Richmond Times Dispatch (Virginia)

November 27, 2002 Wednesday City Edition

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. D-2

LENGTH: 821 words

HEADLINE: AGELESS AMERICAN **WINES** PERFECT FOR THE HOLIDAYS

BYLINE: Ken Collura, Ken Collura is head sommelier at Bern's Steak House in Tampa, Fla. Contact him at asksommelier@bernssteakhouse.com.,

BODY:
I've come to realize that I am aging. Stuff happens. Formerly unfamiliar pains visit without invitation, so there is a distinct downside to this. On the other hand, I know more than I ever knew when I thought I was winespeak cool. Consequently, I suppose the upside is I'm wiser, if less lithe.

As grapevines age, they start to produce **wines** that taste more serious, if less precocious. These vines yield fewer bunches, but what is yielded tends toward the serious. Bottles labeled "old vines" (usually 40 years or older) are concentrated, yet elegant. There seems to be an added element of intensity.

Holiday time is when I gravitate to comfort **wines.** There's a big bird to be dealt with and lots of stuffing and gravy. We're not< ka-20>talking subtlety here, just warmth,<ka0> friends and family. So I seek out some trusted amigos, old vines zinfandel and petite sirah.

These uniquely American varietals produce some of our country's most compelling bottles.

Franciscan missionaries planted the first vinifera vines in California around 1780. **Wine** growing accelerated after California officially became a state in 1847, and its fame as a new **wine** region spread.

The northern part of the state, especially Sonoma, Napa and Mendocino counties, proved to be suitable land for vines. Petite sirah and zinfandel were first planted in the 1880s, laying the groundwork for California's oldest, consistently harvested fine-**wine** grapes.

Zinfandel

Zinfandel took a firm hold on the California **wine** business around 1880, when its ability to produce in quantity was prized above all else. In the late 1890s and early 1900s, zin was regarded as California's own **wine** and occupied some of the choicest North Coast vineyards. During Prohibition (and for years after), it was the main choice for many winemakers. By the 1970s, zinfandel began to evolve into what we encounter today: America's most distinctive red **wine** grape.

Some of the viticultural disadvantages of zinfandel are that bunches can ripen unevenly, leaving green berries on the same bunch as those that have reached full maturity. Once grapes reach full ripeness, they will soon turn to raisins if not picked rapidly. Zin grows best in warm, but not too hot, conditions and in high-altitude vineyards.

Napa zins look and taste quite different from their Sonoma counterparts, more often than not taking on a cabernetlike nose and texture. Some from Sonoma and other prominent regions such as Paso Robles, Mendocino and Amador seem more full-blown and richer, and can pack a distinct alcoholic punch.

Some favorites: Traditional names such **Ravenswood,** Ridge and St. Francis come to mind, but so do lesser-known wineries such as Cline, Elyse, Peachy Canyon, Newlan and Seghesio.

Petite Sirah

Like zinfandel, petite sirah was first planted in California in the 1880s. It was long thought to be a lesser Rhone varietal, durif. Genetic tests have proved that it is not, without proving what it actually is.

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Wine -- 'Tis the Holiday for Red Wines Yakima Herald-Republic (Washington) November 27, 2002 Wednesday

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Yakima Herald-Republic (Washington)

November 27, 2002 Wednesday

SECTION: Pg. B1

LENGTH: 1082 words

HEADLINE: Wine -- 'Tis the Holiday for Red **Wines**

BYLINE: PAUL GREGUTT

BODY:

WIND ADVISER

OK, now that we've got those pesky white **wines** corralled (see last week's column), lets turn our attention to the center ring - your Thanksgiving reds!

I strongly believe that an all-American red **wine** best fits the spirit of this holiday, and I most often turn to zinfandel, for a couple of reasons. Although its origins have been traced back to Croatia, the zinfandel grape can rightfully be called ours. It has been grown in California since the mid-1800s, and there is little argument that American zins are far and away the best in the world.

I personally love zinfandels from the Dry Creek Valley in Sonoma County, notable for their bright raspberry and cocoa flavors and their crisply defined tannins. But good zins are made virtually everywhere up and down the West Coast, including here in the Northwest (Sineann and Thurston Wolfe are two wineries that produce excellent Columbia valley zinfandel).

You will find that most zins currently in the market are from the 2000 vintage, along with quite a few of the 1999s (worth hunting for). Among my favorite budget bottles are the Cline "California" ($10); Rosenblum "Cuvee XXIV" ($10); **Ravenswood** "Vintners Blend" ($10); Marietta Cellars "Old Vine Red" ($10); Peachy Canyon "Incredible Red" ($11) and the Rancho Zabaco "Sonoma Heritage" ($12). If you spend just a bit more, say $15 to $20, you can find any number of richer, more focused **wines.** The top zins - single vineyard bottlings from Ridge, **Ravenswood,** Cline, Rosenblum and dozens of smaller producers - go for $25 and up, making them a relative bargain compared with many other red **wines.**

Need a second bottle of red? Why not go with something French. They helped us during the Revolution, didn't they? A good counterpoint to the ebullient, fruit-driven flavors of zinfandel are the **wines** of southern France. Look for blended red **wines** from these regions: Cotes-du-Rhone, Cotes-du-Rhone Villages, Cotes-du- Roussillon, Cotes-du-Ventoux, Costieres de Nimes, Languedoc, Minervois, Pays d'Ardeche and Pays d'Oc.

Your favorite retailer will have many of these **wines,** often at budget prices. The 1998, 1999 and 2000 vintages were all very good in southern France. The grapes blended in these **wines** include syrah, grenache, mourvedre, carignan and/or cinsault. All deliver ripe, lusty, red and black fruit flavors, and they often have nuances of herbs such as rosemary and thyme, which add a unique level of complexity. Southern French **wines** from importers Robert Kacher, Kermit Lynch, Peter Weygandt and North Berkeley are recommended.

A word about Beaujolais nouveau, just now hitting the shelves. This is not likely to be a particularly good year for the nouveau, given the horrendous weather that struck during harvest. But it's always fun to drink, being the first **wine** of the vintage, and the nouveau has a grapey exuberance that sits well with cranberry sauce. This year's nouveau **wines** arrived in town just last week - too late to taste for this column - but many local **wine** shops are pouring free samples. Among the top producers are Duboeuf, Drouhin, Perret and Picard.

Here are a baker's dozen recommended red **wines** for your Thanksgiving table. All prices approximate.

2001 Banrock Station Merlot; $7. Australian merlot!? I like Banrock's whole lineup, but the merlot is clearly the standout: soft, fruity, lightly spicy and dusted with cocoa.

2000 Delas Freres Cotes-du-Ventoux; $9. Grenache makes up four fifths of this French blend, syrah the rest. You'll find no trace of oak here, just ripe, fresh, berry-packed fruit flavors.

2001 Rosemount Estate Grenache/Shiraz; $9. Here's another Australian charmer, combining the forward fruitiness of grenache with

the peppery muscle of shiraz.

2001 Paringa Shiraz; $10. It's easy to love Australian shiraz for its fat, unctuous, jammy fruit and its smoky, toasty, coffee- and caramel-flavored finish. Not so easy to find all that in a $10 bottle. This one delivers, with power and panache, and it's my "Steal Deal" red **wine.**

2000 Montevina Syrah; $10. A snappy new package adds class to this new release from a reliable Amador county producer. It features super ripe, sappy and succulent fruit, with some pleasing hints of French and American oak.

NV Jest Red; $10. This wonderful red blend, from Belvedere in Sonoma County, has been marked down to just $10 for the holidays. Dark, smooth and sweetly scented with violets and blueberries, it rolls into a satiny, lip-licking finish.

2001 Domaine Les Grands Bois Cotes du Rhone; $11. Importer Peter Weygandt brings in some of the most strikingly pure, fruit-focused value **wines** I've seen this fall. Here is a classy grenache/syrah/ mourvedre southern French blend, with zippy acids underneath spicy, herbal fruit.

2001 Echelon Pinot Noir; $12. There isn't much $12 pinot out there from anywhere that is worth chasing, but this Central Coast (California) bottling brings simple, sweet fruit flavors to the forefront, with nothing off or funky in the finish.

2000 Ninth Island Pinot Noir; $15. Hey, I'll bet it's been awhile since you tried a Tasmanian pinot with your holiday bird! This is a really delicious style, which focuses on bright, spicy fruit wrapped in toasty, chocolatey oak.

2000 Domaine Bertrand Ambroise Bourgogne Rouge; $16. OK, I really love to find good, inexpensive pinot, so here is yet another. Scents of cherry and cinnamon and cola are followed by tart cranberry and pie cherry fruit, with some tannic punch in the finish.

2000 Frei Brothers Merlot; $15. This Dry Creek valley bottling is a real crowd-pleaser, with plump, lip-smacking red fruit and plenty of vanilla wood flavors. Big and friendly.

2000 Pepper Bridge Merlot; $45. Spendy but wonderful! This new release from a premier Walla Walla grower/producer is bursting with seductive scents of berries, cherries and mocha. There's plenty of soft, lush fruit, and it's wrapped in smooth, silky, chocolatey oak. Immediately, irresistibly appealing, it's available now direct from the winery; then in **wine** shops after the first of December.

NV Niepoort Fine Tawny; $17. Tawny ports are soft, nutty, caramel flavored luxuries that are often bottled as 10, 20, 30 or even 40-year-old cuvees and can cost $50, $80 or more. This budget-priced, nonvintage blend carries the same smooth, complex, decadent flavors as a fine 20-year-old. A perfectto a perfect meal.

-- Paul Gregutt is the author of "Northwest **Wines.**" His column appears weekly in the **Wine** section. He can be reached by e-mail at **wine**@seattletimes.com

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A toast to Texas: UT pride now comes in a bottleTexas Exes have put their label on wine in latest promotion, but first fruits won't be Texas-grown Austin American-Statesman (Texas) November 8, 2002, Friday

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Austin American-Statesman (Texas)

November 8, 2002, Friday

SECTION: News; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 714 words

HEADLINE: A toast to Texas: UT pride now comes in a bottle
Texas Exes have put their label on **wine** in latest promotion, but first fruits won't be Texas-grown

BYLINE: Sharon Jayson, AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

BODY:
Take a look at the bottle and you can tell Texas Exes **wine** isn't snooty.

Every bottle looks the same, whether it's a merlot, cabernet sauvignon or chardonnay. The University of Texas alumni association has made sure that the label features a hint of burnt orange, and there's no mistaking the Bevo-like Longhorn image set in the middle.

"We've been pushing the Texas Exes brand, and this is another way to get that out there," said Jim Boon, the group's executive director.

The UT System has produced **wine** for decades. Boon's group isn't into **wine**-making or bottling, however. Instead, the alumni association hopes to raise money by sticking its name onto **wines** labeled by a company called Signature **Wines,** which supplies custom **wine** for universities, corporations, hotels, restaurants and weddings. Boon said the **wine** is a novel product that Texas Exes can buy for themselves or give as gifts. And it's the **wine** of choice at the association's headquarters on the UT-Austin campus.

Signature **Wines** works with nine wineries across the country, most of them in California. That means the initial crop of Texas Exes **wine** won't be made from Texas grapes. A Texas winery is on tap for next year.

Although the label may be gimmicky, the **wine** isn't. The winemakers producing for Signature **Wines** are notables such as Robert Mondavi, **Ravenswood** and Kendall-Jackson.

"They have very, very good Napa Valley and Sonoma County red **wines** -- more a high-quality **wine** portfolio," said Michael Hupf, CEO and founder of Signature **Wines,** the Hayward, Calif., private label company he founded in 1998.

To select the **wines** included in the first edition collector's series, the Texas Exes board of directors doubled as **wine** connoisseurs at a tasting earlier this fall. For next year's series, Boon said Texas Exes chapters will host **wine** tastings and offer their favorites. The **wine** can be ordered online or by phone. A bottle of the Texas brand ranges from $14 to $27.

Signature **Wines** started working with five university alumni associations last year. This year, the number has tripled and includes alumni groups from the University of Nebraska, the University of Michigan, the University of California at Los Angeles and Northwestern University. Texas A&M University's alumni group -- the Association of Former Students -- is considering the idea, said Amy Glass, brand manager for College Station alums.

Nebraska's alumni association, which was the first to uncork the program, is pleased with the results.

"It's gone over very well," said Ed Paquette, executive director. "It has the potential to be a very good money-maker. But I think more than anything, I see this as an opportunity to provide something unique to our alumni."

Paquette, Hupf and Boon wouldn't go into details about the financial arrangement, but Boon said the Texas Exes earn just a few dollars per case.

Shipping costs also are higher for the Texas buyer. Because it's illegal in Texas for out-of-state wineries, breweries and retailers to ship products directly to Texas consumers without going through a wholesaler, the extra step of shipping the **wine** to a Texas wholesaler adds a dollar or two more to the case, Hupf said.

UT's interest in **wine** isn't new. With 2.1 million acres of land in West Texas, the UT System got into **wine**-making decades ago, first with experimental vineyards using drip irrigation to grow the grapes and later helping create Ste. Genevieve Vineyards on 1,000 acres of UT land. Ste. Genevieve **wines** went on the market in 1985.

UT now leases the land for the vineyards and winery, but even so, the UT System has certain monitoring rights, said former UT System Chancellor Dan Burck, who was involved with that operation as a vice chancellor for business affairs.

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Agenda Wilkes Barre Times Leader August 14, 2002 Wednesday

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SECTION: AGENDA

LENGTH: 4491 words

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BYLINE: Michael Golubiewski Weekender Correspondent

BODY:
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Strasburg Rail Road Excursions (Strasburg:717.687.7522, www.strasburgrailroad. com).

COMIC RELIEF

Wisecrackers Comedy Clubs at the Clarion Hotel, Meadow Ave., Scranton. Exit 184 off I-81. Shows Friday and Saturday at 8 and 10:30.

Call toll-free 1-866-424-2411.

EVENTS

Barnes & Noble, Wilkes-Barre events:

A gay and lesbian book group will begin in August. The group will meet the 4th Monday of the month at 7 p.m. (after August 26, it will switch to the fourth Thursday).

Author Al Server will be at Barnes & Noble on Saturday, August 17 at 2 p.m. to discuss his memoir Xin Loi, Vietnam a recount of his 1968-1972 tour of duty.

ChildrenOs Storytime (The Daily Grind, Carbondale: 282.0821). ChildrenOs Storytime - first Sat. of the month, 10:30 a.m. Free.

Dunmore Rotary Scholarship Golf Tourney will be held September 15 at Shadowbrook Resort in Tunkhannock. The captain-and-crew tournament, which starts at 11 a.m. will include prizes, refreshments and a buffet dinner at CarmellaOs Restaurant. Participants will be assigned tee times. Cost: $75 paid in advance or $85 at the course. Limited to the first 144 paid entries. For details, call John Bouselli at 342-9121 or Pete Sabato at 343-6613.

Electric City Swing Dance Society Anniversary Dinner/Dance on Saturday, August 10 at Dupont Fire Hall. Call 963.0594 or 941.8967 for more info.

Eckley MinerOs Village will host its annual living history weekend on August 24 and 25, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. rain or shinw. Saturday will feature Town Ball, a forerunner of baseball, on Sunday a period church service will be held at 11 a.m. Call (570) 636.2070 for

details.

Greater Scranton YMCA has a newly formed Duplicate Bridge Club. Directed by John Burns, the club will play 1-4:30 p.m. each Sunday beginning September 15. The club will be open to up to 50 bridge players of all levels. In addition, the Greater Scranton YMCA will now host games for a second duplicate bridge club specifically for new bridge players with up to 50 player points. This club meets at 12:30 p.m. Thursdays at the Y. For details about either club, call the Greater Scranton YMCA at 342-8115.

Houdini Museum and Tour (Scranton: 342.5555). Admission: $7.50/adults and $6/children.

Hudson Model Railroad Club (Wilkes-Barre: 325.8955). The Hudson Model Railroad Club seeks new members to join their active group of modelers and meets every Wed. at 8 p.m.

Kiwanis Wyoming County Fair. The following are the concerts: Wednsday Aug 28 The Great Pretenders 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. Thursday Aug. 29 Jimmy Sturr 7:30 p.m. Saturday Aug. 31 Amanda Perko with Crystal Marie 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday Sept. 1 Mark Wills with Kevin Denney 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. and Sara Simms at 3:45 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. Act and Show dates,times can change without notice

La Festa Italiana will be held on Labor Day Weekend (Aug. 31, Sept. 1-2) at Courthouse Square in Downtown Scranton. There will be more than 70 vendors offering great Italian food and continuous live entertainment on two stages 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Free admission. For more information visit www.lafestaitaliana.org.

Lacawac Sanctuary, Lake Ariel will offer OFantastical Fungi and Magical MushroomsO on Wednesday, August 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the Carriage House at Lacawac Sanctuary. Call for more info., 689.9494. A $2 donation is requested.

Lion Brewery Tours (Wilkes-Barre: 823.8801, www.lionbrewery.com). Sat. D Make reservations for tour.

MoyerOs Grove Campground, Hobbie, events:

Aug. 10 -- Luau Weekend. Entertainment: Elvis & Blue Hawaii Show.

Aug. 17-18 -- 5th Annual Make A Wish Carnival.

Aug. 24 -- Wacky Formal.

Mulberry Poets & Writers Association (MPWA) will conduct a monthly Writers Workshop on the second Wednesday of each month, August through December 2002. The Workshop will be held from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the downstairs Community Room of the Children's Library, 500 Vine Street, Scranton, PA.

Positive Press Radio Schedule (4949 Birney Ave., Moosic: 457.3630, WAAT 750 AM). Tune into 750 AM or call for program listing.

Pocono Mountain Street Rods Events for 2002: the Friday Night Cruises at the Viewmont Mall, August 23 and September 27. Everyone is welcome: Street Rods, Customs, Classics, Antiques.

Robert Dale Chorale will hold auditions on Monday, August 12 and Monday, August 19 at Marywood University, from 7-9:30 p.m. Call for info., 586.3921.

Services For Homeless and Neglected Animals (Scranton: 963.0600). Animal Care Assoc., Inc. offers services to homeless and neglected animals.

St. PeterOs Evangelical Lutheran Church is looking for vendors for its attic-basement-craft show on September 7 at the church, 1000 Taylor Ave. in Scranton. Hours: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Cost $15 per table. Call 347.0760.

Tudor Book Shop, Kingston will host Mel and Marilyn Wolk authors and creators of the 2003 calendar OJewish Holiday FoodsO on Sunday, August 25 from 3:30-4:30. Some foods will be available for tasting.

Local author Kimbra Leigh will appear on Wed., Aug. 21 from 3-4 to read selections from her novel OWith the Stroke of a Pen.O

The art of Susan Obaza will be presented throughout the month of August.

Cafe performances:

West Side Blues Trio, Fri., Aug. 9 7:45-9:30

Dave Sterenchock, Fri., Aug. 16 7:30-9:30.

Singing Mikes, Fri. Aug. 30 7:30-9:30.

University of Scranton will conduct a Disability Conference on September 20 and 21 on campus. The conference will provide educators, professionals, counselors, parents and high school students with an opportunity to gain insights from presenters that will feature nationally recognized experts and authors.

Wine Brats present RavenswoodOs OBig Reds RockO Tour A comprehensive tasting of **Ravenswood's** renown and stunning line of Zinfandels Thursday, September 26, 6:30 p.m. Location: TBA

HISTORY

Anthracite Museum Complex (Scranton: 963.4804). Ongoing. Exhibit D Works by Lewis Hine. Mon. - Sat. 9-5 p.m., Sun. 12-5 p.m. Admission charged.

Luzerne County Historical Society (69 S. Franklin St., Wilkes-Barre: 823.6244).

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Food calendar North Shore News (British Columbia) February 27, 2002 Wednesday

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North Shore News (British Columbia)

February 27, 2002 Wednesday
Final Edition

SECTION: DINING; Pg. 33

LENGTH: 265 words

HEADLINE: Food calendar

BYLINE: Compiled Deana Lancaster, North Shore News

BODY:

2002 Vancouver Playhouse International **Wine** Festival: Tickets to the 24th annual Vancouver Playhouse International **Wine** Festival (April 22-28) are now on sale. Details are on-line at and in brochures available at most B.C. Liquor Stores and specialty **wine** stores in the greater Vancouver area. For more information or to purchase tickets, call Ticketmaster at 604-280-3311 or The Playhouse at 604-873-3311.

California **Wine** Dinner: On Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. Currents in the Westin Bayshore will be the site of a California **Wine** Dinner prepared by executive chef Jerry Fyfe. The meal will be paired with fine California **wines from such wine**-makers as Ironstone, Wente, **Ravenswood** and De Loach. Tickets are $125, available at The Arts Club Theatre Box Office, 604-687-1644 or online at .

The 22nd annual California **Wine** Fair Tour pours into Vancouver on March 1 from 7 to 9:30 p.m. in the Westin Bayshore's Grand Ballroom. The fair features more than 200 premium **wines** from 61 of California's top producers from the Napa, Sonoma and Central Coast regions. Tickets are $50, and proceeds will support the Arts Club Theatre. Tickets are available at The Arts Club Theatre Box Office, 604-687-1644 ,or online at .

Victoria's Festival of **Wine,** Music & Food: akes place March 7 to 10, 2002. Featuring four days of food, **wine,** music and decadence, the festival this year will showcase premiere British Columbia **wines** plus a select few Australian wineries as well. Proceeds will go to the Victoria Jazz Society and the Island Chef's Collaborative. Tickets: 250-386-6121/1-888-717-6121. For more information, go to

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Two new delis expand local sandwich scene Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico) January 25, 2002 Friday

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Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

January 25, 2002 Friday

SECTION: VENUE; Pg. 11

LENGTH: 503 words

HEADLINE: Two new delis expand local sandwich scene

BYLINE: Charlotte Balcomb Lane OF THE JOURNAL

BODY:
Dining Tips & Tabs

Two sandwich places will make delectable additions to dining in Albuquerque.

One is called Comida Loca Deli & Soup Co. at 118 W. Central, near the Century 14 Theaters. It is the sister restaurant of Comida Buena, which has been serving fresh soups, sandwiches, salads and beverages at the Albuquerque International Sunport for 11 years.

The new Downtown restaurant serves a similar menu, said Theresa Gelinas, who runs both restaurants with her sons, Marc and Joel Gelinas. The specialties of the house are soups, including "famous" green chile chicken, black bean chicken and green chile corn chowder. Overstuffed sandwiches, with interesting condiments, including chutney and sweet-hot chile, round out the selections.

Comida Loca is open 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Mondays-Thursdays and 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. The telephone number is 242-7907.

It's next door to the new location of Cold Stone Creamery, which opened Dec. 28. It's also near Tucanos Brazilian Grill.

HOME OF THE BOSS:

Set to open in mid-March is a new deli called Jersey Jacks Eatery. It's opening in the 25! office park near Pars Cuisine.

"We're going to try to bring the finest deli to New Mexico," said Richard Tanuz, who is opening up Jersey Jacks with his father, Arthur Tanuz, and sister, Rosemary Apodaca.

Richard Tanuz said the Tanuz family has been in the restaurant business in New Mexico for 25 years.

The idea is to recreate the best New Jersey deli outside the Garden State, complete with Boar's Head meats and Ol' Blue Eyes crooning on the soundtrack.

The menu will feature two-fisted pastrami sandwiches, stuffed baked potatoes and homemade soups daily. Soups will include matzo ball and seafood gumbo.

Jersey Jacks also will offer a selection of "healthy foods," which will include nutritional information and calorie counts. The address is 4320 The 25! Way; the telephone number is 268-1130.

WINE, WONDERFUL **WINE:** An event for **wine** lovers is Saturday night, so hurry if you want to make reservations. It is the annual winter **wine** dinner hosted by Terra American Bistro and featuring the full-bodied **wines of Ravenswood** Winery of California.

Peter Lukes, chef and owner of Terra, Tom Donlevy, of National Distributing Co., and the winemaker from **Ravenswood** Winery, Peter Mathis, have put together a stellar menu of food and **wine.**

The wine menu will include **Ravenswood** chardonnay, zinfandel, cabernet sauvignon and American Gewurztraminer. The dinner menu highlights a delectable duck and tart-cherry strudel for appetizers, followed by slow-braised short ribs with mint and anise. Dessert will be baked pear and hazelnut creme brulee.

Service begins at 6:30 p.m. and dinner is $45 a person. Call 792-1700 for reservations.

See a new restaurant? Know a great place to eat? Send the info to me in care of Dining Tips and Tabs, the Albuquerque Journal, P.O. Drawer J, Albuquerque, NM 87103. You can also call at 823-3820 or send an e-mail to clane@abqjournal.com.

LOAD-DATE: January 25, 2002

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TASTINGS; Carrying Heft With Grace The New York Times January 9, 2002 Wednesday

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The New York Times

January 9, 2002 Wednesday
Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section F; Column 4; Dining In, Dining Out/Style Desk; Pg. 4

LENGTH: 363 words

HEADLINE: TASTINGS;
Carrying Heft With Grace

BYLINE: By Eric Asimov

BODY:

MORE good zinfandels are being made than ever, and the choices are many. Huge, concentrated **wines** are the order of the day, with most hovering around 15 percent alcohol and some even approaching 17 percent, previously the territory of fortified **wines** like port. The challenge for these monsters is to balance their power with grace.

I had always preferred lighter-bodied, more subtle zinfandels, but I was surprised at how pleasing the bigger **wines** could be. The Mayo Family zin, a favorite, is 15.9 percent alcohol, yet well balanced. I also love the compact purity of the Brown Estate **wine,** at 14.9 percent alcohol, high by any definition except zinfandel's.

The **wines** of greatest power also tend to be the most expensive. The last six in this list, zinfandels costing no more than $25, are lighter bodied.

With so many good zinfandels around, it is impossible to list them all. Look also for bottles from Ridge, **Ravenswood,** Rosenblum, A. Rafanelli, Martinelli, Hendry and Niebaum-Coppola.

MAYO FAMILY WINERY, RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY, RICCI VINEYARD, OLD VINES 1999 $40
Rich, textured, delicious.

TURLEY, CALIFORNIA, OLD VINES 1998 $60
Dense and voluptuous.

BROWN ESTATE, NAPA VALLEY 1999 $45
Elegant, balanced and pure.

ROBERT BIALE VINEYARDS, SONOMA VALLEY, MONTE ROSSO VINEYARD 1999 $60
Big **wine,** great structure.

NEYERS, CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, PATO VINEYARD 1999 $35
Piercingly ripe fruit, well integrated with oak.

JC CELLARS, REDWOOD VALLEY, RHODES VINEYARD, CUVEE ISABEL 1999 $35
Sweet, peppery, bubbling with flavors.

FRANUS, CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, PLANCHON VINEYARD 1999 $23
Robust and complex with chewy tannins.

JOEL GOTT, AMADOR COUNTY, DILLIAN RANCH 1999 $25
Smooth and supple, with spice, berry and mineral flavors.

STORYBOOK MOUNTAIN VINEYARDS, NAPA ESTATE, MAYACAMAS RANGE 1998 $25
Lean structure; pleasing bites of fruit and pepper emerge with air.

JESSIE'S GROVE WINERY, LODI, VINTNER'S CHOICE, OLD VINES 2000 $15
Classic aroma; pure, delicious flavors.

SEGHESIO, SONOMA COUNTY 2000 $18
Graceful, classy and smooth.

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Mid-Price Delights From California Business Week December 17, 2001

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BusinessWeek
Business Week
December 17, 2001

SECTION: BUSINESSWEEK LIFESTYLE; **Wines;** Number 3762; Pg. 138 E1

LENGTH: 626 words

HEADLINE: Mid-Price Delights From California

BYLINE: By Cliff Edwards

HIGHLIGHT:
Sonoma and Mendocino varietals are gaining favor

BODY:
Marcia Kunde's family knows a thing or two about grapes. Since her great-grandfather emigrated from Germany a century ago, her family has been working the Kunde Estate Winery at the end of a lane of stately magnolias in California's Sonoma County. With vineyards extending 280 acres and comprising 10 microclimates -- pockets of differing weather conditions -- Kunde crafts a surprisingly wide selection of **wines.** Kunde is one of the many great Sonoma **wine** labels that would make a pretty addition to any mid-price ($ 12 to $ 25) **wine** collection. While Napa Valley is the better-known region, Sonoma is one of the most diverse **wine**-growing areas in the country, with hills and valleys that produce quality **wines** of nearly every varietal, or grape type. Long famous for its chardonnays and cabernet sauvignons, Sonoma is now garnering more attention for other varietals, such as syrah and merlot.

Merlots from Sonoma, for example, tend to be far more pleasing for novice drinkers than its cabernet sauvignons, with hints of cherries, plums, and other black fruits complementing the oak-barrel flavoring. One benefit of merlots, which usually are aged and reach store shelves two years after they are bottled, is that they can be opened immediately and sipped without the mouth-puckering tannin assault of the cabernets. Yet they can be saved for as long as six years before losing the complex flavoring that goes well with a variety of dishes, from steak to pasta.

It's hard to go wrong when choosing a moderately priced Sonoma merlot, but Kunde stands out. For one, the winery spent millions to carve out a cave in the hillside that runs along its vineyards. The cave is not only a neat tourist attraction; its coolness and humidity also serves as a natural place for aging **wine.** Kunde only uses grapes grown on its own estate, thus giving its **wines** more consistency.

Indeed, many California wineries buy grapes from vineyards throughout the state -- and as a result, their **wines** are more susceptible to the vagaries of regional weather patterns. That's why aficionados point to the unevenness of California **wines** bottled in 1998, when heavy rains and intense heat spells affected the quality of grapes. That year's **wines** may be prime candidates for **wine** cellars, improving with age. Fortunately, the 1999 vintage currently on store shelves appears to have many of the strong attributes of earlier years. BLUEBERRY. Another Sonoma favorite is the **Ravenswood** Winery, which over time has gained a near cult-like following for its fine zinfandel. Since being purchased last spring by Constellation Brands, the maker of jug **wines** Almaden and Paul Masson, **Ravenswood** has been expanding its distribution nationwide. While its Vintner's Blend Merlot line serves as decent, drinkable **wine** now, the **Ravenswood** Estate Bottled Merlot makes a good choice for storing. Age will mellow its berry, plum, and vanilla accents and bring out even more complex flavors.

Not far to the north, in Mendocino County, is the home of another crowd-pleaser -- Fetzer Vineyards. Fetzer's Barrel Select Merlot was the surprise favorite at an informal **wine**-tasting with my friends, beating out brands nearly three times as expensive. With hints of vanilla and blueberries, the velvety **wine** proved Fetzer can produce fine, reasonably priced products. A word of warning: Fetzer's vintner blends use lesser-quality grapes and aren't suitable for long-term storage. Even the Barrel Select varieties, most of which are ready to drink immediately, shouldn't be held more than two years.

As with all food and drink, what you enjoy is a matter of taste. Choosing from among these mid-price **wines,** you're likely to find some pleasing to your palate -- and your wallet, too.
URL: http://www.businessweek.com/index.html

GRAPHIC: Photograph: HOME GROWN: Kunde Estate Winery uses only its own grapes PHOTOGRAPH BY GERALD FRENCH/PANORAMIC IMAGES

California Sampler

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New wine, new ventures;Beaujolais makes its entrance; established winery branches out The Houston Chronicle November 28, 2001, Wednesday

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The Houston Chronicle

November 28, 2001, Wednesday 2 STAR EDITION

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 1167 words

HEADLINE: New **wine,** new ventures;
Beaujolais makes its entrance; established winery branches out

SOURCE: Staff

BYLINE: MICHAEL LONSFORD; Michael Lonsford's **Wine** of the Week appears Fridays in Dining Guide. If you don't have a quill pen, you can send an e-mail to michael.lonsford@chron.com.

BODY:
SOMETHING old, something Nouveau.

That was the case Thursday with the annual Nouveau Beaujolais silliness. That craze started 50 years ago in Paris as a marketing blitz to boost **wine** business in the bistros, and has blossomed, well, everywhere, it seems. Cases of Nouveau - officially not released until the third Thursday of November - are actually air-freighted around the world so that corks can be pulled at 12:01 a.m. the day of its official release.

Exactly what is Nouveau Beaujolais? While Beaujolais can be a somewhat "serious" **wine,** especially the top village **wines** and the even more serious crus, Nouveau Beaujolais is nothing more than a **wine** for quaffing in a bistro or a back yard. You chill it and drink it - you don't ooh and aah over it - end of story. Nouveau Beaujolais is meant to be drunk young - it's good for about six months after release, then it loses its youthful brightness.

Best of all, Nouveaus go well with holiday foods such as turkey with cranberry sauce, ham, dressing and even ambrosia. And since they're meant to be consumed chilled, they appeal especially to the American palate, weaned on chilled drinks, from milk to colas.

And since most Nouveaus are well under $ 10 a bottle, that's even better news during the holiday season, when expenses can run high.

While a number of restaurants around town hosted Nouveau dinners on Nov. 15, the tasting at the Doubletree on Post Oak, sponsored by the French-American Chamber of Commerce here, was, as always, the biggest single Nouveau event. With more than a dozen fine restaurants serving food, the event attracted more than 1,000 people to taste the Nouveaus and unofficially usher in the holiday season.

While Nouveau is nothing more than gamay grapes pressed and the juice quickly fermented and bottled, which eschews just about any attempt at complexity, there can be differences between the Nouveaus of different producers. This was evident Thursday night.

Of the Nouveaus on hand, the best and the brightest were from Moillard (excellent, full body), DuBoeuf (best bouquet of the night), Pierre Chermette (a pretty **wine**) and Drouhin (un-Nouveaulike label, but the **wine** was solid). Disappointing were the Jaffelin (thin) and Mommesin (missing a mid-palate - ouch).

Starting from scratch 25 years ago, winemaker Joel Peterson slowly and sure-handedly crafted **wines** to an ever-growing audience.

Owning little land but buying buying grapes from many sources Peterson's **Ravenswood** Winery specialized in zinfandels and also made a bit of chardonnay, merlot, cabernet sauvignon and a red blend called Icon. In 25 years, Peterson's production went from a handful of cases to a staggering 500,000.

In July, Peterson & Co. sold the winery to Constellation Brands for a reported $ 140 million, give or take. Peterson is staying on as senior winemaker.

That should ensure continuity in the **Ravenswood** style of **wines,** especially its major seller, the Vintner's Blend Zinfandel, which accounts for a major portion of the production.

Currently **Ravenswood** produces three tiers of **wines:** the Vintner's Blend series, now line-priced at $ 9.99; the county series, such as the Mendocino Zinfandel and the Sonoma Zinfandel (high teens to low $ 20s), and the single-vineyard **wines,** along with Icon (many in the $ 30s).

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Get Comfortable With Ageless American Favorites Tampa Tribune (Florida) November 21, 2001, Wednesday,

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Tampa Tribune (Florida)

November 21, 2001, Wednesday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: BAYLIFE FLAVOR, Pg. 2

LENGTH: 783 words

HEADLINE: Get Comfortable With Ageless American Favorites

BYLINE: KEN KOLLURA, asksommelier@intnet.net; Ken Collura is head sommelier at Bern's Steak House in Tampa.

BODY:
I've come to realize that I am aging. Stuff happens. Formerly unfamiliar pains visit without invitation, so there is a distinct downside to this. On the other hand, I know more than I ever knew when I thought I was cool. Consequently, I suppose the upside is I'm wiser, if less lithe.

As grapevines age, they start to produce **wines** that taste more serious, if less precocious.

These vines yield fewer bunches, but what is yielded tends toward the serious. Bottles labeled "old vines" (usually 40 years or older) are concentrated, yet elegant. It's kind of difficult to describe. There seems to be an added element of intensity.

Holiday time is the time I gravitate to comfort **wines.** There's a big bird to be dealt with and lots of stuffing and gravy. We're not talking subtlety here, just warmth, friends and family. So I seek out some trusted amigos, old vines zinfandel and petite sirah.

These uniquely American varietals produce some of our country's most compelling bottles. Here's some background on their origins.

Franciscan missionaries planted the first vinifera vines in California around 1780. After it officially became a state in 1847, **wine** growing accelerated, and California's fame as a new **wine** region spread.

By the end of the 19th century, nearly every area currently producing **wine** in California had been tried, and production was booming. The northern part of the state, especially Sonoma, Napa and Mendocino counties, proved to be suitable land for vines. Petite sirah and zinfandel were first planted in the 1880s in these and other areas, laying the groundwork for California's oldest, consistently harvested fine-**wine** grapes.

Zinfandel

Zinfandel took a firm hold on the California **wine** business around 1880, when its ability to produce in quantity was prized above all else. In the late 1890s and early 1900s, zin was regarded as California's own **wine** and occupied some of the choicest North Coast vineyards. During Prohibition (and for years after), it was the main choice for many winemakers. By the 1970s, zinfandel truly began to evolve into what we encounter today: America's most distinctive red **wine** grape.

Some of the viticultural disadvantages of zinfandel are that bunches can ripen unevenly, leaving green berries on the same bunch as those that have reached full maturity, and once grapes reach full ripeness, they will soon turn to raisins if not picked rapidly. It therefore performs best in warm, but not too hot, conditions and in high-altitude vineyards.

Napa zins look and taste quite different from their Sonoma counterparts, more often than not taking on a "cab"-like nose and texture. Some from Sonoma and other prominent regions such as Paso Robles, Mendocino and Amador seem more full-blown and richer, and can be packed with a distinct alcoholic punch.

Some favorites (always listed alphabetically): Traditional names such **Ravenswood,** Ridge and St. Francis come to mind, but so do lesser-known wineries such as Cline, Elyse, Peachy Canyon, Newlan and Seghesio.

Petite Sirah

Like it's compatriot above, petite sirah was first planted in California in the 1880s. It was long thought to be a lesser Rhone varietal, durif. Genetic tests have proved that it is not, without proving what it actually is.

Inky in color and scented with black pepper, petite sirah has been the backbone for California generic reds since the 1960s. It has performed most consistently in the Russian River and Alexander valleys in Sonoma and in Mendocino's interior valleys. Napa versions can be harder and less supple, taking 20-plus years to lose their rough tannins.

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DRESS UP THAT BIRD WITH WINE Wisconsin State Journal (Madison, WI) November 18, 2001 Sunday, ALL Editions

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Wisconsin State Journal (Madison, WI)

November 18, 2001 Sunday, ALL Editions

SECTION: DAYBREAK; ON **WINE;** Pg. G1

LENGTH: 559 words

HEADLINE: DRESS UP THAT BIRD WITH **WINE**

BYLINE: Chris Martell Wisconsin State Journal

BODY:
Hard cider washed down the Pilgrims' Thanksgiving dinners. Since then, finding the right beverages for a traditional Thanksgiving feast has been a lot more confusing, especially for those who buy the **wine.**

Wine that would bring out the best in the poultry and stuffing wouldn't necessarily be something you'd also like with yams buried in brown sugar, or a pucker-producing cranberry side dish. Still, it's possible to find **wines** that hold their own in the landslide of flavors that make up the Thanksgiving eating marathon.

The traditional Thanksgiving **wine** is Zinfandel (not to be confused with white Zinfandels, which can taste like liquefied Gummy Bears). "Zinfandel is considered the American grape because until recently, it was rarely grown anywhere but California," said Ross Gloudeman, the beverage manager at Blackhawk Country Club. "There's an affinity between Zinfandel and turkey, especially if there is sage in the dressing, or if you serve mustard or caraway in the meal."

Another advantage to Zinfandels is that they are easy to find in the Madison area. Gloudeman's favorite California Zinfandels for Thanksgiving are:

* Ballentine's: about $13 at many Madison **wine** boutiques.

* Rancho Zabaco: about $11 at most local liquor stores, including those at supermarkets like Woodman's and Sentry.

* Rosenblum: There are eight types between $14 and $25, all of them slightly different in terms of spiciness and fruitiness, available at many local liquor stores.

* **Ravenswood:** the most widely distributed Zinfandel, with bottles selling for between $15 and $20.

Gloudeman recommends refrigerating Zinfandel for about 10 minutes before serving it. To make the food and **wine** compatible, he also puts a little **wine** in his gravy, and keeps salt to a minimum. Cooks working on behalf of **wine** will also want to minimize sugar (as in hold the Cool Whip and mini marshmallows).

In addition to Zinfandel, there are other dry, fruity **wines** -- both whites and reds -- that would be a good match for the poultry. The good news for your budget is that young, simple **wines** are best for a Thanksgiving feast -- aged, expensive **wines, or wines** with delicate flavors, are pretty much a waste of money on a day like this. Fans of red **wine** could try Bordeaux, Beaujolais, Gamays from California, Grenache or Merlot. The main thing to avoid is a red **wine** with lots of tannin, since it gives food an unappealing acidity. If you like white **wine,** Riesling is known for its happy relationship with all edibles, and an alcohol content low enough to keeping family conversations civil. Other dry whites like the Chenin Blanc, Pinot Gris and Sauvignon Blanc are also well suited for turkey and stuffing. Most Chardonnays, despite their overwhelming popularity, can be a riskier choice for Thanksgiving, because their oak flavors can make them taste bitter if drunk with sweet foods.

Thanksgiving is a holiday that brings together people who may not know each other well, have anything in common with -- and just as likely, have different tastes in **wine.** To solve that problem, many hosts prefer to set out a variety of reds and whites and let guests serve themselves, rather than pouring the same **wine** for everyone.

The On **Wine** column appears occasionally in Daybreak. Reach Chris Martell at 252-6179 or at cmartell@madison.com.

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Stockton, Calif., Hosts Regional Wine-Tasting Event The Record September 8, 2001, Saturday

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The Record

September 8, 2001, Saturday

KR-ACC-NO: SK-**WINE**

LENGTH: 968 words

HEADLINE: Stockton, Calif., Hosts Regional **Wine**-Tasting Event

BYLINE: By Liz Benston

BODY:
Not far from the run-down storefronts that dot Stockton's downtown core, one of the region's premier **wine**-tasting events took place Saturday.

Once a cozier affair for a few hundred, **Wine** on the Waterfront, a charity event benefiting the Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Joaquin, Stanislaus & Merced counties, has ballooned into an upscale shindig featuring labels from nearly 60 area wineries. The event also featured foods and beverages from about 20 other vendors, including local restaurants and caterers.

The annual affair drew a well-dressed crowd of about 1,600 people who paid $ 40 each to sip **wines** at the multi-story Waterfront Warehouse, one of few commercial buildings overlooking downtown's Deep Water Channel. More important, the event generated publicity for a regional **wine** industry aiming for nationwide recognition. Local **wine** lovers were paying attention, too.

"I heard that this is one of the more elegant events in Stockton," said Joyce Gillingwater, 26, a Lodi resident who attended for the first time this year. "It's nice because you're on the water."

For Gillingwater, a former winery representative who is pursuing a career in **wine** marketing, the event is an opportunity to increase her familiarity with local **wines.**

There are plenty to choose from.

Wine on the Waterfront, which began in a University of the Pacific hall 19 years ago, has more than doubled the number of participating wineries and attendees in just the past three years -- mirroring a surge in the number of fledgling wineries that have emerged in San Joaquin County and the Sierra foothills.

"A huge number of wineries have been coming out of the woodwork in the last 10 years," said Mary Laughlin, executive director of the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization.

The Fair Play **Wine** Association, a group of wineries in El Dorado County near the border of Amador County, made their debut this year, along with several Calaveras County **wines.**

Closer to Stockton, Vino Piazza, a recently launched production and tasting center for several startup wineries in Lockeford, spread the word at this year's event.

The growth of area wineries should perhaps be no surprise.

Lodi leads California **wine** districts in the production of the top five premium **wine** varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Zinfandel, according to the Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission.

The region's annual yield is valued at more than $ 300 million -- San Joaquin County's top cash crop and more winegrape production than Napa and Sonoma counties combined.

Still, many locals aren't aware that much of the region's fruit ends up in well-known **wines** including Fetzer, Napa Ridge and **Ravenswood.**

Boutique wineries are emerging to capture name recognition for the region, where fruit often ends up in bottles for well-known labels based in picturesque Napa, Sonoma and Mendocino counties.

One example is the Van Ruiten-Taylor Winery in Lodi, a recent enterprise started by a vineyard consultant and experienced grape growers that unveiled an unusual blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz at the tasting event for the first time this year.

There's some evidence that Lodi's reputation is growing.

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Ravenswood Winery Is Sold;Sonoma label added to New York's Constellation Brands The San Francisco Chronicle APRIL 12, 2001, THURSDAY,

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APRIL 12, 2001, THURSDAY, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: BUSINESS; Pg. B6

LENGTH: 401 words

HEADLINE: Ravenswood Winery Is Sold;

Sonoma label added to New York's Constellation Brands

SOURCE: Chronicle Senior Writer

BYLINE: Peter Sinton

BODY:
Ravenswood, the Sonoma winery best known for its Zinfandel, has agreed to a $148 million buyout offer from New York's Constellation Brands.

Constellation, the second-largest U.S. winemaker and formerly known as Canandaigua, will pay $29.50 in cash for each share of **Ravenswood,** a 68 percent premium over its Tuesday closing price of $17.52.

Ravenswood, which sold 440,000 cases of **wine** for $37.9 million last year, will become part of Constellation's Franciscan Estates fine-**wine** division based in Napa Valley. Franciscan also owns Franciscan Oakville Estate, Simi, Estancia and Mount Veeder wineries in California.

Founded in 1976, **Ravenswood** won rave reviews for its distinctive Zinfandel **wines** from select Sonoma County vineyards. In the 1980s, it expanded into Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot and Syrah.

The company's sales have doubled since it sold stock to the public in 1999.

"Merging with Constellation gives us the opportunity to go to the next level," said Joel Peterson, **Ravenswood's** founder, winemaker and president.

"We were growing fast, but our sales and marketing were less than apt, and we wanted to merge with a group with real power," he added.

Peterson will remain with **Ravenswood** and oversee production.

Under its previous Canandaigua name, Constellation was best known for inexpensive **wines** such as Almaden and Paul Masson.

In the last two years, it has been upgrading its image and inventory.

In 1999, it acquired Simi for $55 million and Franciscan Estates for $240 million.

Earlier this year it agreed to buy Sebastiani Vineyards' 7-million-case Turner Road Vintners and Humphrey & Brown International **Wine** Marketers divisions for $295 million.

Constellation chief executive Richard Sands said in a statement that the addition of **Ravenswood** demonstrated his firm's "continued strategic investment in the fastest-growing segment of the beverage alcohol market" and gives his company "the most sought-after fine **wine** portfolio."

The high cost of producing and marketing **wine** is driving more wineries to merge. In addition to Constellation's recent acquisition binge, Australia's Foster's Brewing Group purchased Beringer **Wine** Estate Holdings for $1.5 billion last year and this month agreed to buy New Zealand's Matuo Valley **Wines** for about $4.6 million.

E-mail Peter Sinton at psinton@ sfchronicle.com.

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DINING OUT Touches of class make Remomo a standout The Capital (Annapolis, MD) April 06, 2001, Friday

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The Capital (Annapolis, MD)

April 06, 2001, Friday

SECTION: Entertainment; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 1129 words

HEADLINE: DINING OUT Touches of class make Remomo a standout

BYLINE: TOM & JULIE MALLONEE For The Capital

BODY:
WHEN YOU GO

WHAT: Remomo

WHERE: Arundel Mills

TELEPHONE: 410-579-6666

HOURS: Monday through Thursday, 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Sunday, 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.

HANDICAPPED ACCESS: Yes

CREDIT CARDS: All major

NON-SMOKING SECTION: Entire restaurant

RESERVATIONS: No

WHEN YOU GO

Unless you've been living in Patagonia, you must have heard of Arundel Mills, the latest over-the-top, one-stop, shop-till-you-drop outlet outcrop to grace our county. Hearing rumors of better than usual mall food, we finally made the trek ourselves.

Sure enough, right next to the pillars of the Temple of Karnak (or whatever the Egyptian theme, 24-screen cineplex calls it) is Remomo, a Milanesemodern trattoria opened by the same group that runs prestigious restaurants like Baltimore's Brass Elephant and Kings Contrivance near Ellicott City. This is their first venture into the mass market and, to a degree, they still seem to be feeling their way.

The high-ceilinged room has that European techno look, with lots of chrome and bare wood. It's broken up into a number of smaller, more intimate areas, and for those who must know how their order is doing, there is counter seating along the open kitchen, similar to what you encounter in sushi bars. Badly needed is some kind of self-closing or revolving door at the interior entrance, as the mall noise is quite bothersome.

The chef, who is also part owner, was formerly at the Brass Elephant, and his good taste shows in the menu and many of the presentations. For a moderately-priced mall eating emporium, there are touches of class that make Remomo stand out.

There are also some good intentioned ideas that still need work. Our antipasto for two ($ 7) was a mix of right on and near misses. It offered a number of items you usually don't encounter in an antipasto and left out some you do. Italian deviled eggs were a novel ideal, but we couldn't figure out anything particularly Italian about them.

A helping of seafood salad contained the expected calamari plus a marinated oyster and a piece of pickled herring, but there was no sign of the promised shrimp. There were plenty of roasted sweet red peppers, marinated artichoke hearts and lots of carrot sticks, but a crumpled sliver of prosciutto was miserly in the extreme.

There were two wrinkled and skinny spears of asparagus, one strawberry, and one each of olive pate and chicken liver mousse coated crostinis. This was supposed to be an appetizer for two, so why all the onesies?

Maryland minestrone soup (($ 3.95 cup/$ 4.95 bowl) came off much better. It was simply a good, thick minestrone zipped up with Old Bay and a goodly pinch of crab meat. It wasn't the listed jumbo lump, but still a sufficiency. A nice crossover.

Grilled salmon ($ 13.75) was a very fresh fillet that had been lightly seasoned and cooked to moist perfection over an open grill. It was served with acini de pepe, the little peppercorn shaped pasta usually found in soups, and wood-fire roasted vegetables, basically a mix of green and yellow squash. The veggies were another idea needing more attention, as they seem to have been roasted earlier and held much too long.

Italians eat a lot of pork, but you seldom see it on restaurant menus, except in the form of the ubiquitous fried sausage and peppers. In addition to the sausage ($ 11.75), Remomo shows its class by featuring a grilled pork porterhouse ($ 13.95) served in a pool of rich pork demi glace and garnished with strips of vinegarmarinated sweet red peppers. Delicious! The "porterhouse" was actually a thick loin-end chop which, excepting for a little gristle, was tender, juicy and sweet.

It came with more of the desiccated vegetable mix, plus wedges of roasted potato which fared much better. A nice touch was the inclusion of sweet potatoes along with new and redskin varieties.

We would like to have tried Remomo's lamb osso bucco ($ 15.25) which sounded heavenly. Oven-roasted crab cakes ($ 19.95) were an intriguing variation on the usual broiled version. And cheese tortellini with Bolognese sauce ($ 10.95) headed a list of interesting pasta dishes. There is also a three-course prix fixe dinner available Sunday through Thursday which includes a ticket to the nextdoor movie palace.

Wines are listed in groups from light to big, with chatty commentary to guide the uninitiated. Our pick for best value white would be Geyser Peak Sauvignon Blanc ($ 19.75), and red would be **Ravenswood** Zinfandel ($ 19.50). Or, you can spend $ 39.50 for a '95 Amorone which probably has still not reached its prime. There's a reasonable selection of house **wines** available by the glass ($ 3.50-$ 5) or bottle ($ 13-$ 22.75).

Domestic and imported draft beers range from $ 3 to $ 4.50 a 12-ounce glass. Bottled beers include a number of craft beers and imports. The only Italian beer is Moretti and Moretti la Rossa (Italy's answer to Killian's Red) at $ 4 a bottle. About half of Remomo's desserts come from Vaccaro's bakery in Baltimore, so you know they're going to be good. The other half are made in house and the ones we tried were excellent. A gelato tuile ($ 5.75) consisted of three flavors of the wonderful Italian ice cream in a crisp cookie cup. Poached pear ($ 5.50) was two halves of the cinnamon infused fruit, each carrying a dip of properly grainy pear sorbet.

Mention must be made of Remomo's excellent focaccia bread, served with a dish of olive oil for dipping, and of the service, which was expert, attentive and friendly. Even the runner who brought our entrees knew who got what without asking.

If you're looking for an above-average trattoria, we suggest you give Remomo a try. If you feel you must make a day of Arundel Mills (and it's hard not to), we'd recommend Remomo as the place to call it a day.

Getting there

Take Interstate 97 or Ritchie Highway North to Rte. 100 and go West to Exit 10. Turn right at the first traffic light and look for the big, kitschy pillars of the cineplex on your right.

The Beef du Jour

If they can separate Siamese twins, why can't restaurants split checks? We get feeble excuses like "your orders won't come out together" or "our cash registers aren't set up to do it." Give us a break! We frequently have lunch with a group of 10-12 people where each of us gets a separate check; we listen to jazz at a restaurant where each couple gets its own, even if the two are not sitting side by side. It certainly can be done.

Tom Mallonee has his own advertising business, is a co-founder of the Annapolis Food & **Wine** Society, and teaches **wine** appreciation at A.A. Community College. Julie Mallonee is a working portrait artist, accomplished gourmet cook and flower arranger.

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ZINFANDEL FEST DEBUTS IN VALLEY The Arizona Republic (Phoenix) April 4, 2001 Wednesday Final chaser Edition

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The Arizona Republic (Phoenix)

April 4, 2001 Wednesday Final chaser Edition

SECTION: THE GOOD LIFE; OFF THE SHELF; Pg. 6G

LENGTH: 854 words

HEADLINE: ZINFANDEL FEST DEBUTS IN VALLEY

BYLINE: MIKE STEPHENS, The Arizona Republic

BODY:
Zinfandel, you've come a long way (back), baby.

Say "Zinfandel" today and most casual **wine** drinkers will conjure images ofdark, rich, tongue-purpling **wine.** It wasn't that way 15 years ago, when Zinmeant White Zinfandel, a light, sweet, pink picnic beverage that was trendyand popular.

Zinfandel in 2001 has made a comeback of sorts and is a **wine** that oftensteals business from its more popular and austere cousin, Cabernet Sauvignon.Rich, mouth-filling and robust, these red **wines** can be complex enough to standup to the heartiest of meals, but also soft and supple, so they make greatdrinking on their own.

Zinfandel even has its own booster organization: Zinfandel Advocates andProducers -- affectionately known as ZAP.

California-based ZAP is a non-profit organization dedicated to educatingthe public about Zinfandel, often called America's Heritage Grape.

This month, the Valley's growing reputation as an important retail marketfor **wine** is being recognized when ZAP makes Scottsdale one of just three stopson its Spring Tour (Austin and Las Vegas are the other two). The event willinclude more than 50 ZAP wineries pouring their Zinfandels. Hors d'oeuvreswill be prepared to complement and contrast the diversity of Zinfandels beingsampled.

The event is April 25 at the Scottsdale Culinary Institute, 8100 E.Camelback Road, Suite 1001. Hours are 6 to 8 p.m. Tickets cost $45 ($40 forZAP members). Order through the organization's Web site, www.zinfandel.org, orby calling 1-(530) 274-4900. Tickets also are being sold through My WineCellar in the Ahwatukee area of Phoenix. Call (480) 598-9463.

The event is for adults only. No one younger than 21, including babies, isallowed.

If you're a Zinfandel fan and would like to join the organization,membership is $25 ($30 a couple) and includes a T-shirt, newsletter andwine-related volunteer opportunities. The Web site has details.

In honor of the ZAP event this month, here are four Zinfandels that Itasted off the shelf (each winery is a ZAP member; all but the first will beat the Scottsdale event). Cost reflects actual price paid at the specifiedretailer. Prices elsewhere may vary.

Tastings

Chateau Souverain 1998 Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel ($11.99, Cost Plus) --Flavors of chocolate and pepper, but still fairly smooth. It's a fine everydayZin, but in a tasting against the next three, those **wines** easily best it. Afew dollars more for Rancho Zabaco or **Ravenswood** buys a better **wine.**

www.chateausouverain.com

Rancho Zabaco 1998 Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel ($13.99, Cost Plus) -- Apopular, easy-to-find **wine.** This Zin is fruity, with rich flavors of berriesand cherries -- almost jammy. There is a small percentage of Petite Sirahblended in, which adds depth. A wide range of palates would take to this **wine.**

Ravenswood 1998 Old Vine Zinfandel ($16.99, Cost Plus) -- This is a bigname in the Zinfandel world, and **Ravenswood wines** are widely available. Thiswine had spicy-pepper qualities in the aroma. It's subtler than the RanchoZabaco, but also more refined. It's easy-drinking and delicious. Threequarters of what **Ravenswood** makes is Zin. Try this and you'll know why. (Note:**Ravenswood** also makes a less-expensive Vintner's Blend Zinfandel that looksvery similar, so make sure you study the bottle carefully.)

www.**ravenswood-wine**.com

Lolonis 1998 Redwood Valley Zinfandel ($19.99, Cost Plus) -- Zinfandel forpeople who care about certified organic products. Lolonis

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Zinful Pleasures FORBES March 05, 2001

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March 05, 2001

SECTION: Forbes Life; Pg. 190

LENGTH: 837 words

HEADLINE: Zinful Pleasures

BYLINE: Quentin Hardy

HIGHLIGHT:
WINE Tradition-loving devotees of zinfandel are finding bliss in a two-word mantra: old vines.

BODY:

A crowd of 9,200 zinfandel partisans converged on San Francisco in January to taste the first of 1999's new vintage, some of it only recently bottled, some drunk straight from the barrel. Their verdict? Zowie! Oenophile and amateur alike say '99 should go down as the best year of the last ten for zinfandel-a decade that saw not just the comeback but the redemption of California's quintessential red **wine.**

That's r-e-d. Not pink. Certainly not white. In the eyes of zin traditionalists, **wine** producers sinned immeasurably in the 1980s by using zinfandel grapes to make insipid soda-pop-like white zinfandels.

Zinfandel was one of the first grapes grown in California, imported there after the Gold Rush by the '49ers. Like those hardy miners, zin-in its original incarnation-was famous for its feistiness and full-bodied intensity. Flavor? A mix of ripe berries, spice, pepper, tar and tannic earth. Color? A blazing garnet. No wonder, then, that when white zin later came along, purists viewed it with all the disdain a Texan might muster for a vegetable barbecue.

Credit for zin's redemption goes largely to a group called Zinfandel Advocates & Producers (ZAP). Founded in 1991, it took as its motto: "The first obligation of **wine** is to be red."

Now some 6,000 members strong, ZAP has emerged as one of the largest and most active consumer-based **wine** organizations anywhere. Its showcase event is San Francisco's annual ZAP Festival, held the last week of January. ZAP also mounts other festivals around the world, throughout the year (see "Getting Zapped").

This year's San Francisco convocation drew 50% more people than last year's. They met at Fort Mason Center, on the city's northern waterfront, an old district revived by artisans. The buildings ZAP called home that day weren't much to look at-just two old converted warehouses on a former Army wharf. But attendees don't come for the architecture. They show up to drink.

This is not a glass-swirling, let-it-breathe kind of crowd. Rock-concert electricity crackled through the crisp morning air, as aficionados waited for festivities to start. Their mood? "Let's drink it now!" It was like waiting for the Oklahoma land rush. Then-bang!-the doors opened, and 255 producers uncorked better than 500 different varieties.

The '99 vintage, as we noted, is tops-the product of a year that winemaker Leon Sobon of Sobon Estate and Shenandoah Vineyards calls "just about perfect: an extra-long growing season with no weird weather and plenty of time for the grapes to ripen slowly."

Among the **wines** drawing maximum attention were "old-vine"zinfandels-so called because their fruit comes from vines dating as far back as the 1860s but still going strong. It's debatable whether century-old root stocks are the best ones for all **wine** grapes, but the argument here is that since old vines typically were planted in areas without irrigation, the flavor of **wine** made from their fruit tends to be especially concentrated and intense. In short, old-vine zins are the strict antithesis of (and a welcome antidote to) white.

We sampled a number of these oldies-but-goodies and can recommend the following, all of which are made from vines at least 100 years old:

*Turley **Wine** Cellars' Hayne Vineyard, $75: A powerful, oaky monster. So sought after is this **wine** that at auction it brings as much as $120. Tamer and easier to find-but still formidable-is another in Turley's stable of zins, labeled simply "Old Vines," $22.

*Saxon Brown **Wines'** Zinfandel, $38: Vines from the 1890s still impart notes of berry and briar.

*JC Cellars' Bolduc, $35: This dark-red bruiser has a blackberry nose and a long spiced finish. It needs a few years in the bottle to develop its full complexity.

*__Ravenswood's__ Monte Rosso, $30: Intense, with a hint of vanilla and coriander spice and a vanilla-cherry finish. Firm acidity makes it lively and juicy in the mouth.

*Sobon Estate's Fiddletown, $18: Exotic and complex, made from Amador County vines. For the price, this may well be the best California zin.

Old-vine **wines** were by no means the only stars of the show. Meritorious zins from vines merely middle-aged (or younger) include:

*Martinelli Winery's Jackass Hill, $75: Talk about full-bodied. This popular, hard-to-find zin could withstand a nuclear attack. Plan on drinking it to celebrate the end of World War III. It sells at auction for $90-$120.

*Robert Biale Vineyards' Spenker Selection, $30:Rich notes of chocolate and black currant.

*__Ravenswood's__ Teldeschi, $30: A good example of crisp, raspberry fruit from Sonoma's Dry Creek region.

*Haywood Winery's Morning Sun, $30: Displays the delicious concentration of fruit typical of grapes grown (as these were) at higher altitudes.

All of these are no-nonsense reds you can drink with pride, knowing you have kept faith with zin's past. Somewhere high above you, as you sip, a grizzled prospector is smiling down and giving you his blessing.

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The pows and bams belong to '99s;Amateur events bring out best of zinfandel samples Kansas City Star (Kansas & Missouri) February 28, 2001, Wednesday

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THE KANSAS CITY STAR

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Kansas City Star (Kansas & Missouri)

February 28, 2001, Wednesday METROPOLITAN EDITION

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. E1 ;THE **WINE** PRESS

LENGTH: 800 words

HEADLINE: The pows and bams belong to '99s;
Amateur events bring out best of zinfandel samples

BYLINE: DOUG FROST

BODY:
SAN FRANCISCO - For 10 years zinfandel lovers have been assembling in San Francisco at the end of January for the ZAP tasting.

ZAP (Zinfandel Advocates & Producers) began as a small but ardent collective and has grown into a much larger if looser organization. The annual tasting gets bigger every year, and this year's event drew more than 10,000.

"People are religious about it or something," says one zinfandel producer. "It can be a little weird," admits another, "but it's a party."

ZAP is a virtual love-in for zinfandel - red zinfandel, that is - and the 2001 version contained 230 wineries and three times as many **wines.** As befits an amateur event, few tasters were seen spitting it out. But as long as sobriety prevails, zin lovers have an unprecedented chance to assess a vintage and to discover, often before the pundits, the names of the next exciting estates.

The **wines** this year were divided between the 1998 and 1999 vintages. The comparison did 1998 no favors.

The best 1998 zinfandels can be aromatic and even intense, but they are not rich like the 1999s. So tasting the two vintages required two approaches.

With the '98s it's a fairly simple process; if you taste a delicious **wine,** the winemaker is either great or really lucky.

With the '99s, it's much trickier to sort out the great from the good.

It may seem ungrateful to complain about that, but by placing a lackluster vintage against a great vintage, ZAP offered an opportunity to see what a winery will do when confronted with adversity or advantage.

So, for this taster, it provided a road map to the pinnacle producers of zinfandel. The difference between 1998 and 1999 was no more pronounced than with Ridge, the winery with the longest history of superb zin. Its 1998s are at best difficult, reserved and reticent. And its '99s are typical of winemaker Paul Draper's brilliant ability to create elegance in an exuberant vintage. Seek out some Geyserville when it's released.

Zin's great three "R" win-eries (**Ravenswood,** Ridge and Rosenblum) have unquestionably been in the top ranks of zinfandel for well over a decade. While there is more competition in the 1999 vintage than ever before, all three acquitted themselves well here.

All **Ravenswood's** 1999 vineyard-designated bottlings (Teldeschi, Barricia and Monte Rosso) were lovely, although the Dickerson bottling was typically hard and minty.

Rosenblum was, as always, excellent across the board with the Rockpile '99 showing a little clumsy, but the rest are typically superlative. That means its Hendry '99, Rhodes Annette's Reserve '99 and Maggie's '99 bottlings are all first rate.

At least 50 out of the festival's 230 wineries showed excellent **wines.** Among those that showed lots of promise and deserve the attention of zinfanatics are Bella, Brochelle, Dasche, Everett Ridge, Gustavo Thrace, JC Cellars, Random Ridge, Savannah Chanelle and Star Hill.

But the new stars of zin are in the main a group of very small producers: Robert Biale, Brown, D Cubed, Downs Family, Eric Ross, Hartford, Nadeau, Outpost, Runquist and Turley. The **wines** they offer, 1998 or 1999, are delightful, but it's impossible to miss the obvious: '99 is a much better vintage.

"The '98s are not classic California zins, but with a little time they're going to develop nice aromatics," says Hartford Court winemaker Mike Sullivan. "They have good structure, but they'll never develop the exuberance of the '97s and '99s."

The 1998 harvest was difficult. Hartford's Tom Rozner explains: "There was a storm on Labor Day, with 2 inches coming down. A lot of people freaked out and picked and those **wines** are green and unripe. But those that waited, those that had nerve, did much better. The storms never hit, in fact it was a long Indian summer, the next rain didn't happen until Halloween."

Still, for this palate, the '98s are at best inconsistent. The '99s, happily, are another matter.

Both '99 and 2000 are lush vintages, and both are a pleasure to taste in their youth. While '97 may have grabbed the headlines, the best seems yet to come.

Random Ridge's Bill Hawley describes '97 as "full-on and hedonistic, like raspberry jam" and predicted the 2000 vintage would be similar. The '99, he says, "is more elegant and chocolate."

For zin lovers, the '90s up to now have not been as rewarding as the '80s. But the last part of the decade may turn out to be a wealth of riches. This year's ZAP tasting gave ample proof of that. Next year's ZAP, with '99 and 2000 the focus, could be an embarrassment of riches.

Doug Frost is a Kansas City **wine** and spirits consultant. His column appears in this section monthly.

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GLENN FOSTER CALIFORNIAN TOUTS WINES OF COLORADO Denver Rocky Mountain News (Colorado) December 31, 2000, Sunday

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Denver Rocky Mountain News (Colorado)

December 31, 2000, Sunday

SECTION: Local; Ed. Final; Pg. 35A

LENGTH: 491 words

HEADLINE: GLENN FOSTER
CALIFORNIAN TOUTS **WINES** OF COLORADO

BYLINE: By Carla Crowder, News Staff Writer

BODY:
California transplant Glenn Foster wants people to trust two important facts about his occupation at the Two Rivers Winery.

First, some wonderful **wines** truly are produced in Colorado.

"The **wines** can be really quite good," he said. "I won't say that all of them are, but there's great potential here, and we hope that people will be open-minded."

Second, though his job is set in a beautiful location and he creates an appealing product, it's demanding work. Being a winemaker is no cushy job.

Foster, 36, a native of Oakland, learned his craft in the golden, rolling hills of northern California's **wine** country at the Rav-ens-wood Winery in Sonoma County.

He first ventured into Colorado for college, splitting his education between Boulder and Greeley. With a degree in teaching, he worked as a substitute for middle school science and social studies teachers.

But grapes are more easily cultivated than seventh-graders, he found. "I discovered teaching wasn't for me."

So in 1992, he returned to the **Ravenswood** Winery. This was home. After all, his father helped start the business in 1976. Known for its zinfandel, **Ravenswood** grew from a first harvest of 479 cases to a publicly owned company that produced 500,000 cases last year.

Still, there was something about the tug of Colorado, something strong enough to lure him from the heart of the American **wine** industry to a state where many wineries are fledgling businesses.

"We decided in 1995 that we really liked Colorado better," Foster said. " Due to lower population density and also the presence of a burgeoning **wine** industry."

Neither he nor his wife, Natalie, who is from Pueblo, had jobs.

As Foster put it, "We came out on a free-fall basis."

He got a none-too-glamorous job in the perishables warehouse of the City Market grocery store chain, working a 3 p.m.-to-midnight shift.

But after a few months, the Californian picked up a part-time job at Grande River Vineyards in Palisade, eventually rising to head of production.

His current job is at one of Colorado's newest wineries. Two Rivers opened its tasting room in November 1999.

"It's really an interesting business; there are so many facets to it," Foster said. "There's a little bit of a marketing streak in me. I also have a bit of a mechanical streak in me. I enjoy working with the equipment."

And of course, "I also enjoy just drinking it."

Some days, the Fosters are in charge of the tasting room and the retail operation.

The day after Christmas they were swamped.

But the busiest time is crushing season in the fall.

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BIG FISH; BIGGER FISH The Washington Post November 19, 2000, Sunday, Final Edition

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November 19, 2000, Sunday, Final Edition

SECTION: MAGAZINE; Pg. W21; DINING

LENGTH: 1130 words

HEADLINE: BIG FISH; BIGGER FISH

BYLINE: Tom Sietsema

BODY:

Oceanaire Seafood Room

1201 F St. NW (near 12th Street). 202-347-2277.

Open: for lunch Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; for dinner Sunday through Thursday 5 to 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday 5 to 11 p.m. All major credit cards. Reservations suggested. Separate smoking area. Prices: lunch appetizers 95 cents to $ 14.95, entrees $ 8.95 to $ 34.95; dinner appetizers 95 cents to $ 42, entrees $ 12.95 to $ 57.95. Full dinner with **wine,** tax and tip about $ 75 per person.

The only thing that doesn't ring true to yesteryear at the Oceanaire Seafood Room is the cell phone at the red leather booth next to mine.

When's the last time you started a meal with a relish plate? Quaint, and complimentary, it's a homey welcome: a few bites of herring surrounded by crisp carrot sticks, radishes, big black olives and celery. The menu, printed in a style that resurrects the art deco era, promises such golden oldies as oysters Rockefeller and baked Alaska. Big-band music dances in and out of your conversation, and the enthusiastic, fresh-faced servers, whizzing by with glistening shellfish platters and fish from just about everywhere, sound as if they're straight out of charm school. "Our pea salad tastes just like Grandma's!" a waitress gushes at lunch one day. And so it does.

Oceanaire, which sailed oh-so-smoothly into its retro digs in September, is a seafood restaurant for people who like steakhouses. You'll notice it in the bravura of the staff, as well as the portion sizes. A team of sumo-size shrimp appear in the shrimp cocktail. Morsels of Dungeness crab climb an Everest of iceberg lettuce in an inflated version of crab Louis. Baby spinach tossed with a warm bacon dressing and oil-soaked croutons yields salad enough for three, and just wait until you see dessert. Oceanaire is the only restaurant I've been to where a waiter has volunteered to "break down" my Key lime pie (hidden under a cumulus of whipped cream, the wedge is served with a steak knife).

You're here to catch fish, of course. Depending upon the day, there might be Arctic char from Iceland, wahoo from Florida and sturgeon from Washington state. Yet I'd be happy just to knock back some raw oysters and white **wine** at Oceanaire's inviting bar. (Two of my favorites among the dozen or so oysters offered daily are the sea-sweet, thumbnail-size Olympias and the briny Kumamotos, both plucked from the cold waters of the Pacific Northwest.) The main dining room strikes a rakish pose, with its cherry wood paneling, curved booths, wooden Venetian blinds and flattering lighting. Picture the Queen Mary merged with the Stork Club -- right down to the mixing of such antique cocktails as sidecars. The **wine** list, overloaded with similar-tasting chardonnays, nevertheless rounds out its selection of white **wines** with a couple of fine sauvignon blancs, the '98 from Fiddle-head ($ 45) near Santa Barbara and a '99 from Dry Creek ($ 24). And the **wines** by the glass include such worthy options as Peter Lehman semillon from Australia and **Ravenswood's** Lodi zinfandel.

A tip when trawling for your dinner: Don't be fooled by flash. Otherwise pleasing salmon isn't helped by its cloying bed of pecan-laced sweet potato puree, nor is pan-seared Chilean sea bass improved by a thick scarlet sauce that tastes too sweetly of fall fruit blended with earthy beets. A terrific slab of grilled rockfish, poised on lumpy polenta, is complicated with fried sage leaves and one sauce too many. Big, tender clams are steeped in a "lemon grass" broth that tastes only of butter. And while the muted cioppino wouldn't pass muster on its home turf in San Francisco, its melange of salmon, scallops and shrimp steam-bathing in tomato broth is admirably generous. Of the side dishes, the crisp green beans strewn with almonds and the golden matchstick fries beat out the limp asparagus and the bland mashed potatoes.

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WINE UNDER $20;A Mere $2.88 per Chapter The New York Times November 5, 2000, Sunday, Late Edition - Final

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November 5, 2000, Sunday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section 14; Page 14; Column 5; The City

LENGTH: 346 words

HEADLINE: WINE UNDER $20;
A Mere $2.88 per Chapter

BYLINE: By HOWARD G. GOLDBERG

BODY:
In a city where tidal charts could reflect sommeliers' arrivals and departures, Joseph DeLissio's career as the River Cafe's **wine** director rests on the same bedrock as the Brooklyn Bridge overhead. For 22 years, his **wine** program has illuminated the restaurant's American cuisine as brightly as Lower Manhattan lights that sparkle across the East River.

Whether stocking the cellar or working the floor, he has influenced the tastes and judgments of thousands. His own were partly shaped by Italian grandparents who, digging into the New World, built a **wine** cellar, stored their **wine** in wooden milk crates and reused corks.

Reared in Brooklyn and a longtime Staten Island resident, Mr. DeLissio, who knows the value of a buck, conveys in "The River Cafe **Wine** Primer" (Little Brown, $25.95) his tugboat-like ease in steering novices. Nine chapters, each the equivalent of a $2.88 glass of **wine,** brim with sensible information that can save budget-conscious holiday shoppers cash at a moment of economic ebbing.

"Ordering **wine** in a restaurant should be easy, not intimidating," he writes. "Selecting **wine** in a local **wine** shop should be enjoyable, not anxiety provoking."

Since **wine** is organic, buying is always somewhat risky. Mr. DeLissio's list of "good value wineries" -- I agree with them -- offsets risk. For example, in California: Beringer Founder's Estate line, Domaine Carneros sparkling **wines,** Estancia, Fetzer, Franciscan, Louis Martini and **Ravenswood;** in Washington, Chateau Ste. Michelle, Columbia Crest, Hogue Cellars; in Oregon, Oak Knoll and Sokol Blosser.

From Spain: Torres, Conde de Valdemar and Marques de Murrieta; Italy, Alois Lageder, Chiarlo; Germany, Robert Weil; Chile, Los Vascos and Santa Rita; France, Burgundies of Joseph Drouhin, Rhones of Jaboulet and such Bordeaux chateaus as d'Angludet and Meyney.

His restaurant tips are smart: Sniff empty glasses before **wine** is poured, because they might impart off odors. And refuse a **wine** if "the server has not informed you of a vintage or producer change." HOWARD G. GOLDBERG

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THE WINE PRESS Seasons In the sun are no match for wonder of good wine in winter Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (Little Rock, AR) November 01, 2000, Wednesday

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Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (Little Rock, AR)

November 01, 2000, Wednesday

SECTION: FEATURES; Pg. E3

LENGTH: 692 words

HEADLINE: THE **WINE** PRESS Seasons In the sun are no match for wonder of good **wine** in winter

BYLINE: ROBERT NERALICH

BODY:
My three sons and I recently had an argument over which of the four seasons is the best, even though for me to write that "we argued" is about as remarkable as it would be for me to declare that "we were in the same room" or that "we were breathing." But what hurt me about this disagreement is the fact that all three boys accused me of being "inherently biased."
This cruel denigration of my parental fairness cannot go unanswered, and so in this column I am going to present an absolutely impartial assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the four seasons. I challenge readers to guess which one is my favorite.
SPRING. Strength: The flowers are pretty. Weaknesses: In Arkansas, spring lasts only three hours, and then the flowers wilt in the heat, along with everything else.
SUMMER. Strength: It's warm. Weaknesses: It lasts three-quarters of forever; it infests the world with ticks and chiggers and afflicts everyone with prickly heat. Summer is the favorite season of slothful dullards.
I will conclude my relentlessly fair appraisal of the seasons after describing some excellent **wines.**
While it is splendid for casual sipping, Montevina 1999 Amador County Nebbiolo Rosato ($ 8) has substance and character enough to accompany a wide variety of casual fare, including burgers, barbecue and spicy Tex-Mex cuisine. This charming rose is filled with pleasantly rounded berry and citrus flavors, and its finish is crisp and lively.
The luscious black cherry, blackberry and dark currant flavors of Beringer Founders' Estate 1998 California Shiraz ($ 11) are complicated by deftly integrated nuances of pepper-spice, citrus and vanilla. This "Best Buy" red **wine** has a velvet-smooth texture and a soft, oak-tinged finish.
Meridian 1999 Santa Barbara Chardonnay ($ 11) has immensely appealing and well-balanced tropical fruit, apple, peach and vanilla flavors, a rich texture and a long, fruit-forward finish. This delectable chardonnay would be a splendid companion for trout, shellfish and pasta salads.
Ravenswood 1997 Napa Valley Zinfandel ($ 17) is the sort of **wine** that zinfandel lovers dream about, since it is filled with dark berry, bramble-spice and vanilla-oak flavors that are supported by supple tannins. The finish of this excellent red **wine** is polished and lingering.
The bright melon, fig and lemon grass flavors of Arbor Crest **Wine** Cellars 1998 Sauvignon Blanc ($ 10) would be the perfect match for fried fish or herb-seasoned chicken. The finish of this Washington State **wine** is vibrant and refreshing.
Three generations of the Travaglini family have crafted nebbiolo **wines** in the Piemonte region of northern Italy, and their artistry is deliciously apparent in each sip of Travaglini 1996 Gattinara ($ 30). This eloquent **wine** has beautifully orchestrated ripe raspberry, blackberry and black cherry flavors that are complicated by hints of brown spice, earth and pepper. The texture of this Gattinara is smooth, and notes of vanilla-oak accent its satiny finish.
FALL. Strength: The autumn foliage is lovely. Weaknesses: Since summer persists into late October, the leaves quickly turn sere. Football season makes people emotionally unbalanced, and craft fairs make them deranged.
WINTER. Strengths: It is the loveliest of the seasons and the one favored by intelligent, spiritually enlightened and fair-minded people. Blizzards sometimes liberate everyone from onerous responsibilities, and people who hate snow probably also despise Santa Claus. Weakness: Winter doesn't last all year.
In my completely objective opinion, someone would have to be a mind reader in order to determine which of the four seasons is my favorite, since I have been scrupulously fair in all my evaluations. I suppose that it would be unkind for me not to declare which of the seasons I prefer, and so I reveal that it is winter. I wager that this disclosure surprised almost everyone, except, of course, for those obnoxious "know-it-all" types whose ranks include the same misfits who admire spring, summer and fall.
Write to Robert Neralich at 946 Mission Blvd., Fayetteville, Ark. 72701 or e-mail:
RNeralich@aol.com

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THE AIR WAS HEAVY, AND SO WERE THE WINES Philadelphia Daily News AUGUST 23, 2000 Wednesday LATE SPORTS EDITION

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AUGUST 23, 2000 Wednesday LATE SPORTS EDITION

SECTION: FEATURES FOOD; Pg. 50

LENGTH: 517 words

HEADLINE: THE AIR WAS HEAVY, AND SO WERE THE **WINES**

BYLINE: Lynn Hoffman, For the Daily News

BODY:
They must have been worried at Ristorante Panorama in the Penn View Hotel.

It was one of those unimaginably hot Philadelphia days that turns the air into liquid in your lungs. The city stank from gas fumes that accumulated like compound interest in the heat. And Panorama was holding a **wine** tasting.

Not just any **wine** either - these were big, rich reds from **Ravenswood,** a Sonoma County winery whose slogan is famously "No Wimpy **Wines.**" Not exactly the beverages you crave to cool you down.

It wasn't just any crowd of cork dorks either. The guests were members of the American Sommeliers Association - folks who drink for a living and talk about what they drink for a hobby. Reputations were at stake.

So the hosts turned the thermostat all the way down. It felt like Thanksgiving in the tasting room by the time the crowd assembled. I wouldn't swear that they toasted pumpkin pie spices and fed the smoke into the ductwork, but I wouldn't swear against it either. Sweaty bodies started to shiver and you could almost see your breath with each sigh of relief.

Perhaps the most interesting **wine** of the day was one that wasn't served. When Joel Peterson and W. Reed Foster founded **Ravenswood** Winery in 1976, they were dedicated to the production of Zinfandel. Today, half their production is **Ravenswood's** "starter" Zinfandel, the Vintners Blend, which has been a consistent gold-medal winner since 1983. This **wine,** which is available in state stores, will cost you between $10 and $13. It is an easy-drinking, lip-smacking favorite, generously flavored with just enough tannic bite.

But this tasting was about rarer stuff, more ambitious single-vineyard **wines** - Zins and Merlots. The **wines** are made in an old-fashioned, European way, fermented in wooden and stainless steel open-top tanks with wild natural yeasts doing the work. Grape stems are frequently added for tannin, and the cap of skins is punched mechanically or by hand three to five times a day. Everything is aged in small French oak barrels, fined with egg whites and usually not filtered. It's the kind of winemaking your grandfather would have understood.

Ravenswood Lodi Zinfandel '97 ($18). What a bouquet! Floral perfume and ripe cherries knock you back on your chair. The massively tannic attack of the **wine** suggests that it could wait in the cellar for a year or three.

Ravenswood Napa Zinfandel '97 ($14). This **wine** had a younger strawberry and cherry bouquet with a pleasantly spicy flavor and a long finish. With a slight cellar chill, it actually could have been served on a hot summer day.

Ravenswood Belloni Zinfandel '97 (available later this month at about $25). The complex, smoky nose of this **wine** begged for salmon right off the grill or a piece of chicken smothered with an herb pesto.

Ravenswood Monte Rosso '97 ($30). A combination of cedary and earthy tastes made me want to check the label to make sure that I hadn't been poured a Cabernet by mistake. A medium-bodied **wine,** pleasant plum flavor, with the distinctive cigar-box aroma overshadowing everything else.

NOTES: On **Wine**

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There's nothing wimpy about Ravenswood wines The Miami Herald July 4, 2000, Tuesday

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The Miami Herald

July 4, 2000, Tuesday

SECTION: FOOD NEWS

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LENGTH: 522 words

HEADLINE: There's nothing wimpy about **Ravenswood wines**

BYLINE: By Fred Tasker

BODY:
H. Reed Foster is the money man at California's **Ravenswood** Winery, but he's no corporate stiff.

He wears the winery's motto, "No wimpy **wines,**" printed on his T-shirt in 15 languages. (In French, it's "Pas de vins poules mouillees," literally "No wet-hen **wines.**" In Latin it's "Nullum vinum flaccidum." "I had it translated by a Jesuit scholar at Santa Clara University," he says. In Spanish, it's "No vinos sin ...," (well, we can't finish that phrase in a family newspaper).

Ravenswood's wines, especially its red zinfandels, thoroughly live up to the slogan. They are powerful but smooth, with rich, full body and big, ripe tannins, and sometimes up to 15 percent alcohol, compared to the usual 12 percent or so.

Their power, in fact, makes them the perfect **wines** for summer barbecues _ full and rich enough to stand up to sweet, spicy sauces and grilled meats, both white and red.

One **wine** critic dubbed the zins "Gothic," to the delight of **Ravenswood** winemaker Joel Peterson. He brags of using "old world" methods to make them _ open-top tanks for warmer fermentation, wild, natural yeast, grape stems added for structure, minimum filtration.

But there's more to it than that. Many zins that high in alcohol become too sweet, almost like port; **Ravenswood's** are more like good cabernet sauvignons in texture, clean and firm, nicely balanced, very unponderous.

Ravenswood's popularly priced "Vintner's Blend" zinfandel, which makes up half of its production, is bright, fruity, spicy, priced at $11. The Napa and Sonoma zinfandels and single-vineyard zins, at $14 to $29, regularly score 90 and above in blind tastings.

Peterson's reputation as the "King of Zins" is bolstered by the 1998 vintage (just now being released). In a tough, unripe "El Nino" year for many vineyards, his zins are as big and ripe as ever.

"It was a difficult year for zinfandel in California," Foster says. "People who panicked and picked early didn't do so well. But people who waited until the grapes were really ripe were fine."

Peterson and Foster say their zins will age well for 5 to 10 years. But they like to drink them younger.

"As they age, they lose their spicy, peppery, blackberry flavors," Foster says. "They taste just like cabernet sauvignon."

He dismisses European critics who say zinfandel, the purely American grape, is incapable of the excellence of European cabernet sauvignon or merlot.

"I'm absolutely convinced the zinfandel grape makes world-class **wine,**" he says.

Foster, who graduated from Harvard Business School but looks very non-corporate with his white beard, battered fisherman's vest and slogan-covered T-shirt, was chief financier in 1976, when he and Paterson founded **Ravenswood.**

"We started with no land, no building, no grapes," he says.

Today, with their new, 45,000-square-foot Quarry Winery coming on line just outside the town of Sonoma, **Ravenswood** is making 350,000 cases a year.

That's a success story.

(Fred Tasker is the **wine** columnist for the Miami Herald.)

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Blues Greats Come to Boogie by the Russian River;Etta James in Guerneville again for festival The San Francisco Chronicle JUNE 16, 2000, FRIDAY,

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The San Francisco Chronicle

JUNE 16, 2000, FRIDAY, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: MARIN SONOMA NAPA FRIDAY; Pg. 3; THE ARTS

LENGTH: 926 words

HEADLINE: Blues Greats Come to Boogie by the Russian River;

Etta James in Guerneville again for festival

BYLINE: Bill English

BODY:
If you've got the blues, want the blues or have no idea what the blues might be -- check out the fifth annual Russian River Blues Festival this weekend.

Once again, the legendary Etta James and the Roots Band will be singing with the flow -- belting out her signature hits downstream in the resort town of Guerneville.

The Grammy Award-winning Rock and Roll Hall of Famer joins a stellar lineup of musical acts including Los Lobos, the Average White Band, Tommy Castro, Funky Meters, Little Milton, Angela Strehli, Bobby Murray, the Duke Robillard Band, and Mighty Mo Rodgers for an all-out blues celebration.

This two-day event, on Johnson's Beach, will offer an incredible mix of musical styles.

Show promoter Lupe De Leon, who began booking riverside events 15 years ago with the highly successful Russian River Jazz Festival, said he feels there's something magical about an outdoor concert by the water.

"The setting here is beautiful," says De Leon. "You've got the river, the redwoods, and you're right in the heart of the **Wine** Country. I've been to festivals all over Europe, and I think this event is as spectacular as any of them."

Etta James, 62, has a long and respected reputation in the music world. She scored her first big hit in 1953 when she recorded "Roll With Me Henry," with Sonoma County's own Johnny Otis. In her latest album, "Heart of a Woman," James sings popular standards by such immortal songwriters as Duke Ellington and Irving Berlin.

In the past, her classic tunes have entered the repertoires of such singing stars as Janis Joplin, the Rolling Stones and Tina Turner.

"My fans accept any direction I take musically," James says. " They know I'm a singer that sings all kinds of songs. I think this new album is very hip. I might do some of the older tunes at the Blues Festival and see what happens."

The Russian River Blues Festival offers the kind of the excitement that was once found at the historic outdoor concerts held in Golden Gate Park during the 1960s.

Thousands of people -- all fans of the same kind of music -- sit side by side, giving the event a tribal feel akin to Woodstock.

Talk and gossip on the beach tends to demonstrate a true understanding of this traditional American musical form and the artists who perform it.

At this festival everybody knows the blues.

"The majority of the fans on the Russian River know me personally," James says. "I used to work at the old Hexagon House around 1978. I cooked, I hung out. I love Guerneville, and I love to come up there to sing. The people on the river are hot, and they love to party."

Bill Bowker, a local award-winning DJ who hosts "Blues With Bowker" on KRSH 98.7, will be the master of ceremonies at this year's show. Bowker, who has 20 years of Sonoma County radio to his credit, has emceed the festival four times. He is an unabashed lover of the blues.

"This year's lineup will expose fans to new blues talent like Mighty Mo Rodgers," says Bowker. "But we'll also be stepping outside the lines of traditional blues with the roots-rock group Los Lobos and the New Orleans funk of the Meters. I don't think the addition of this kind of music to the festival will cause any problems with the blues community."

In past festival weekends, as many as 7,000 fans have gathered on the beach or floated on inner tubes to listen to some of the hottest acts in the country.

De Leon is clearly more interested in putting on a well-rounded show than strictly defining what should be called the blues. Purists might argue that Los Lobos is actually a Tex-Mex group -- but no one can find fault with the integrity of their sound.

"I try and book music that I enjoy and that has importance in the overall blues spectrum," says De Leon. "I try to include delta blues, urban blues and rhythm and blues. When so-called blues people call me up and say a certain act isn't the blues -- I tell them they don't really know the blues. Someone like Etta James is beyond placing in a category. Cesar Rosas of Los Lobos could teach a class at Harvard on the blues. The man is that knowledgeable."

This year's festival also will feature **wine** tasting from several of Sonoma County's world-famous wineries. Those 21 and older will be able to taste premium **wines from Ravenswood,** Kenwood, Davis Bynum and many others. The fee for tasting is nominal and a portion of the proceeds will benefit Sonoma County charities. In addition, a small city of tents will offer gourmet foods and crafts by local artists.

RIVERSIDE BLUES

If you plan on attending the Russian River Blues Festival, gates open at 10 a.m. tomorrow and Sunday. Music begins at 11 a.m. both days.

-- TICKETS: $45, or $85 for a two-day pass. "Gold Tier" tickets also are available for $85 per day and allow concertgoers reserved seating near the stage, the use of a beach chair, free **wine** tasting and preferred parking.

-- WHAT TO BRING: Blankets, swimsuits, hats, sunscreen and even a sweater for cool river evenings.

-- WHAT TO LEAVE HOME: Pets and audio/video recording equipment. Neither will be allowed.

-- DIRECTIONS: Guerneville is 90 minutes north of the Golden Gate Bridge. Take 101 north to Santa Rosa. Just north of Santa Rosa take the River Road exit. Follow the river west for 17 miles to Guerneville. Follow the signs to Johnson's Beach.

-- FOR INFORMATION: Call (510) 655-9471.

Bill English is a free-lance writer based in Kenwood. Send comments to nbayfriday@sfgate.com.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, SINGING LEGEND: Etta James, who had her first big hit in 1953, performed at last year's Russian River Blues Festival. / Geoffrey Wittmer/Special to The Chronicle

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Why Ravenswood's got rosy bouquet CBS MarketWatch June 1, 2000 Thursday

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CBS MarketWatch

June 1, 2000 Thursday

SECTION: WALL ST. EAVESDROPPER

LENGTH: 1020 words

HEADLINE: Why **Ravenswood's** got rosy bouquet

BYLINE: Jeff Clabaugh; Jeff Clabaugh writes for CBS.MarketWatch.com.

BODY:
http://www.investorplace.com/todaysadvice/advice1.php See full story.

If you ever hit it big with an investment, you might be likely to toast to your success.

In this case, you might end up toasting with your success.

InvesTools(TM) Web site quotes special situations adviser RobertFlaherty as saying sales of premium **wines** from Northern California are booming because of an upbeat economy and a confident and more secure **wine**-drinking public. Flaherty(TM)s favorite vintner for investors is the **Ravenswood** Winery (RVWD). Its stock has gained about 10 percent this year and, while a year or two ago that wouldn(TM)t even be worth looking at for many investors, a positive return of any kind is a welcome sight in this market.

Ravenswood is big on red **wines,** which account for about 90 percent of U.S. sales. Flaherty likes the company(TM)s investment on promoting itself because a brand name can make or break a winery. **Ravenswood,** which went public last spring, is enjoying more of its red-hot pre-IPO growth, with net income up more than 43 percent. And its success might be its quality products at a fair price. Its management is strict about quality and it has a new facility that will reduce its dependence on third-party facilities now.

Ravenswood(TM)s stock, which closed Wednesday at 11 3/8, is reasonably priced, and has a strong platform for continued growth, Flaherty says. He predicts fiscal 2001 revenue will top $40 million, putting earnings at $1.25 vs. 67 cents a year ago.
http://www.investools.com/cgi-bin/IT/advisory/archive See full story.

Worst-case scenario

Time to rethink investment strategies? As the mood of the markets changes, just about everybody is. Among those doling out advice is Jay Schabacker, who edits the Mutual Fund Investing newsletter. And, at the InvestorPlace Web site, he(TM)s steering people toward small-cap value funds.

Schabacker says in a worst-case scenario, inflation could rear its ugly head and corporate earnings growth could slide. One of the favored investments in such a cyclical climate is small-cap value stocks. He says that class looks a lot more interesting this year, and he(TM)s projecting this to be a leveling out period, with high-flying tech stocks cooling while small-cap value and sectors such as real estate post a reasonable recovery.

And the advice comes with a recommendation. Schabacker says if you(TM)re looking to stay on track with your investments as inflation rises, one big turnaround candidate is a small-cap value mutual fund. One at the top of his list is the Fidelity Low-Priced Stock Fund (FLPSX), whose performance is flat so far this year. Its five-year return is 14 percent. See full story.

Netzee not like the rest

Like its fellow Internet companies, Netzee (NETZ) has watched its stock melt away in this spring(TM)s technology sell-off. Unlike many of those companies, this one may be among the few that rise from the ashes once the oe.com correction is done. So thinks Bob Gablele. Writing on the America-Invest Web site, Gabele says Netzee(TM)s not the only Net IPO to plummet 75 percent from its highs, and not the only one to claim it was merely caught in the downdraft. But Netzee may be positioned to out-perform many now sharing its misery. What makes Gabele think Netzee(TM)s any different from the rest of the pack? He says the company continues to exceed analyst expectations and its anticipated burn rate and access to credit mean it likely won(TM)t be cash-starved. That alone sets it apart from many of the newly public, struggling Internet companies. He also says the few analysts who cover the stock have remained steadfast in their admiration for Netzee. Gabele watches insider trading, and the trading he(TM)s seeing and anticipating sound like votes of confidence. He says even with lockup expiring, many insiders are accumulating the stock. One director recently made his second purchase since the November IPO and another exercised warrants to buy not set to expire until 2004. He doesn(TM)

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WINE GUY; The cat's out of the bag: Zinfandel is a terrific red Morning Star (Wilmington, NC) March 8, 2000, Wednesday

Copyright 2000 Wilmington Star-News, Inc.
Morning Star (Wilmington, NC)

March 8, 2000, Wednesday

SECTION: Lifestyle; Pg. 3D

LENGTH: 809 words

HEADLINE: WINE GUY; The cat's out of the bag: Zinfandel is a terrific red

BYLINE: PATRICK SHIELDS

BODY:
The grape variety known as zinfandel has led quite an interesting existence over the past 20 years.

In the early 1980s it was heavily planted to use as a blending grape in much of the large-volume **wines,** and then in the mid 1980s, as the result of an accidental stuck fermentation, white zinfandel made the **wine** scene, in a pink, slightly sweet form.

If this is the only experience you have had with this wonderful grape, then you don't know it at all.

The confusion over the styles of **wine** that this grape can produce is something that you have to get over, and quick. In its most regal form, this uniquely American variety offers a medium to full-bodied red that is brimming with fresh raspberry and cherry flavors, backed by a touch of black pepper and spice.

All **wine** gets its color from the skins of the grapes. The zinfandel grape is red, but with white zinfandel the skins are pulled off the fermenting **wine** while its color is pink, never reaching the full depth of color and flavor that this grape is capable of producing. Winemakers can show versions that are so concentrated with fruit they seem downright jammy, or go for a more laid back and balanced style.

Regardless of the style, these reds are best when they are young, which makes them accessible right out of the gate. You don't have to cellar these **wines** to achieve their maximum potential. And as far as matching the red zinfandels with food, it's a match made in heaven for most grilled grub - ranging from chicken with a tangy barbecue sauce, to hamburgers, steak or lamb.

I also love to drink zinfandels with ribs, meatloaf, pot roast or any other comfort food, because this is a **wine** that is so comforting itself.

The best climate to grow the zinfandel grape is one that stays relatively warm. The size of the individual grapes on any cluster can vary so it can struggle to ripen fully.

California is the only region of the world to have such tremendous success with it. Oregon and Washington have tried in the past, but have been disappointed with the results. The grapes origin was thought to have had Hungarian roots but now it is believed to be similar to the Primitivo grape of southern Italy. Nonetheless, it is a varietal that we can call our own.

Zinfandels are a perfect example of "more bang for the buck," and how the laws of supply and demand affect the **wine** industry. Look at the prices of some of the top California cabernets, significantly more than $ 100 a bottle. The prices for these **wines** have soared the past few years, as more people are willing to pay through the nose for **wines** that will always be in tight supply. As long as the demand is there, and with the economy as strong as it has been lately, prices will continue to rise.

But with zinfandels it seems whatever you pay it is always worth the cost. The best in the class can be purchased for $ 20-30, with most prime examples costing $ 10-20.

Unfortunately, that may all change as well, as the cat's out of the bag on what a fantastic red **wine** zinfandel is. 1997 was a great year for zinfandel and those are on the market shelves right now.

My favorites include **Ravenswood,** who produce a wide range of zinfandels, including single vineyard versions and a vintners blend that is always a great buy; Robert Biale, St. Francis, Dry Creek Vineyards, Cosentino "The Zin," Renwood, Frogs Leap and anything from Ridge, but especially Geyserville and Lytton Springs.

Have a **wine** question for Patrick? Write him at Everyday Gourmet, 8207 Market St., Wilmington, N.C. 28411. Or e-mail your question to wineguypatаol.com

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COOL CITY/PEMBROKE PINES Sun-Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, FL) March 3, 2000, Friday,

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March 3, 2000, Friday, South Broward EDITION

SECTION: SHOWTIME, Pg. 61, M.L. WARREN FINE DINING

LENGTH: 772 words

HEADLINE: COOL CITY/PEMBROKE PINES

BYLINE: M.L. WARREN FINE DINING

BODY:
With its menu decorations of a jazz band and the moniker "Cool City," diners might expect to be heading for a Chicago watering hole or a New Orleans nightspot when they visit this expansive spot in a Pembroke Pines shopping center. Guess again: The cool city in question is Key West, complete with a stand hawking T-shirts and baseball hats.

Cool City is actually three eateries under one roof, ostensibly supplying Key West atmosphere with a Sloppy Joe's; the Speakeasy Lounge, a cigar bar complete with roller; and a sprawling restaurant of modest pretension, Duval Street Grill.

This is Key West only to the extent computer-simulated basketball games are the real sport. There's none of Key West's raucousness and sprawl, and little of its energy, either. Sloppy Joe's is actually a rather sedate pub where the name has been licensed from Papa Hemingway's Key West hangout, but the essential seediness of the original is impossible to move (something Pembroke Pines' city fathers probably appreciate).

If it isn't really a stroll down Duval Street, Cool City still has a fun atmosphere, though it is more likely to please families looking for a comfortable place to take the kids than adults looking for a Key West clone closer to home, or diners seriously interested in good food, for that matter. Where Cool City, and Duval Street Grill in particular, disappoint most is in some areas that are actually easy to fix if management had the interest.

Kids and parents both will be delighted with a couple of appetizers that have mass appeal and good flavor, too. Stuffed potato skins are usually so dreadfully drowned in sour cream and cheese you never get any sense of the ingredients. At Cool City, a sextet of skins ($ 7.99) are lined with chicken breast, filled with potato, glazed with just the right amount of sour cream and drizzled with barbecue sauce -- heavenly harmony. I've liked the sliced portobello mushroom, too ($ 5.29); it is, in fact, one of the few portobello appetizers that can justify the widespread use of this too-often innocuous ingredient. The breading is crunchy, the flavors are as crisp as the skin and it's served piping hot.

The other choices are pedestrian: chips and salsa ($ 2.99), Buffalo wings ($ 5.99) that are too greasy and a gooey spinach and artichoke dip ($ 5.99). It's pretty much the list you'll find at dozens, if not hundreds, of half-hearted eateries. The food is popular at the large bar lining one wall and facing four enormous screens filled with sporting events, but what is puzzling is why the restaurant has a better **wine** list than beer list. The beers are limited to watery domestic brands with an emphasis on light beer and a couple of heavily commercial imports.

The **wine** list, on the other hand, is more carefully thought out. It is inexpensive and has good choices, including Ferrari Carano's Sauvignon Blanc ($ 26), chardonnays from Raymond ($ 20) and Jekel ($ 21), good cabernets by DeLoach ($ 26) and Rodney Strong ($ 29) and top-flight zinfandels from **Ravenswood** ($ 24) and Fife ($ 34).

These **wine** selections nicely complement the menu offerings divided between sandwiches and a sizable roster of considerably more-expensive dishes. Among the sandwiches, don't miss the blackened mahi sandwich at $ 7.99 and the "original" Sloppy Joe. The sandwiches form a big part of the restaurant's family business, but in its effort to be a full-service restaurant, there is an expanded menu that starts at $ 11.99 and heads into expensive lobster territory.

Unfortunately, the kitchen isn't adept enough to justify the relatively high prices for most of the menu. Salmon ($ 13.99) is nicely grilled, but the accompanying mustard hollandaise sauce drenches it in fat. Seafood linguini ($ 13.99) is swimming in a gummy sauce that uses not only a pint of cream but shows up with a puddle of oil on top, and the pasta is hopelessly overcooked. Chicken with linguini ($ 11.99) has blander flavors but just as much cream and cheese gumming up the dish.

Grilled mahi-mahi ($ 13.99) was cut thin and showed up warm instead of hot, but a 12-ounce strip steak ($ 17.99) was just right, and the roast prime rib ($ 16.99) is another safe bet. The preponderance of fat in so many dishes, like blackened swordfish ($ 14.99) with a butter sauce and oily rice on the side, removes much of the fun from dining at Duval Street. For sandwiches and kids' fare, it's fine, but grown-ups deserve better than this.

M.L. Warren is a pseudonym to protect our dining critic's anonymity. Please phone in advance to confirm information on hours, prices, menu items and facilities.

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HIGH ALCOHOL MAKES BIG WINE KING OF VINEYARD The Commercial Appeal (Memphis, TN) December 8, 1999, WEDNESDAY,

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The Commercial Appeal (Memphis, TN)

December 8, 1999, WEDNESDAY, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: APPEAL, Pg. F3

LENGTH: 1095 words

HEADLINE: HIGH ALCOHOL MAKES BIG **WINE** KING OF VINEYARD

BYLINE: Fredric Koeppel The Commercial Appeal

BODY:
Some **wines,** light and delicate, trail nymph-like fingers in limpid pools.

Those are not these **wines. These wines** kick sand in your face, ride Harleys over your foot and make rude remarks to (not to mention passes at) your date.

What makes a Big **Wine** assertive, aggressive and awesome?

Alcohol, mainly.

Generally, the higher a **wine's** alcohol content, the more full-bodied it will be, filling the mouth with a sense of substance and weight. Because alcohol is more viscous than water, the primary constituent of **wine,** the higher the alcohol content, the denser a **wine** will feel in the mouth. Two percentage points may not seem like a lot, but you will perceive immediately the material difference between a **wine** with 12.5 percent alcohol and one with 14.5 percent.

The level of extraction contributes to our perception of a **wine's** "size." Extract is that congeries of chemical compounds called phenolics drawn from the grape skins during fermentation. This is how red **wine** gets its color - all grape juice being pale of hue - as well as the tannins that provide density and the ability to hold a **wine** together as it ages. Extract is what makes a Big **Wine** feel dusty and velvety in the mouth, even though the **wine** is crystal clear.

What do you do with Big **Wines?**

Drink them with Big Foods.

Big Whites, meaning mainly chardonnays, require big rich seafood dishes, lobster and scallops with creamy sauces, tuna, salmon, swordfish. Big Reds need red meat dishes with the fullest, deepest flavors and richest sauces, but nothing fancy or fussy: game like boar and venison, standing rib roast, the finest unadorned steaks, braised lamb or veal shank, leg of lamb with Moroccan spices.

Look first at a few examples of Big Chardonnays.

The De Loach O.F.S. Chardonnay 1995, Russian River Valley, is big, ripe, luscious and remarkably viscous but acutely balanced among vibrant oaky spice, juicy fig-banana-mango flavors and a scintillating mineral element. About $ 28. Another brash example is the Morgan Reserve Chardonnay 1997, Monterey, bold with a ripe, earthy and cheesy bouquet in the Burgundian mode; firmly framed and densely textured, almost powdery with chalk and flint, this **wine,** after 16 months in barrel, is graphically luscious but wonderfully clean and pure. About $ 28. Big in a different manner is the very serious Robert Mondavi Reserve Chardonnay 1997, Napa Valley, a 14.1 percent alcohol chardonnay that features a broad frame of oak, deep spiciness and very intense lemon-lime-grapefruit flavors; not a whit of tropical or buttery nonsense mars its austerity. About $ 32.

Of course we associate high-alcohol California zinfandel **wines** with Bigness; it often seems to be their raison d'etre.

HUGE is the word for the unamused **Ravenswood** Zinfandel 1997, Amador County. Ripe, meaty and fleshy, yes, touched with dried herbs, cinnamon and clove and minerals but boy is it ever dense, dry, bushy and brushy and foresty. Give it three or four years. About $ 25. Even bigger, bless its black heart, is **Ravenswood's** Dickerson Vineyard Zinfandel 1997, Napa Valley, an intensely plummy-jammy, iodine and barbecue-sauce-laced zinfandel of powerful and impenetrable stature. Amazing, but what do you do with it? About $ 40.

Alcohol at 14.9 percent lends the Ridge Lytton Springs 1997, Dry Creek Valley, remarkable intensity, concentration and substance; it's all ripe black and blue fruits, smoke and lavender, very dusty polished and grainy tannins and glittering minerals and is surprisingly well-balanced and drinkable. About $ 28. This embodiment of purpleness, prunes and plums called Ridge Late Picked Zinfandel 1997, Paso Robles, can't decide if it wants to be table **wine** or port yet ends up being almost elegant and well-balanced; it's a deep dark **wine** that exercises a narrow range of roasted meatiness, profoundly intense black currant and boysenberry flavors and resonant tannins with fine detail. About $ 25.

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FINE ZINFANDELS AVAILABLE FOR THANKSGIVING Times-Picayune (New Orleans, LA) November 18, 1999 Thursday, ORLEANS

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Times-Picayune (New Orleans, LA)

November 18, 1999 Thursday, ORLEANS

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. F4

LENGTH: 578 words

HEADLINE: FINE ZINFANDELS AVAILABLE FOR THANKSGIVING

BYLINE: By Michael Dresser The Baltimore Sun

BODY:
Zinfandel and the traditional Thanksgiving turkey dinner are one of those matches that are hard to understand but that work anyway.

You think turkey, white meat, maybe a chardonnay. But it's wrong. There's a lot more to turkey than the breast, and a lot more to the feast than the turkey.

It takes a big **wine** to hold its own with the gravy and the green beans and the stuffing and the yams, which seem to come around to you three times even though you can't stand yams.

The zinfandel does nothing better than produce big red **wines** fit for a feast. Forget you ever heard about white zinfandel.

But who among the multitude of California producers can you trust to deliver a first-rate red Zinfandel? If you'd like to keep things elementary, just remember the three Rs.

Ridge, **Ravenswood** and Rosenblum. They're not a law firm. They are three of the most reliable producers of world-class zinfandel on the planet.

Ridge, founded in 1959, is California's great Temple of Zin. Long before other California winemakers realized that Zinfandel was capable of making exceptional red **wines,** winemaker Paul Draper was treating it with respect.

Draper developed both fine regional blended Zinfandels and specific vineyards that yielded **wines** of amazing concentration. He made the names Lytton Springs and Geyserville as respected among Zinfandel lovers as Margaux and Lafitte are among Bordeaux connoisseurs.

If Draper could be called the Mozart of Zinfandel, Joel Peterson would be the Beethoven.

Peterson's **Ravenswood** winery, founded in 1976, produces some of the biggest, boldest and most expensive Zinfandels on the market. His two most famous Zinfandels, from the Dickerson and Old Hill vineyards, can fetch $40 a bottle.

For those of us who are not tycoons, **Ravenswood** produces a reliable and widely distributed Vintner's Blend Zinfandel that retails for about $12. Year after year, it's a terrific bargain.

Rosenblum Cellars, founded in 1978, also produces a non-vintage Vintner's Cuvee whose different lots are designated by Roman numerals. The current release, XVIII, is a solid value at $13.

A recent sampling of the three wineries' Zinfandels showed that each is playing at the top of its game. The following are all blockbusters worth considering for your Thanksgiving feast:

1997 Ridge Pagani Ranch Zinfandel, Sonoma Valley ($30). This is simply a monumental **wine,** an explosion of concentrated blackberry fruit with a velvety texture that masks the generous alcohol level (14.6 percent).

1997 **Ravenswood** Monte Rosso Zinfandel, Sonoma Valley ($33). The alcohol level is a rip-snorting 15.5 percent, but the flavors of blackberry and black raspberry are so intense you can barely detect it.

1997 Rosenblum Annette's Reserve Zinfandel, Rhodes Vineyard, Redwood Valley ($28). The relatively light, bright color can be deceptive. This is a very intensely flavored zin with penetrating raspberry flavor and hints of black pepper, smoked meat and chocolate.

1997 Ridge Lytton Springs, Dry Creek Valley ($29). The characteristic black pepper flavor of Lytton Springs grapes is seasoned with rich blackberry and black raspberry fruit.

1997 **Ravenswood** Teldeschi Zinfandel, Dry Creek Valley ($33). This rich,

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FOOD DAY / WEDNESDAY / THE WINE GLASS / COURTING SYRAHS IN CALIFORNIA Newsday (New York) October 20, 1999, Wednesday

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October 20, 1999, Wednesday ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: FOOD & DINING; Page B24

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HEADLINE: FOOD DAY / WEDNESDAY / THE **WINE** GLASS / COURTING SYRAHS IN CALIFORNIA

BYLINE: By Michael Dresser. THE BALTIMORE SUN

BODY:
THE SYRAH GRAPE of the Rhone Valley and the climate of California seem like a perfect match. So why aren't things working out? The syrah likes dry, sunny places; California can provide them in abundance.

Syrah produces robust, flavorful red **wines;** that's California's strong suit.

But like a couple whose friends have pushed them together, this noble grape and the Golden State are having a bit of an awkward courtship. There is no question that interest in syrah has grown in California. About 15 years ago, assembling a dozen syrahs for tasting was nearly impossible. Now it's possible to go to a good **wine** store and buy several.

All you need to do to understand why California winemakers are so interested in this little-known varietal is taste one of the great **wines** it produces in France or Australia.

In the Rhone Valley the syrah is the sole grape used in the production of Hermitage, one of the world's most breathtaking and long-lived red **wines.** It is also the principal grape used in Cote Rotie, a **wine** that at its best combines power and grace in a way that puts the finest Burgundies to shame.

In Australia, the syrah (known there as shiraz) produces a boatload of solid, flavorful, inexpensive red **wines.** But old vines in top locations produce such treasures as Penfold's Grange - the consensus choice for greatest **wine** of the Southern Hemisphere.

California winegrowers and makers are still struggling to understand the nuances of the grape. The **wines** I tasted were every bit as big as a syrah fan could expect, and the best were powerful reds with the potential to age gracefully.

All but a few missed some of the flavor definition the syrah produces in Rhone.

California syrah is still not significantly more successful than petite sirah, a red varietal that outperforms its modest reputation.

Does California have a future in the syrah business? You bet. As recently as a decade ago, California pinot noir was an international joke. Now the state's pinot noirs are worthy rivals to Burgundy itself.

Of the syrahs tasted, these had considerable merit: 1996 **Ravenswood** Icon, Sonoma County ($ 27). Ravens wood's proprietary blend of 92 percent syrah and 8 percent grenache was the only one that approached the style of fine Rhone **wine.** This intense, complex **wine** is packed with blackberry and black cherry fruit, and finishes with a fine touch of acidity.

1997 Qupe Syrah, Central Coast ($ 19). This lush, silky **wine** comes close to achieving some of the texture and flavors of Cote Rotie. There's a hint of ripe black raspberry and earth, good complexity and charm, and a fine, long finish.

1997 Everett Ridge Sonoma Valley Syrah, Nuns Canyon Vineyard ($ 30). A big, big **wine** with a ton of blackberry fruit and little complexity or nuance, but a strong tannic backbone here and the hint of good things to come. There's a lot of potential for collectors who are willing to let it rest a decade in the cellar.

1996 Seven Peaks Shiraz, Paso Robles ($ 15). I'd rather this winery didn't confuse the issue by calling the **wine** shiraz, but I can see why it does. It's very Australian in style with its big, leathery, blackberry jam flavors. It's a powerful, aggressive **wine.**

1996 Marietta Cellars Syrah ($ 16). This is a big, lush, chunky **wine** with notes of blueberry, chocolate and smoked meat. It's a

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Big red laps up spicy stew Asbury Park Press October 20, 1999 Wednesday

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October 20, 1999 Wednesday

SECTION: D; Pg. 1D

LENGTH: 731 words

HEADLINE: Big red laps up spicy stew

BODY:
RAVENSWOOD is one of California's big-gun producers of zinfandel. The winery's guiding force, Joel Peterson, is a kind of zinfandel genius, drawing from this most American of grapes effusive flavors that invariably impress even those who are not ordinarily impressed by **wine.**

Wine needs more Joel Petersons and more **Ravenswoods.**

There's a lot of zinfandel around, and even a lot of different **Ravenswood** zinfandels. What you should look for if you're just starting out is the 1997 **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend Zinfandel, which isn't just a mouth-filling, down-right yummy and overtly ripe red zin, but a terrific buy at under $10.

When you get it home, turn the bottle around and read the back of the label. "No wimpy **wines,**" it proclaims, then bolsters that claim by stating its toll-free phone number at the winery: (888) NO WIMPY. Can you resist a **wine** producer with a sense of humor? I hope not.

I can't resist trying out a **Ravenswood** zin with any kind of food. It's a workhorse at the table, taking on any pasta dish that has a lusty sauce, pizza topped with a veritable kitchen table, chicken any way but plain (OK, plain, too, but why would you do that?), barbecued ribs, highly seasoned dishes and, most of all, red meat.

Go, beef eaters, go. I think beef stew is more compatible with well-made zinfandels than almost anything else, so one recent night when I set about playing with a few pounds of beef stew meat, I put the **Ravenswood** zin to the test. I went all the way back to my first, and favorite, culinary lesson - a beef chili made from scratch when I was a mere grade-schooler.

I'd never tasted, let alone used, spices like cumin and chile powder before. Heck, Lone Star State native Lyndon Johnson may have been in the White House, but he wasn't promoting any Texas-Mexico border cuisine. Ketchup was the condiment of choice with beef back then; who'd ever consider cinnamon as a meat seasoning?

Decades later, those flavors still captivate me, and perhaps that's why I love zinfandel: It's the ultimate spicy red **wine.** As I cooked, I felt supremely confident that my chili-style beef stew (minus the beans, but with a host of veggies and spices) would stir the soul of this rich, rousing zin.

It did. In fact, it's the kind of food-**wine** pairing that's perfect for a Sunday evening in the fall when dusk dims the outdoors and football fires up conversation in the family room. Scream at the TV, do a somersault at a score; just work up an appetite for a hearty beef stew that demands, and gets, a **wine** that's decidedly not for wimps.

BEEF STEW WITH A TIJUANA TOUCH

3 pounds boneless beef chuck, cut into 2-inch chunks

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Salt and black pepper

Olive oil to film pot

2 large onions, cut into chunks

1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded and cut into chunks

5 garlic cloves, crushed through a press

12 sun-dried tomatoes, cut up

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Escape to Wine Country; travelling in Northern California Los Angeles Magazine October 1, 1999

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HEADLINE: Escape to **Wine** Country;
travelling in Northern California

BYLINE: LENDER, HEIDI

BODY:

With five-star restaurants, casual eateries and a la mode cooking schools, California's **wine** country is heating up as the state's hottest culinary destination. Throw in some **wine** tastings and a weekend stay in one of its charming resorts and you'll never want to leave.

To get a real taste of the **wine** country these days, you'll need toindulge in more than a few sips of Syrah. Just under an hour's drivenorth from the Golden Gate Bridge, the vast region nestled in the rolling green counties of Sonoma and Napa, is ripe with restaurants, shops and new lodgings that will have your Cabernet-soaked head spinning. Nearby, the quaint town of Mendocino is also worth a stop-over--ifyou've got the time. Three days will barely get you through all the magnificent new meals the **wine** region has cooking, not to mention winery hopping, shopping and melting in some mud. Historic small towns, like Healdsburg and Yountville, are fast sprouting sophisticated centers, luring big-city chefs and antique treasures that have foodies and fashionable folk flocking to the intoxicating escape.

SONOMA VALLEY

Plotting a trip through Sonoma requires a bit of **wine**-wisdom, a hint of adventure, and no attitude. Pack an empty stomach and a week's worth of aspirin, and snake your way up Route 12 into the Sonoma, Anderson and the Russian River valleys that make up the mouth-watering county.

Here, where a trip to the farmer's market is as zestful an outing as a balloon ride, California is as casual as it gets. To Sonoma residents, next-door Napa, "is a four-letter word" and a place where glamour and grapes grow together. Sonoma, a sleepier "scene," is for the more laid-back **wine** lover, "still a T-shirts and shorts crowd," says one native. Alongside its tasty history--it touts itself as the birthplace of the California **wine** industry and 140 wineries--Sonoma Valleyis bubbling with fresh food finds, new places to stay and even a cooking school.

Something's definitely abuzz in Healdsburg, and it's not just the crop of cappuccino stops on the square. This charming town on the Northern circuit of Sonoma's **wine** region has been dubbed the next Carmelby some. San Francisco yupsters are snatching up second homes at grape-crushing speed, while the rest of the west is fast discovering thenatural opulence of this once-secret town.

If the new 55-room "urban hotel" on the square--a project that's been on the drawing board for 15 years and was to break ground this summer--is any indication, the burgeoning B&B borough is in for a modern-day renaissance. The HEALDSBURG HOTEL (its working title) is the brainchild of a group of investors including hip hoteliers from Marin County, who want to inject a shot of style to the otherwise country bumpkin town.

Napa County's celebrated OAKVILLE GROCERY set up a souped-up outpost here a few years back with an outdoor patio, igniting the towns updated new formula. It's stocked with choice produce, cheese and **wine** from the area and its well-known unique condiment supply is scatteredabout in bite-size samples. Berkeley's favorite specialty store, THEGARDENER, has also cultivated a chic new address here. En route to the winery kingdom on Dry Creek Rd., keep your eyes peeled for its corrugated metal building, a shelter for drying lavender and the backdrop for owner Alta Tingle's creative greens and garden accessories.

Forever antique rich, Healdsburg is also embracing a millennium modern mix of design, with new stores like KAJUL which swung open its Eastern-inspired doors last spring. The place (named numerologically to mean hearth and home) is the collaborative effort of an interior designer and a furniture maker and is chock full of exotic Buddhas, Balinese textiles and local crafts and ceramics. Also not to be missed is PENTIMENTO's new digs on the square. The sleek store houses a perfect mix of antiques, vintage posters and handsome

112-room Tuscan-style hotel which sits rather unfortunately on the highway, is decked with Roman mythical accents, fountains and goddesses. If you can meditate to the tune of traffic, take a dip in the more intimate lap pool, or bask in a 3-hour blissful "Juventas Package"--herbology wrap, Swedish massage and European facial--in the soundproof spa.

Rumor is that AUBERGE DU SOLEIL, the last word in luxe, is drawingup plans for a new spa. Though the in-room service they offer now isa nice touch, a full-fledged facility would certainly round out the close-to-perfect property. They recently introduced a couple of heady1800-square-foot suites, decked with two fireplaces, outdoor jacuzzi, steam room and a built-in massage table, for a mere $2,000 a night.Don't miss an early-morning stroll through the new 75-piece sculpture garden that winds impressively through the olive grove.

For a simpler stay there's always the COTTAGE GROVE INN in Calistoga, a storybook set of quaint cottages--or Yountville's new LAVENDER,an 8-room sister of neighboring MAISON FLEURIE.

MENDOCINO

If you have the time, head to the tiny town of Mendocino, an artsyenclave on the California coast. The faux-fishing village, though teeming with tourists in the summer, is a charming stop on Highway i for whale watching, walking or just a fast fix of the Pacific. You can even hop a horse, or better yet, a llama, for a trek through the coast's gorgeous beaches and redwood forests.

The town is sprinkled with countrified B&Bs, many sporting jaw-dropping views, like THE LITTLE RIVER INN GOLF AND TENNIS RESORT, which recently opened one of the first full-fledged spas to hit the area--THE THIRD COURT. (It sits where the third tennis court would have beenerected). To tempt your palette, check out the Inn's cozy breakfast,or head into town for some fresh organic fare at CAFE BEAUJOLAIS. Veggies and vegans will be in green heaven at THE RAVENS, a new vegetarian establishment at THE STANFORD INN BY THE SEA.

WINE TASTING

Sonoma Stops

B. R. COHN, 15140 SONOMA HWY., GLEN ELLEN, (707) 938-4064. Doobie Brothers' manager Bruce Cohn turns out more than just smooth **wines.** Pick up a handsome bottle of cabernet or champagne vinegar, or olive oil, pressed on the premises.

GLORIA FERRER CHAMPAGNE CAVES, 23555 HWY. 121, SONOMA, (707) 996-7256. See how sparkling **wines** are aged in traditional Spanish-style subterranean cellars. The sporadic Spanish cooking class will have you tasting with tapas.

HOP KILN, 6050 WESTSIDE RD., HEALDSBURG, (707) 433-6491. Beer buffs should check out this old-hops-producing-place-turned-winery where the **wine's** oak barrels are located in historic kilns.

MATANZAS CREEK AND LAVENDER FARM, 6097 BENNETT VALLEY RD., SANTA ROSA, (707) 528-6464. If you go for the Merlot, don't overlook the dazzling lavender--all 1.5 acres of it. This winery and lavender farm produces Northern California's largest crop of lavender, and spins an aromatic dose of soaps, sachets and bath salts.

RAVENSWOOD, 18701 GEHRICKE RD., SONOMA, (707) 938-1960. Their motto says it all: Nullum Vinum Flaccidum; no wimpy **wines!** A retreat for red Zin addicts, **Ravenswood** hosts a weekend summer BBQ with roasted veggies, salmon and custom-made sausage.

Also worth a try: BARTHOLOMEW PARK WINERY, BENZIGER FAMILY WINERY,FERRARI-CARANO, LANDMARK and ROCHIOLI VINEYARDS & WINERY.

Napa's Must-Tastes

CLOS PEGASE, 1060 DUNAWEAL LN., CALISTOGA, (707) 942-4981. An eccentric **wine** experience, thanks to art-lovers and owners Jan and Mitsuko Shrem. Architect Michael Graves dreamed up this uber-modern **wine** palace, stuffed with an haute art collection from Cesar to Henry Moore.

NIEBAUM-COPPOLA ESTATE WINERY, 1991 ST. HELENA HWY., RUTHERFORD, (707) 963-9099. Often found on the piazza, Francis Ford Coppola transformed this ex-Inglenook winery into something off a Hollywood set. Check out the museum of movie memorabilia blended with a bit of Inglenook history.

OPUS ONE, 7900 ST. HELENA HWY., OAKVILLE, (707) 944-9442. Samplings in a state-of-the-art structure from partners Baroness Philippine de Rothschild and Robert Mondavi. Reserve a spot for the daily 10:30 a.m. tour and tasting.

PLUMPJACK, 620 OAKVILLE CROSS RD., OAKVILLE, (707) 945-1220. The latest enterprise from San Francisco social and political pals, Bill Getty and Gavin Newsom, (of PlumpJack restaurant and **wine** shop and Plump Jack Inn at Squaw Valley). Check out the swanky sampling room of the 2-year-old winery, whimsically shot with Leavitt/Weaver's droll design.

ROBERT MONDAVI WINERY, 7801 ST. HELENA HWY., OAKVILLE, (707) 963-9611. No visit to Napa is complete without a peek at Robert Mondavi's world-renowned place. Plans for a facility facelift are underway, to be completed in 2001.

More tasting to be had at: SILVER OAK CELLARS, STERLING VINEYARDS,BERINGER, CAKEBREAD, DOMAINE CARNEROS, DOMAINE CHANDON and LUNA.

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MY DINNER WITH ... NO STAINS ON HER WHITE SUIT - OR HER INTEGRITY Philadelphia Daily News AUGUST 27, 1999 Friday LATE SPORTS EDITION

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AUGUST 27, 1999 Friday LATE SPORTS EDITION

SECTION: FEATURES YO!; Pg. 90

LENGTH: 934 words

HEADLINE: MY DINNER WITH ... NO STAINS ON HER WHITE SUIT - OR HER INTEGRITY

BYLINE: Stan Hochman, For the Daily News

BODY:
District Attorney Lynne Abraham wore an elegant white suit to lunch at San Marzano, the upscale pizza place on Walnut Street.

A fashion statement or a glimpse into her philosophy of life?

"If you take high risks," she said at one point, "you get high rewards."

An hour later, after sampling lasagna, two kinds of pizza and a tomato and mozzarella salad, the DA's thick-skinned image and her white suit remained unscathed.

We lunched on a grim day. The front six pages of the Daily News were devoted to the fanatic who machine-gunned kids at a Los Angeles community center. The back three pages dealt with the Vet Stadium coward who threw two batteries at St. Louis outfielder J.D. Drew.

"I am perpetually depressed when I read about the terrible harm people do to each other," she said. "I'm at a loss to comprehend why Congress and our state legislatures are so slow to act with dispatch to do more about gun violence."

She talked about lobbying in Harrisburg, along with the mayor and police commissioner, to limit purchases to one gun a month, and how that proposal "died on the vine."

She ridiculed the NRA slogan about "people killing people," calling it absurd. "A gun in the hands of an irresponsible person," she said, "leads to nothing but tragedy."

Idealism and realism raced side by side through her conversation. "If you focus only on people who are destroyers," she said, "one surely misses the point that we are an extraordinary, multidimensional country and that most people are good.

"The horror that the few perpetrate on the rest is so mind-bending, so extraordinarily cruel, that it is small wonder that it gets the attention it does. Bad news sells newspapers, good news doesn't.

"If 47,530 people behaved themselves at that ballgame and a couple of jerks almost caused the game to be forfeited, the 47,520 fans who behaved, they're not news."

Abraham is often in the news. She does not relish the glare of the spotlight.

"It's never pleasant," she said, "to be on the front page of any publication. . .and not be in a position to respond adequately.

"However, if you cannot stand even unjust or unfair criticism, you should be doing something else. I love this job."

It is not the fulfillment of a life-long dream. It wasn't until her senior year in college that she concentrated on what she would do with the rest of her life.

"I knew I didn't want to be a teacher," she recalled. "I wanted to be a doctor, but that was unrealistic. I needed something that was A-realistic, B-affordable and C-attainable. I borrow Bill Cosby's line and change it to say I couldn't have gone anywhere. Temple Law School chose me and I'm very gratified."

There are other, easier paths in law to pursue than being district attorney in a big city, with snarling politics and a harsh media. "If you are motivated," she said bluntly, "to change the way people think, if you are creative in the way you deal with issues, if you're

resolute, strong and want to be a leader, you have to put up with the vagaries of politics and a tough press."

She had chosen San Marzano because it's new, because the prices are moderate, because it's close to City Hall.

She ate heartily, first sharing a bit of my tomato-mozzarella salad ($3.95), a handsome dish of sliced tomato, two slabs of cheese and four perfect basil leaves, all bathed in olive oil.

"Good buffalo mozzarella," she said. "Fruity olive oil. And San Marzano tomatoes are special."

She ordered the lasagne pasticciate ($6.95), made with bolognese sauce. She identified the crumbled meat as sweet Italian sausage and enjoyed it thoroughly.

I ordered the trademarked Fiorentina pizza ($7.50), an individual thin-crusted pizza generously covered with spinach, Parmesan, tomato and garlic, with a sunnyside-up egg in the center. It was as tasty as it was colorful.

The Giardiniera ($7.75) paled by comparison, although it included mushrooms, olives, leeks, pepperonata and four thin slices of tomato.

San Marzano offers an impressive list of **wines,** including a **Ravenswood** zinfandel at $32.50. There's Peroni beer and a selection of draft beers.

It is a handsome place, part of a British chain called Pizza Express. The front windows are kept open, offering a view of Walnut street. There's live jazz on Friday and Saturday nights.

Abraham, married to radio personality Frank Ford, was an ambitious hostess before becoming district attorney.

"I used to have dinner parties," she said, "where I'd start cooking sauces and reductions and soups on Thursday and Friday for Sunday dinners.

"Made everything by hand from appetizers to fabulous desserts. Cooked in different styles, Chinese, American, French, you name it. Cocktails from 6 to 7, and then dinner. Now, I get home very late, so we settle for basic fare - steaks, chops.

"My wonderful husband has become my sous chef. He'll set the table, make the salad, prep the vegetables."

What leisure time she has is built around travel, music, art, the theater. She reads newspapers and magazines voraciously.

She intends to run for re-election in two years. After that?

"I've been asked to consider other offices," she said. "I love what I do. After the next election, perhaps statewide or perhaps other offices.

"People should never doubt my strength, my resolve. I'm a survivor. And I mean to win the people's trust."

SAN MARZANO

What: Upscale pizza

Where: 1509 Walnut St.

Phone: 215-564-3562

Hours: 11:30 a.m.-11p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 11:30 a.m.-midnight, Friday and Saturday.

Details: Major credit cards accepted

NOTES: BIG FAT FRIDAY

GRAPHIC: PHOTO;
PHOTO
A waiter serves Abraham at San Marzano, which she finds moderately priced and convenient to City Hall (G.W. MILLER III, DAILY NEWS)

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WINE TALK;Why That Bottle Costs $50 In a Restaurant The New York Times August 11, 1999, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

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SECTION: Section F; Page 8; Column 3; Dining In, Dining Out/Style Desk

LENGTH: 1032 words

HEADLINE: WINE TALK;
Why That Bottle Costs $50 In a Restaurant

BYLINE: By Frank J. Prial

BODY:
REMEMBER the so-so cabernet you shelled out $50 for in that restaurant last week? And how you felt you'd been taken? Well, if it makes you feel any better, the winemaker didn't do too well on the deal, either. He or she probably made about $2.

In the **wine** trade, that's actually not bad money. Take **Ravenswood,** a well-known winery in Sonoma, Calif. **Ravenswood** has been making superior **wines,** mostly zinfandels, for almost 20 years. Last year the winery, which is publicly traded, posted a net profit of about $1.5 million on sales of $17 million. With some 131,000 cases of **wine** sold, that translates into a profit of about 95 cents a bottle.

The Robert Mondavi Winery, also a public company, netted $29 million, selling just under 6.8 million cases, or some 81.2 million bottles of **wine.** Net profit per bottle: 36 cents. Beringer **Wine** Estates did a little better, making $29.5 million on about 6 million cases, or 41 cents a bottle.

No need to send any of these people CARE packages. Volume clearly makes up for any shortcomings in the per-bottle profits. Even so, it should be evident that no one, at least no one at the publicly owned wineries, is making a killing in the **wine** business. Privately owned wineries do not release their profit figures.

So where did your $50 go? (Closer to $60 with tax and tip.) Mostly to the restaurant. The winery would have sold it to a wholesaler -- called a distributor in the liquor business -- for about $12.50. The distributor then would have marked it up about a third, selling it to a retailer or to a restaurant for about $16.50, plus freight and state taxes. The retailer then would sell it for about $25, and the restaurant for double that, charging you around $50.

This is called the three-tiered system. Antiquated and costly, it's part of the liquor laws of almost every state. And there can be a fourth tier as well. Many larger **wine** producers hire marketing companies to augment the efforts of the distributors. Typically, a marketer will take a five-figure fee for selling a predetermined number of cases.

It cost the maker of our $50 bottle about $10.50 to produce it. **Wine** making costs are not difficult to understand. First, there are the grapes. Some wineries use only grapes they have grown themselves. Big wineries like Mondavi and Beringer own vineyards and also buy grapes from other growers. Many smaller wineries, like **Ravenswood,** buy all their grapes, currently paying $2,000 and more a ton for the best cabernet sauvignon. Estate-grown or purchased, grapes can account for up to 25 percent of production costs.

The bottle, cork, label and the capsule around the bottle's neck would ordinarily account for little more than $1, except at the E.& J. Gallo Winery, which makes its own bottles and prints its own labels. Accounting for the rest of the **wine** production costs: barrels, which can cost $600 each, storage costs while the **wine** is aging, taxes, marketing and promotion.

Of course, prices, markups and fees are flexible. If a highly regarded small-production **wine,** say a Bruno Giacosa barbera from Italy or a Silver Oak cabernet from California, is much in demand and only one distributor carries it in a state or a city, he may increase his markup from a third to 40 percent or more. Retailers and restaurants will pass this increase on to their customers.

Once, restaurants simply added 50 percent to the retail price of a bottle of **wine.** More commonly now, they double or triple the retail price. It's no longer surprising to find **wines** that sell for $10 in New York **wine** shops on restaurant lists for $25 to $35. Most restaurateurs defend high **wine** prices as a way to hold down the cost of food and general overhead. But there are restaurants -- Harry's Hanover Square, Sparks Steakhouse and Union Square Cafe, to cite three in New York -- that consistently offer **wine** prices lower than their competitors'.

Some price increases are unavoidable. Like many serious restaurateurs, John Foy at the Sonoma Grill in East Rutherford, N.J., holds his best Bordeaux and California cabernets for three or four years before selling them. Since he uses bank loans to buy the **wine,** he adjusts his prices periodically to cover his interest payments.

"I won't be selling my 1994's for another two years, my 1995's for three," he said. "I've got to finance my inventory."

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Lilly's European Cuisine looking for better site Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico) May 28, 1999, Friday

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Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico)

May 28, 1999, Friday

SECTION: Pg. E10

LENGTH: 548 words

HEADLINE: Lilly's European Cuisine looking for better site

BYLINE: DINING TIPS & TABS Charlotte Balcomb Lane FOR THE JOURNAL

BODY:
It's not exactly "here today and gone tomorrow," but almost. Lilly's European Cuisine opened at 412 San Pedro NE in February and closed this month. Explained owner Lillian E. Orsak in a letter to the Albuquerque Journal: "San Pedro is not a good location for European cuisine. So, we decided to close on May 15 temporarily until we find a better location, (such as) Nob Hill."

Orsak operated another restaurant under the same name on Juan Tabo that closed in 1994. No word yet on when the third installment of Lilly's European Cuisine will open.

MILLENNIUM MAGIC: One of Albuquerque's most fun food events is the Vintage Albuquerque Fine **Wine** and Art Auction to benefit the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra. The event covers three days June 24-26 and prices vary from $40 to $125 per person.

At 7 p.m. June 24, seven winemaker dinners will be held at seven restaurants for $85 per person, including **wine** and dinner. Patrons can select one of the following venues: Artichoke Cafe with Robert Mondavi **wines;** Avalon Restaurant & Bar with St. Supery **wines;** Cafe Miche with Duckhorn Vineyards **wines;** Gold Street Cafe with Australian **wines;** Prairie Star featuring Gruet Winery; Ranchers Club with Ferrari-Carano **wines;** and Seasons Rotisserie & Grill with **Ravenswood wines.** The founder of **Ravenswood** Winery, Joel Peterson, is the auction's honorary chairman.

From 6-9 p.m. June 25, is the Grand Food & **Wine** Tasting at the San Felipe Plaza, across from Old Town where Season's Rotisserie & Grill is located. It costs $40 per person and includes samplings from 20 restaurants and 20 wineries. Music, a silent auction and a raffle for a Mercedes are also featured.

On June 26 are two **wine** seminars. The first will be 11 a.m.-noon about **Ravenswood** Zinfandel given by winemaker Joel Peterson. The second will be 1-2 p.m. about Duckhorn merlot given by Dan Duckhorn. Each seminar costs $40 per person and is limited to 50 people. The location has not been announced.

Also June 26 is the Live Auction Dinner from 5:30-10 p.m. at Casa Rondena winery in the North Valley. The $125-per-person event starts with a gala **wine** reception and silent auction, and concludes with a seated dinner and live auction. Millennium-related **wine** lots, trips, dining experiences and works of art are up for bid.

For reservations or information, call Joan Allen or Judy Harris at the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra office at 881-9590.

BURGERS 'N' RIFFS: In 110 company-owned Fuddruckers restaurants across the United States, rock 'n' roll is on the menu. The burger restaurants are adopting rock-era decor to appeal to the tastes of mature customers with plump wallets. Elvis, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and other rock legends will be featured, as well as gewgaws of 20th-century Americana.

So, will we hum "Blue Suede Shoes" in Albuquerque's Fuddruckers? This restaurant is a franchise, not a company-owned store, so it may pass on the rock look, said owner Kevin Cummings. Cummings may consider a change but not immediately, because the restaurant is less than a year old.

If you have news of note on the local dining scene, send it to me in care of Dining Tips and Tabs, P.O. Drawer J, Albuquerque, NM 87103. You may also leave a message at 823-3931 or e-mail me at clane@abqjournal.com

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DRINK; MYSTERY ACHIEVEMENT: SIRAH IS SYRAH Los Angeles Times January 6, 1999, Wednesday,

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January 6, 1999, Wednesday, Home Edition

SECTION: Food; Part H; Page 9; Food Desk

LENGTH: 1426 words

HEADLINE: DRINK;
MYSTERY ACHIEVEMENT: SIRAH IS SYRAH

BYLINE: ROD SMITH, SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

BODY:
The next time you find yourself driving through Northern California's **wine** country, keep an eye out for living treasures.

They're easy to spot, typically standing in ranks like an army of green-haired gnomes preparing to charge down the hillside. Each short, stout vine has a different shape, with three or four gnarly arms twisting out from its trunk. The wood is split and the bark hangs off in strips; spiders crouch under patches of moss and lichen that decorate each figure like badges of honor, and lizards bask in the knobby crooks.

On closer scrutiny, the green-haired gnomes appear to be bearing gifts: a few fat purple clusters of grapes, the very essence of California **wine.**

Petite Sirah and Zinfandel, which are often planted together in "field blends" in Sonoma County and the Sierra Nevada foothills, are California's heritage grapes. "Pet" and "Zin" are synonymous with California **wine,** and practically with each other. They have been grown here longer than any other fine red **wine** varieties, and many vines planted well before Prohibition are still yielding highly prized **wine** (by contrast, most of California's Cabernet Sauvignon was planted during the 1980s).

But for all their familiarity to Californians, both Petite Sirah and Zinfandel are grapes of mystery. They appeared here during the mid-19th century without any kind of paper trail by which their origins could be documented. No Vitis vinifera (**wine** grape) vines are indigenous to the New World, so Pet and Zin, like all Americans, must have come from somewhere else.

But where? For all anyone knew, they had been left behind in California by extraterrestrial visitors. Until this year, the **wine** world accepted as doctrine that Petite Sirah had nothing to do with the "true" Syrah of France's Rhone Valley. In the '80s it was suggested that it might be an obscure French variety called Durif, but that hypothesis could not be supported by any of the testing techniques available then.

Now, the century-old mystery of one of California's oldest grape vines has finally been pierced. At long last, we know the true identity of Petite Sirah. Cutting-edge DNA analysis by UC Davis plant geneticist Carole Meredith has confirmed that most of the California vines called Petite Sirah are in fact distant relations of true Syrah. It is descended through the little-appreciated Durif grape, which is itself descended from Syrah and another little-known grape called Peloursin. A small percentage is actually Peloursin itself, with a few other varieties--including the "true" Syrah--mixed in.

Meredith says Durif was either hybridized or selected by the rather obscure Dr. Durif, an agronomist who worked in southeastern France during the 1880s. She has established that the true Syrah is most likely the pollen parent, or father, and Peloursin the mother.

"When we discover that a variety has certain parents, what we're saying is that the original vine grew from a seed which came from that particular cross," explains Meredith. "Grapes are propagated by cuttings. Each grape variety has originated as a single plant that grew as a seedling, and is then perpetuated by cuttings for many, many years without changing its genetic composition."

So now we know that the grape variety dubbed Petite Sirah by pioneer growers (probably to distinguish it from Syrah, which is similar but has larger grapes and bunches) came into being as a single seedling in France during the late 19th century and all the Petite Sirah that now exists was propagated by cuttings and buds from that original cross between Syrah and Peloursin.

(Incidentally, we now have similar insight into the origins of Cabernet Sauvignon, which is a cross between Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc--i.e., all the Cabernet Sauvignon in the world derives from the one original vine that came out of one random, exalted pollination event in the Bordeaux region.)

*

But who first planted Durif here and where they planted it are still unclear. We know that Petite Sirah vineyards throughout California made such good **wine** year after year that they were cultivated continuously while other vineyards were torn out to make room for the crop of the moment, such as the prune orchards that filled Napa Valley during World War II.

Ridge Vineyards, best known for the old-vine Zinfandels it has produced since the late 1960s, has also bottled single-vineyard Petite Sirah for more than two decades.

Ridge president and **wine** master Paul Draper points out, "The old vines that have survived through Prohibition and the Depression have done so because they're growing on excellent sites and produce particularly interesting **wine.** That's why they have the reputation--not because they're old, but because they were planted in the right place."

When growers wanted to plant new Petite Sirah vineyards, they sought out budwood from the original plantings, thus preserving both the genetic essence and the clonal diversity of the variety. That's important, because vines of a single variety, like identical twins, can express different characteristics in response to the soil and climate in different vineyard sites. That accounts in large part for subtle differences in **wines** from different vineyards.

New vines propagated from old vineyards will transmit the specific character of their predecessors, but because each vineyard is a complicated genetic puzzle, there is a danger that the complete personality of a unique old vineyard can be lost through the imprecise nature of propagation by selection.

For example, Stags' Leap Winery in southeast Napa Valley has 22 acres of Petite Sirah. Five acres were planted in the 1930s, using cuttings from even older vineyards. The remaining 17 acres were planted in the 1990s, using cuttings from the original five acres.

Was the genetic puzzle transferred intact, or are some pieces missing? Stags' Leap enologist Jeanette Padilla is currently trying to answer that question through DNA analysis of the old Stags' Leap vines. The object, she says, is to identify what's there so the old planting can be expanded without losing important components of its unique nature, as expressed in the distinctive Stags' Leap **wines.**

The revelations about Petite Sirah's identity are well timed. Zinfandel has gotten more attention in the modern **wine** renaissance dating from the 1970s, in large part because until recently Petite Sirah **wine** tended to be dense, tannic stuff that took years of aging to reveal all its delicious beauty.

But a kinder, gentler style of Petite Sirah has been winning new fans in recent vintages. Prominent **wine** producers such as Rosenblum, **Ravenswood,** Stags' Leap, Turley, Foppiano, McDowell Valley and Ridge have cracked its code of accessibility and tamed those awful tannins. The new Petites are velvety, luscious **wines** that age well but are also drinkable at an early age.

Look especially for single-vineyard bottlings from the historical **wine** country north of San Francisco and in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Prices for these beauties are edging above $ 20 these days, but a fine Petite Sirah is still cheaper than a mediocre Burgundy or Bordeaux.

I've particularly enjoyed the 1996 Rosenblum from the Napa Valley's Keneflick Ranch vineyard. Its charms are very similar to those of a fine Zinfandel, but in a lower register--a baritone to Zin's tenor. The deep, rich perfume rises from the glass with suggestions of sun-warmed berries and dried roses, delicately spiced; the **wine** is at once firm and luscious on the palate and the finish glows like a **wine** country sunset.

*

Meredith had previously solved the mystery of Zinfandel--well, half of it, anyway--by determining that it is genetically identical to the Italian red **wine** grape called Primitivo. However, since Zinfandel was being grown in California well before Primitivo appeared in Italy, the question of the grape's origin is still open.

Just months ago Meredith's DNA analysis ruled out the best candidate for a Zinfandel/Primitivo antecedent, a grape called Mali Plavac, which is widely grown in Croatia. So Zinfandel's ultimate origin is still a mystery.

Scientists will doubtless pursue the question as long as there's hope of a meaningful conclusion. We happy **wine** lovers, however, don't need to bother our little heads about it. Under the time-honored "finders, keepers" rule--as applicable to viticulture as anything else--both Petite Sirah and Zinfandel belong to California.

*

Smith is a freelance writer living in Northern California.

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Buying for connoisseur can be easy The San Diego Union-Tribune December 2, 1998 Wednesday

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The San Diego Union-Tribune

December 2, 1998 Wednesday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. FOOD-6

LENGTH: 879 words

HEADLINE: Buying for connoisseur can be easy

BYLINE: Robert Whitley

BODY:

At first blush, finding the right Christmas gift for the **wine** connoisseur in your life would appear to be as easy as a trip to any big **wine** shop. There are so many options, even a novice could do it.

Or so it would seem. Then the doubts begin to creep in.

What if it's not the right vintage? Should it be red or white?

Is the most expensive **wine** always the best **wine?** Is fine crystal an option?

If so, which shape? Although connoisseurs take a critical approach when purchasing **wine** and are often fussy about the utensils used in the service and consumption of **wine,** buying for one of these Frasier wannabes need not be a traumatic experience. Anyone can do it.

You simply need to know where to look and what to ask for. The catalogs If you dread asking for help in a fine-**wine** shop, perhaps ordering through a catalog is for you.

Two possibilities come to mind: Windsor Vineyards, a mail-order winery in Sonoma County, and Ambrosia, a company in Napa that specializes in well-aged Cabernets and other rare **wines** from the Napa Valley and Sonoma. Windsor, (800) 333-9987, has won more medals this year than any other California winery.

The winery's selections cover the entire spectrum of California **wine,** including methode champenoise, and prices range from very modest to moderately expensive. Quality is exceptional across the board, and the prices are fair given the quality.

Personalized labels are available, too. Ambrosia, (800) 435-2225, offers older vintages as well as current hard-to-find releases from many of California's top wineries, such as Joseph Phelps, Far Niente, Mayacamas, Niebaum-Coppola, Stag's Leap, Heitz Cellars, Diamond Creek, Simi, Jordan, **Ravenswood** and Newlan. There are many more from which to choose, and prices are fair, frequently exceptional. Super-premium reds California viticulture has emerged from the shadows of its European rivals to produce limited quantities of red **wine** as fine as any in the world. California vintners have only recently been bold enough to price them accordingly. The formula for these super-premium red **wines** is simple.

Make strict selections from the best vineyards, severely limit yields, go for ripeness, and use only the finest French oak for aging.

Then limit supply in every important market and watch connoisseurs line up to snag a few bottles regardless of the cost. These are not **wines** a person drinks every day.

It could be argued they aren't worth the cost, but no one can deny they are very good and difficult to find before collectors and top-notch restaurants snap them up. Bottom line: No connoisseur will complain if even one of these **wines** finds its way under the tree on Christmas morning. All of the following super-premiums get four stars or better in my rating system, where five stars (97 to 100 points) is perfection in a **wine** bottle. [] 1995 Quintessa, Napa Valley ($90) -- Five stars for complexity, elegance and overall impression.

A stunning Meritage.

A stunning price. n 1995 Bernardus "Marinus," Carmel Valley ($36) -- A four-star **wine** at a three-star price.

Over the past few vintages, this has been one of the most elegant and delicious Meritage **wines** made in California. [] 1995 Joseph Phelps "Backus Vineyard," Napa Valley ($75) -- A **wine** from what historically has been one of the greatest Cabernet Sauvignon vineyards in the Napa Valley.

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Uncork the holiday spirit;The festive season The Boston Globe November 29, 1998, Sunday

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November 29, 1998, Sunday ,City Edition

SECTION: MAGAZINE; Pg. 30

LENGTH: 897 words

HEADLINE: Uncork the holiday spirit;
The festive season

BYLINE: By Fiona Luis

BODY:

As the season of gift-giving and holiday parties bears down upon us, novices and oenophiles alike start fretting: What **wine** to tie with a bow? Which bottle to bring to a fete? There's something out there, either drinkable or useful, for everyone who likes **wine.** Here are a few gift suggestions.

Do the twist It stays home, and it goes out on the town, too. The Screwpull, made by Le Creuset, is an indispensable little corkscrew that never fails to rise to the occasion, and the pocket model, which retails for about $20, will comfort even the cork-challenged. Auger it into the cork, keep turning, and pour the claret like a pro.

Flute players What's the festive season, pray tell, without smooth sips of vintage bubbly? Whether you prefer Perrier-Jouet or veer toward Veuve Clicquot, do Champagne justice: Give the friend who's partial to sparkle a pair of Riedel flutes. The theory here is that each different Riedel model is perfectly engineered to a particular varietal or style of **wine,** capturing its essence and showcasing its flair. Once a skeptic, I've now humbly surrendered my sneer.

If you can't quite shell out $100 for the Sommelier series, you can take home a pair of the Vinum Vintage Champagne flutes for about $30. Every tiny, tight bubble, every sip of toasted yeast, every glaze of glorious hazelnut on the tongue, will imbue your friend with good cheer.

Page turner Published just last year, The New Sotheby's **Wine** Encyclopedia, by Tom Stevenson (DK Publishing, $50), is a visual feast. Loaded with information, including labels, maps, and profiles of producers, it's a hardcover that won't gather dust on the coffee table.

Sweet surrender From classic Sauternes to marvelous Moscato, dessert **wines** can quite literally transform your taste. After a sip of a particularly good one, the diehard dessert fan is likely to refuse that chocolate torte in favor of a liquid finale. A pricey Chateau d'Yquem will impress everyone, of course, but there are other treasures on retail shelves.

For a northern exposure, try a half-bottle of 1996 Inniskillin Ice **Wine** Vidal from the Niagara Peninsula for about $50. This intense Canadian, as good as German eiswein, boasts a high acidity, and if you close your eyes and dream, it's almost like creme brulee in a glass.

For a regional option, look to the North Fork of New York's Long Island, where Pellegrini Vineyards turns out a traditional late-harvest white table **wine** called Finale. This $25 half-bottle from the 1994 vintage, a blend of sauvignon blanc and Gewurztraminer, is as sweet as Sauternes but cuts through with a racier edge.

Francophiles will welcome this gift of gold from the Loire at $25 a half-bottle: a 1996 Quarts-de-Chaume from Domaines des Baumard. The abbey of Ronceray used to hold sway over vineyards in the village of Chaume and claimed one-quarter of the vintage, hence the name. The chenin blanc's rich intensity is superb solo, but its lighter body can make merry with berries.

Three of a kind For entertainment wrapped up as a gift set, consider a trio we'll call the Three R's of Original Zin. Some champion zinfandel as the only indigenous vitis vinifera grape of North America, while others point to Italy as its probable birthplace. Whatever your inclination, this is a great varietal, filled with peppery backbone, an intense berriness, and sometimes even a splash of chocolate. Zinfandels from Ridge (Geyserville 1995), **Ravenswood** (Monte Rosso 1996), and Renwood (Grandpere 1995), all in the $30-a-bottle range, are unbeatable.

Big deal A mixed half-case of **wine** is your chance to go global. There's bound to be someone on your list who will relish the geography lesson of these three whites and three reds: a grassy and intense Brancott Vineyards Reserve Sauvignon Blanc 1997 from New Zealand ($16), a dry and pearlike Pazo de Senorans Rias Baixas Albarino 1997 from Spain ($15), and an unctuous, melony Blanck Tokay Pinot Gris 1997 from Alsace ($15), as well as a harmonious and earthy Hamilton Russell Vineyards Pinot Noir 1997 from South Africa ($14), a succulent E. Guigal Gigondas 1995 from France's Cotes-du-Rhone ($16), and the dark, jammy Altos de Medrano Malbec 1997 from Argentina ($12).

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ZINFANDEL'S COLORFUL COMEBACK Buffalo News (New York) July 15, 1998, Wednesday, CITY EDITION

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July 15, 1998, Wednesday, CITY EDITION

SECTION: FOOD, Pg. 3D

LENGTH: 476 words

HEADLINE: ZINFANDEL'S COLORFUL COMEBACK

BYLINE: BOB HOSMON; Knight Ridder

BODY:
While researchers continue to debate the origins of the zinfandel grape, one point is clear: Wherever it came from, zinfandel is recognized today as a quintessential American grape.

In the early part of this century, zinfandel was one of the most planted grapes in California and those red jug **wines** you bought in the 1950s and '60s probably were made from zinfandel grapes.

But in the 1970s and '80s, as the California **wine** industry began to grow, a lot of wineries produced red zinfandel in 750-milliliter bottles and identified that **wine** as zinfandel on the bottle labels. The problem with these early varietal-designated zins was that every winery seemed to make its zinfandel in a different style.

Some zinfandels were light and fruity; others were as dark as India ink and as high in alcohol as the law allowed. The result: The American consumer became confused and gave up on zinfandel. Instead, **wine** buyers focused their attention on cabernet sauvignon as a red varietal **wine.**

Faced with plummeting sales of zinfandel, a lot of wineries pulled up their vines (some as old as 50 years) and replaced them with more profitable grape varieties.

While all this was going on, a California winery named Sutter Home introduced a **wine** called "white zinfandel." By crushing zinfandel grapes and allowing their skins to have very limited contact with the juice (**wine** gets its color from the grape skin), Sutter Home produced a pale pink **wine** that was light and slightly sweet. It was an instant success.

Indeed, for all the **wine** snobs who decry white zinfandel, there is a place for that **wine** on the shelf. And quite frankly, it was the success of white zinfandel and its potential profit margin that encouraged vineyard owners to stop pulling up their zinfandel vines.

One could speculate that, had white zinfandel not come along, the zinfandel grape may have virtually disappeared from California vineyards.

Also, it should be noted that some drinkers of white zinfandel have graduated to red zinfandel, and red zin is enjoying revival.

With rich blackberry flavors, it's the perfect **wine** to enjoy with Italian food such as pasta and pizza. And it goes well with such all-American favorites as grilled steak and hamburgers. So whether the choice is white or red, enjoy a bottle of zinfandel.

Recommended choices/price/availability: In addition to Sutter Home, some of my favorite white zinfandels include DeLoach and Beringer. Most white zins retail for less than $ 8 a bottle.

With so many red zinfandels on the market, a good **wine** merchant should be able to direct you to one you like.

My favorites include those from Rosenblum, Caymus, **Ravenswood,** Ridge, Beringer and Storybook Mountain. Red zinfandels can range in price from $ 8 to more than $ 20 a bottle, but a good selection should be available in all **wine** shops.

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ZINFANDEL BUYING BASICS The Washington Post June 10, 1998, Wednesday, Final Edition

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June 10, 1998, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. E08

LENGTH: 633 words

HEADLINE: ZINFANDEL BUYING BASICS

BYLINE: Michael Franz , Special to The Washington Post

BODY:
Zinfandel is easy to enjoy but challenging to purchase, since California produces more than 300 different bottlings. However, you can quickly become a savvy buyer by learning the top growing regions and producers.

The "benchmark bottling" listed with each region refers to the **wine** that most closely typifies the style of that area.

Regions

Dry Creek Valley: **Wines** from this warm appellation in north-central Sonoma County tend to be very ripe and dense, with berry flavors, soft tannins and low acidity. Benchmark bottling: A. Rafanelli Winery Dry Creek Zinfandel.

Mendocino County: The best vineyards are situated on cool, sunny ridges above the foggy Anderson Valley, producing **wines** that show a striking combination of depth and delineation. Benchmark bottling: Steele Caves DuPratt Vineyard.

Napa Valley: Napa takes a back seat to Sonoma where Zinfandel is concerned, but several excellent vineyards exist on the valley floor and in the surrounding hills. Benchmark bottling: **Ravenswood** Winery Dickerson Vineyard.

Paso Robles: This San Luis Obispo County appellation features very ripe, soft and alcoholic **wines** from the warm vineyards to the east of Highway 101 and, on the west side, firmer **wines** with higher acidity and more pronounced structure. Benchmark bottling: Peachy Canyon Winery Dusi Ranch.

Russian River Valley: Zinfandels from this cool district in central Sonoma County show bright berry fruit with excellent delineation and a distinctive peppery bite in the finish. Benchmark bottling: DeLoach Vineyards Pelletti Ranch.

Sierra Foothills: Most top bottlings come from Amador County and feature extreme ripeness and a pruny, tarry character. My least favorite of the major regions, but it has plenty of devotees. Benchmark bottling: Renwood Winery Grandpere Vineyard.

Sonoma Valley: Known for powerful and age-worthy Zins with plenty of firm tannin to balance the concentrated fruit. Tough for novices but ideal for those who value structure above gushy fruit. Benchmark bottling: **Ravenswood** Winery Old Hill Ranch.

Top Producers (alphabetically)

Cline Cellars: Excellent Zinfandels (and stunning Mourvedre) from Contra Costa County at very fair prices.

DeLoach Vineyards: All seven bottlings are ripe and alcoholic but almost always balanced by the Russian River Valley's telltale spice and pepper components.

Edmeades Vineyard and Winery: A top Mendocino property with a solid regular Zinfandel and two standout bottlings from the Eaglepoint and Zeni vineyards.

Peachy Canyon Winery: This Paso Robles standard-bearer produces up to six different and distinctive bottlings that tend toward the big bruiser type but usually feature impressive complexity.

A. Rafanelli Winery: The epitome of consistency and class, with plenty of flavor but invariably outstanding symmetry. Tough to find but worth the effort.

Ravenswood Winery: Simply the best. Seven or eight bottlings in most years, including vineyard designates from Belloni, Cooke, Dickerson and Old Hill that combine explosive power with remarkable balance.

Ridge Vineyards: America's most historic producer, with famed bottlings from Dry Creek, Napa and Paso Robles. These **wines** have

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'96S AND ONE '95 THAT'S RULLY GOOD The New York Post May 10, 1998, Sunday

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The New York Post

May 10, 1998, Sunday

SECTION: Entertainment; Pg. 043

LENGTH: 708 words

HEADLINE: '96S AND ONE '95 THAT'S RULLY GOOD

BYLINE: Fredric Koeppel

BODY:
Wine talk

LAST week I wrote about Burgundy **wines** you have to anticipate; they won't be released in America for six months or so. Every **wine** mentioned today is available right now. These are chardonnay **wines,** some from 1995 but most from 1996, produced by the French firm of Joseph Drouhin, founded in 1880 in Beaune and still operated by the family.

Drouhin owns about 150 acres of Burgundy vineyards and is the only Beaune house that owns grand cru and premier cru acreage in Chablis.

LaForet Bourgogne Chardonnay 1996. What a great little **wine,** lip-smacking and juicy but dry and bony, too, with lots of stones, a dense powdery texture and moderately rich and lush pineapple-grapefruit flavors. Excellent. About $11.

Montagny 1995. This **wine,** tart and lemony, hugging lushness but clean and slate-like, begs for shellfish to accompany. Its bony-limestone qualities are cut by hints of spice and dried flowers. Very good. About $18.

Rully 1995. Wow. Smoke, mushrooms and clean earthiness teem in the glass. This **wine** has lots of limestone and scintillating acid, but it's nicely fat and dense and tastes lovely. Excellent. About $19.

Chablis 1996. Wheatmeal, dried herbs and mushrooms team with steely, high-toned citrus and vivid acid. Very dry. A bit more forbidding than pleasurable, but still very good. About $20.

Pouilly-Fuisse 1996. Exhilarating, pure lemon drop and limestone, attentive to detail but not a lot of depth. Very good. About $20.

Domaine de Vaudon Chablis 1995. A pretty impeccable chablis, this example offers hints of dried flowers and mushrooms, limestone, citrus and almond blossom in the bouquet. These factors meld beautifully in the mouth, supported by a smooth, dense, enticing texture, moderate weight, lively acidity and juicy, slightly earthy citrus flavors. Excellent. About $25.

Puligny-Montrachet 1996. This terrific **wine** has it all: limestone and lavender and a hint of dried thyme; bright acid and softly polished oak; citrus and orange blossom scents and flavors; smoke and hazelnuts; impressive weight and texture. Excellent. About $42.

Chassagne-Montrachet 1996. Big but rather lean, this elegant **wine** emphasizes stony and minerally elements. Give it a year or two to get smoother and gain flavor. Very Good. About $45.

Marquis de Laguiche Chassagne-Montrachet 1995 and 1996. The '96 version of this **wine** is big and powerful, rather austere now, very minerally and chalky but shot through with classic citrus-pineapple flavors and the warmth of dusty oak. Give it two to four years. Excellent. About $55. The '95 rendition is even more reticent, a bit one-dimensional, though still very good. About $51.

Beaune Clos des Mouches 1996. Unimpeachably terrific. This **wine** exhibits great balance and suspension in all elements as it gains density in the glass. Lemondrop and honeysuckle over river stones with a sort of summer lane leafiness characterize the scents and flavors, while richness and lushness are given tone by a chalky quality that comes up from the bottom. Exceptional. About $75.

Here are a chardonnay and three zinfandels from **Ravenswood.**

My first notes for the **Ravenswood** Sangiacomo Chardonnay 1996, Sonoma Valley, were "exquisite" and "wonderful." Though it practically vibrates with every great quality you want in a California chardonnay, there's not the least iota of flamboyance about it. Its elegance and balance and liveliness are irreproachable. About $30.

The **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend Zinfandel 1995, California, is big, solid, dry and tasty with dark berry flavors, but it's simple and rustic. Very Good. About $13.

Oodles of fruit teem in the **Ravenswood** Zinfandel 1995, Sonoma County, a ripe, fleshy and jammy zin, loaded with smoke and scents and flavors of brandied black currants and blackberries. The tannins become more dominant on the finish. Excellent. About $21.

A fabulous bouquet of smoke, tar, sandalwood, dried flowers, roasted black and blue fruits and brandied raisins blossoms from the **Ravenswood** Dickerson Vineyard Zinfandel 1994, Napa Valley. It's a huge, dusty, chewy **wine** that holds its balance and offers luscious cranberry, blackberry, plum and black pepper flavors. Excellent. $32.50.

- Scripps Howard News Service

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Wines of the week Fresno Bee (California) April 29, 1998 Wednesday,

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Fresno Bee (California)

April 29, 1998 Wednesday, HOME EDITION

SECTION: LIFE, Pg. E3, **WINES** OF THE WEEK

LENGTH: 142 words

HEADLINE: Wines of the week

BODY:
Ravenswood has few rivals in its mastery of zinfandel, and it shows in 1996 **Ravenswood** Vintner's Blend Zinfandel ($ 11), a full-bodied California red **wine.**

It offers generous blackberry and black-pepper flavors, and a silky texture that is unusual in a big, inexpensive red **wine.**

This is a classic pizza **wine.**

The Baltimore Sun

* Every once in a while, even in this time of high demand and escalating prices, a **wine** of modest price comes along chock-full of flavor and varietal taste. The 1997 California chardonnay from CK Mondavi Vineyards is an example.

At a suggested price of $ 7, it delivers an unexpected wealth of fruit -- most notably apple and pear -- balanced by lively acidity, a hint of lemon and the added depth provided by wood aging.

Don't hesitate to pour this chardonnay at a meal for company.

-- Chicago Tribune

LOAD-DATE: April 30, 1998

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A VINTAGE YEAR / FERMENTING UNDER THE WESTERN SUN / FROM ONE VINE IN 1769, CALIFORNIA HAS GROWN TO PRODUCE 90 PERCENT OF U.S. WINES Newsday (New York) April 29, 1998, Wednesday,

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Newsday

Newsday (New York)

April 29, 1998, Wednesday, NASSAU AND SUFFOLK EDITION
Correction Appended

SECTION: FOOD & DINING; Page B17

LENGTH: 1172 words

SERIES: A Vintage Year. A 12-Month Course on **Wine.** Lesson 7: April California, Pacific Northwest, other U.S. regions

HEADLINE: A VINTAGE YEAR / FERMENTING UNDER THE WESTERN SUN / FROM ONE VINE IN 1769, CALIFORNIA HAS GROWN TO PRODUCE 90 PERCENT OF U.S. **WINES**

BYLINE: By Peter M. Gianotti. STAFF WRITER

BODY:
IN 1769, Father Junipero Serra planted a grapevine at the site of the Mission San Diego.

Today, California produces more than 90 percent of the **wine** in the United States, or about three of every four bottles sold.

The vines extend almost statewide thanks to hospitable climates with the right soil conditions and plenty of sun. El Nino notwithstanding, the weather is the envy of winemakers for its consistency.

Grapes for **wine** are grown in 45 of 58 counties in California. Although the Napa and Sonoma Valleys north of San Francisco are the best-known **wine** regions, **wine** grapes are grown as far north as Mendocino and extend southward to Santa Barbara.

They cover 378,603 acres. And there are more than 680 commercial wineries in the state, according to The **Wine** Institute, a trade group. But the 25 biggest ship 90 percent of the **wine.**

Franciscan monks planted the grapes to celebrate mass. The first California **wine** dates to 1782, from the Mission San Juan Capistrano. The variety was the mission grape, which was imported from Mexico. The grape was practical for sweet **wine** and brandy, if not ideal for table **wine.**

Later, Jean Louis Vignes, arriving from Bordeaux, started planting vineyards with imported cuttings and, by the 1830s, Los Angeles was the hub of **wine** production. The first vines in the Napa Valley were planted in 1838. had planted vines and cuttings of Vitis vinifera, the species that with more than 100,000 cuttings representing hundreds of grape varieties that the juices for better **wines** really started flowing. Haraszthy established the Buena Vista Winery.

Winemaking grew after the Mexican War and the Gold Rush. The population grew, with Dutch, English, French and Italian immigrants. Supply and demand for **wine** grew. The number of vines jumped from 1.5 million in 1856 to almost 4 million in 1858.

Most of the **wine** made then was sweet rather than dry. The industry subsequently endured problems ranging from phylloxera, the vine-destroying louse, to Prohibition. Some producers, such as Beaulieu, Beringer and Christian Brothers, made sacramental **wines** during Prohibition.

Winemakers Louis M. Martini, Samuel Sebastiani, and Georges de Latour were planting vines in the early 1900s and survived Prohibition. In the 1920s, the Gallo brothers grew and sold grapes. Their enterprise eventually would become the world's largest winery, producing more **wine** than many countries do. Other notable **wine** producers early on: Italian Swiss Colony, Charles Krug, Inglenook.

It wasn't until 1946 that the state's production hit 1 million gallons. **Wine** shipments in 1996 were 407 million gallons. By 1967, California was selling more dry **wine** than sweet.

The modern era of winemaking in California is often said to have begun in 1966, when Robert Mondavi left the family business at the Charles Krug Winery to start his own. Promoter and producer, Mondavi stressed premium **wines,** and began to transform the image and substance of the California **wine** industry.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the reputation of California **wine** began to rise dramatically, getting away from the ever-present jug **wines** and titles such as Hearty Burgundy and Rhine, concentrating on varietal chardonnay, for example. CALIFORNIA **wines** gained international attention in the 1970s, particularly because of a 1976 tasting in Paris, at which **wines** from Chateau Montelena and Stag's Leap **Wine** Cellars finished ahead of Burgundies and Bordeaux.

Oaky chardonnays and big, powerful cabernets started to define California **wine** in the 1970s. But over the years, softer **wines** have become more common. And white zinfandel, from the red zinfandel grape, made many drinkers happy and many critics blush.

Chardonnay leads in acreage in California, going from 28,852 acres in 1986 to 82,330 in 1996. During the same period, cabernet sauvignon went from 18,778 to 40,457. Respected cabernet producers include Heitz, Caymus, Stag's Leap **Wine** Cellars, Robert Mondavi and Opus One; chardonnay, Kistler, Mondavi, Peter Michael, Chateau Montelena and Grgich Hills.

Still, zinfandel is the state's big red grape in terms of tons crushed. Turley, Ridge and **Ravenswood** are among leading zinfandel producers in quality. In tonnage, zinfandel is followed by cabernet sauvignon, merlot, Grenache and Barbera. Pinot noir trails, with syrah, cabernet franc, petite sirah and sangiovese far behind.

Among whites, after chardonnay comes French colombard. Then there's a sizable drop to chenin blanc, another big dip to sauvignon blanc, after which are muscat of Alexandria, white riesling, gewurztraminer, semillon, muscats and viognier.

European **wine** producers, including Mouton-Rothschild, Moet & the Pacific Northwest, making **wines** such as the Mondavi-Mouton venture Opus One, Domaine Chandon sparklers, the cabernet blend Dominus and Domaine Drouhin pinot noir.

In the '70s and '80s, wineries started establishing themselves north of California. Oregon and Washington State have distinctive **wines,** from areas different from California's **wine** regions.

Oregon has a cooler and wetter climate than California. Its primary grape now is pinot noir. For whites, the state emphasizes chardonnay and riesling, and there's growing interest in pinot gris. Pinot noir and pinot gris grow south of Portland in the Willamette Valley, where most of the state's wineries are situated. Other **wine** regions in Oregon are the Umpqua Valley and the Rogue River Valley. They're both warmer than the Willamette.

The **wine** areas of Washington State are the Columbia Valley, with most of the acreage, followed by the Yakima Valley, and the much smaller Walla Walla Valley. East of the Cascade Mountains, the summers are dry and hot. Merlot, cabernet sauvignon, semillon and sauvignon blanc are the primary grapes. Wineries to the west of the Cascades also produce riesling.

More than 40 states produce **wine,** from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, through Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan, to Texas, Virginia and Florida. There's a vineyard on Martha's Vineyard, too.

Leon D. Adams, an authority on **wine** in America, once said only Alaska was doubtful as a **wine**-producing state because the season is so short. But, he added, grapes do grow there. **Wine** Country / The main grape-growing and **wine**-producing regions of California and the Pacific Northwest. SOURCE: "Oz Clarke's **Wine** Atlas" Main **wine** regions:

California Napa Valley Sonoma Valley Alexander Valley Mendocino Los Carneros Livermore Sierra Nevada Santa Cruz Santa Clara San Joaquin San Luis Obispo Riverside Stockton Clear Lake Monterey Santa Barbara San Francisco Sacramento San Jose Los Angeles San Diego San Bernardino

OREGON/WASHINGTON Columbia Valley Yakima Valley Walla Walla Valley Cascade Mountains Seattle Correction: A map on Wednesday locating several **wine** regions along the Pacific Coast misspelled Tacoma, Wash. (5/1/98 A02 ALL) Tokoma Spokane Olympia Willamette Valley Umpqua Valley Rogue River Valley Eugene Grants Pass Portland Cascade Mountains

CORRECTION:
A map on Wednesday locating several **wine** regions along the Pacific Coast misspelled Tacoma, Wash. (5/1/98 A02 ALL)

GRAPHIC: Newsday Color Map by Philip Dionisio- **Wine** Country / The main grape- growing and **wine**-producing regions of California and the Pacific Northwest. SOURCE: "Oz Clarke's **Wine** Atlas" (see end of text)Correction: A map on Wednesday locating several **wine** regions along the Pacific Coast misspelled Tacoma, Wash. (5/1/98 A02 ALL)

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STORE'S BUYER GIVES SWEET REDS RECOMMENDATIONS Dayton Daily News (Ohio) April 22, 1998, Wednesday,

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Dayton Daily News (Ohio)

April 22, 1998, Wednesday,

SECTION: LIFESTYLE: FOOD, Pg. 3C,

LENGTH: 444 words

HEADLINE: STORE'S BUYER GIVES SWEET REDS RECOMMENDATIONS

BYLINE: Mark Fisher

BODY:
A variety pack to kick-start your spring, starting with a question that I've heard from more than one reader in recent weeks:

Q: I want to start drinking red **wine,** but I do not like the taste of dry red **wines.** Can you recommend a sweet red?

A: Sweet reds are not my cup of juice - well, not since I sampled that Boone's Farm Strawberry Hill a couple of decades ago, and it was more pink than red - so I turned to Dennis Batty, **wine** buyer for Arrow **Wine** & Spirits' Far Hills Avenue store, for assistance. (He, too, has been asked this question more than once.)

Batty recommends Sangria, the Spanish red mixed with fruit juices; Lambrusco, the once-ubiquitous Italian red; Nouveau Beaujolais, the frothy French red that is fruity and grapy, with a slightly tart aftertaste; and Concord **wines** from the likes of Mogen David and Manischewitz. Several Ohio **wines** make Concords as well.

* Ken Brewer has been hired as **wine** and beer manager at Lofino's in Beavercreek and says he plans to add to the 400-plus **wine** selection the grocery store now has. Brewer is past president and board member of the American **Wine** Society and a member of the Society of **Wine** Educators. His goal at Lofino's, he says, will be to "provide a selection of **wines** for every level of **wine** consumer." Brewer said the store has **wine** tastings from 2 to 4 p.m. every Saturday.

* **Wine** of the Week: **Ravenswood** 1996 Vintner's Blend Zinfandel, $ 11.99. There are benchmark **wines,** and then there are benchmark **wines.** This simply sets the standard for pleasant-drinking red zinfandels in (and in most cases above) its price category, and the quality in the bottle is outstanding. **Ravenswood** carved its reputation as one of the best zinfandel producers in the world with a series of single-vineyard bottlings that few customers can get their hands on; those **wines** are tightly allocated and the few bottles that make it to Miami Valley shelves are snatched up rather quickly.

But **Ravenswood** proprietor Joel Peterson makes a large quantity of this vintner's blend bottling from zin grapes snatched up from all over California, and the result reveals Peterson's mastery with this grape. Try this with pasta dishes with tomato sauce or with anything off the grill. Serving hint: If your room temperature is 70 degrees or so, chill the bottle slightly before serving.

* In an upcoming "Taste of **Wine**" column, we're going to take a closer look at sauvignon blanc, the white-**wine** grape that has long toiled in chardonnay's shadow. If you have a favorite **wine** in this variety - especially if it's relatively inexpensive - suggest it to me at 225-2258; or e-mail me at mark_fisher@coxohio.com

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Napa's wines offer elegance, Sonoma's power Chicago Sun-Times January 14, 1998, WEDNESDAY, Late Sports Final Edition

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Chicago Sun-Times

January 14, 1998, WEDNESDAY, Late Sports Final Edition

SECTION: FOOD; CHEERS!; Pg. 4; NP

LENGTH: 799 words

HEADLINE: Napa's **wines** offer elegance, Sonoma's power

SOURCE: JIM FROST

BYLINE: BY MICHAEL DRESSER

BODY:
There was a time, not long ago, when Red Zinfandel -- the only kind that matters -- had few pretensions. It was just a hearty California red **wine** that cost less and was ready to drink sooner than Cabernet Sauvignon.

But Zinfandel has gone uptown in a big way. Once it was common to find excellent Zins for under $ 10 a bottle. Now it could require the services of a Sam Spade to find such a **wine.** Many producers whose **wines** sold for $ 10 to $ 12 a few years ago are flirting with $ 20.

At these prices, you have every reason to be picky. Not only are you entitled to a high-quality **wine,** but you should be able to find one in the style you prefer.

Where it's grown makes a big difference. If you walk down the Zinfandel aisle of a good **wine** store today, you'll notice that many of the **wines** carry a geographic name -- Napa Valley, Sonoma Valley, Amador, Contra Costa County, to name a few.

The geographical differences among Zinfandels can be at least as striking as those found among the classic **wines** of France.

An example of the powerful influence of geography came in a recent comparative tasting of Zinfandels made from Napa County and Sonoma County grapes by some of the state's top producers. In six flights, a Zinfandel from Sonoma or one of its sub-regions (Dry Creek Valley or Russian River Valley, for instance) was tasted side by side with a Napa **wine.**

The results clearly showed that there is, indeed, a Sonoma style and a Napa style. They also suggest that Sonoma offers more consistent quality.

In general, if you prefer a powerful Zinfandel with ripe, round, blackberry fruit, not-so-subtle hints of black pepper and herbs, and heady levels of alcohol, Sonoma is the place for you.

If you prefer a red that depends somewhat less on power and more on elegance, with more of a high-toned purity of fruit than a gamy earthiness, a Napa Zin is likely your cup of tea.

Caveats are in order. Zinfandel, whether from Napa or Sonoma, is still Zinfandel. It won't mimic a Margaux or a Barolo. And it's entirely possible to find a big, gamy Napa Zinfandel and a graceful, elegant Zin from Sonoma.

FLIGHT 1

1995 Rosenblum Napa Valley Zinfandel ($ 20) and Ridge Sonoma Station Zinfandel ($ 19). The ripe, elegant Rosenblum displays intensely pure blackberry and blueberry fruit, with nuances of chocolate and coffee.

The Ridge is a super-concentrated **wine** with flavors reminiscent of vintage port without the sweetness. The oversized fruit and meaty, herbal notes aren't likely to appeal to delicate Euro-palates, but if you like a real muscle **wine** (and I do), the Ridge is a knockout. (A tie)

FLIGHT 2

1994 Robert Mondavi Napa Valley Zinfandel ($ 17) and 1994 Peterson Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel ($ 10.49). Robert Mondavi, which had dropped out of the Zinfandel business for more than a decade, is struggling to find its way back. This short, one-dimensional **wine** seems to have had more than its share of exposure to oak. The result is rather sharp.

The attractively priced Peterson, in contrast, displays penetrating black cherry and black pepper flavors, with Rhone-like blackberry notes and a racy acidity. (Advantage: Sonoma)

FLIGHT 3

1994 Chateau Montelena Napa Valley Zinfandel ($ 15) and 1995 **Ravenswood** Sonoma County Old Vine Zinfandel ($ 18.49). The Montelena is a terrific expression of the elegant Napa Valley style of Zinfandel. It's a medium- to full-bodied **wine** with hints of blackberry, chocolate and herbs.

The **Ravenswood** is a blockbuster, loaded with intense flavors of cassis, blueberry, black pepper, herbs and smoked meat. (Advantage: Sonoma)

FLIGHT 4

1994 Storybook Mountain Napa Estate Zinfandel, Mayacamas Range ($ 16) and 1995 Murphy-Goode Sonoma County Zinfandel ($ 19). The Storybook is harsh and astringent, as if someone had tried to stuff a rounded Zinfandel into a square Cabernet box.

The Murphy-Goode is a heady **wine** with lush wild-berry fruit, a strong note of black pepper and a rounded, supple feel. (Advantage: Sonoma)

FLIGHT 5

1995 **Ravenswood** Dickerson Napa Valley Zinfandel ($ 27) and 1995 **Ravenswood** Wood Road Belloni Russian River Valley Zinfandel ($ 29). Both **wines,** which normally rank among California's best, were bitterly disappointing in 1995. The Wood Road was curiously ungenerous and hard-edged; the Dickerson, rough and tannic.

Of the two, the Dickerson offers more fruit, but neither is impressive. (Advantage: Napa)

FLIGHT 6

1995 Frog's Leap Napa Valley Zinfandel ($ 20) and 1994 Villa Mount Eden Sonoma Valley Zinfandel, Monte Rosso Vineyard ($ 20). The Frog's Leap is an elegant, polite Zinfandel but lacks a certain intensity.

The rough-and-ready Villa Mount Eden, with its black-pepper flavors and mix of rusticity and complexity, leapfrogs its rival in quality. (Advantage: Sonoma)

GRAPHIC: Elegance defines the 1994 Chateau Montelena Napa Valley Zinfandel. ; Baltimore Sun

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Wine-lover wish lists sure to make holidays bright and gay Florida Times-Union (Jacksonville, FL) December 18, 1997 Thursday,

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Florida Times-Union (Jacksonville, FL)

December 18, 1997 Thursday, City Edition

SECTION: TASTE; Pg. E-6; Grape Expectations

LENGTH: 1229 words

HEADLINE: Wine-lover wish lists sure to make holidays bright and gay

BYLINE: Dick Brown

BODY:

With the holidays a short week away, we asked a number of area **wine** enthusiasts and **wine** professionals what they would like to receive as the ultimate **wine** gift.

Their suggestions range from the sublime to the simple and practical.

Deborah Alfaro, director of Fine **Wine** for the Jacksonville Division of National Distributing Co., has this gift suggestion in the extravagant category: 'First class [transportation] to San Francisco and on to the **wine** country. Stay at the beautiful Meadowood Country Club in Napa (home of the Napa Valley **Wine** Auction), with visits to each of the major **wine** districts, including Stag's Leap, the Rutherford Bench, Howell Mountain, etc. Dinner at the French Laundry and Pinot Blanc restaurants are a must.

'Then on to Sonoma County, staying at the luxurious Sonoma Mission Inn and Spa, offering the most decadent of spa treatments. This is followed by a visit to the great Zinfandel producers such as **Ravenswood,** St. Francis and Cline, and conclude with dinner at Rubicon in San Francisco.

'On the more-accessible side, I'd love a bottle of Pesquera Tinto Crianza Ribera del Duero '94 [$ 22], Spain. From one of my favorite winemakers, Alejandro Fernandez, this **wine** has rich, jammy flavors with remarkable intensity on the nose. Fernandez is one of the showiest winemakers in Spain today and all of his **wines** are worthy of collecting, especially the '94 vintage.'

Here's a wish list from Kevin Marshall, North Florida **wine** supervisor for ABC Fine **Wine** and Spirits. 'I'd love a good **wine** storage locker, a must for fine **wine** collectors in Florida. The home models are pricey. A practical alternative is the new **wine** storage lockers at ABC stores in Mandarin and Atlantic Beach that provide the correct environment for **wine.** The lockers come in 36-, 72- and 144-bottle sizes at $ 1 per bottle per year.

'I'd like to toast the New Year with a bottle of Pol Roger Cuvee Sir Winston Churchill Brut 1998 [$ 99]. It's one of the greatest champagnes made.'

Marshall, whose company is a sponsor of the WJCT Jacksonville **Wine** Experience **Wine** Lover's Weekend (Feb. 14 and 15, $ 200 per person), said that would be a perfect gift for any **wine** aficionado.

'This is the highlight of the year for **wine** lovers and never disappoints,' he said. 'The package includes three seminars, the annual Winemaker's Dinner with **wines** and winemaker from Kenwood Winery, and food by award-winning Chef Matthew Medure, owner of the new Matthew's Restaurant in San Marco, followed the next day by the Grand Tasting and Auction.'

Wine collector and former importer Sam Handlee came up with this wish from the sky's-the-limit category: 'I'd like an opportunity to experience any of the classified growths from pre-phylloxera Bordeaux. This should provide a reference point on whether the **wines** were really that good and different or have just become mythological. I think 1870 would suffice for tasting purposes.

'On the lighter side, I'd like invitations from friends who have extensive stocks of fine **wine** in their cellars who simply need help in rotating some inventory. This would provide a beneficial service for everyone.'

The aforementioned Medure wanted a complete set of Riedel stemware (the ultimate wineglass), with specially shaped glasses for each **wine.** 'Then, I'll prepare dinner for two with courses to match each **wine.**'

My colleagues on the WJCT Stereo 90 radio series, The Jacksonville **Wine** Experience, offered these holiday gift wishes: **Wine** experts Gene Hayford and Bob Merendino went for broke on their first choice with one of richest and most-prized **wines** of Bordeaux, Petrus. Merendino opted for the '82 ($ 625). Hayford went for the '85 ($ 400). 'These are dream **wines** and almost impossible to find,' Merendino said. 'They're like crown jewels.'

Hayford added, 'I'm afraid I'd hold off drinking the Petrus, waiting for the right occasion and then it would be too late.'

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THE WINE GLASS / A ZINFUL TASTE TEST: NAPA VERSUS SONOMA Newsday (New York) November 19, 1997, Wednesday,

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Newsday (New York)

November 19, 1997, Wednesday, NASSAU AND SUFFOLK EDITION

SECTION: FOOD & DINING; Page B25

LENGTH: 568 words

HEADLINE: THE **WINE** GLASS / A ZINFUL TASTE TEST: NAPA VERSUS SONOMA

BYLINE: Michael Dresser

BODY:
THERE WAS a time when red zinfandel was just a hearty California red **wine** that cost less and was ready to drink earlier than cabernet sauvignon.

But zinfandel has gone uptown in a big way. Once it was commonplace to find excellent "zins" for less than $10. Now it could require the services of a Sam Spade to find such a **wine.** Many producers whose **wines** sold for $10 to $12 a few years ago are flirting with $20. At these prices you should be able to find a high-quality **wine** that succeeds in the style you prefer.

Many of the **wines** carry a geographic name - Napa Valley, Sonoma Valley, Amador, Contra Costa County, to name a few. An example of the powerful influence of geography came in a comparative tasting of zinfandels made from Napa and Sonoma County grapes by some of the top producers. They also suggest that Sonoma offers more consistent quality.

In general, if you prefer a powerful zinfandel with ripe, round, blackberry fruit, hints of black pepper and herbs, and heady levels of alcohol, Sonoma is for you. If you prefer a red that depends less on power and more on elegance, with more purity of fruit than a gamy earthiness, a Napa zin is likely your cup of tea.

Caveats are in order. Flight 1

1995 Rosenblum Napa Valley Zinfandel ($20) and Ridge Sonoma Station Zinfandel ($19). The ripe, elegant Rosenblum displays intense blackberry and blueberry fruit, with nuances of chocolate and coffee. The Ridge is a super-concentrated **wine** reminiscent of vintage port without the sweetness. If you like a real muscle **wine,** the Ridge is a knockout (a tie). Flight 2

1994 Robert Mondavi Napa Valley Zinfandel ($17) and 1994 Peterson Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel ($10.49). The Mondavi one-dimensional **wine** seems to have had more than its share of exposure to oak. The result is rather sharp and not characteristic of zin. The Peterson shows deep black cherry and pepper flavors, with blackberry notes (advantage Sonoma). Flight 3

1994 Chateau Montelena Napa Valley Zinfandel ($15) and 1995 **Ravenswood** Sonoma County Old Vine Zinfandel ($18.49). The Montelena, a terrific expression of the elegant Napa style, is medium to full-bodied with hints of blackberry, chocolate and herbs. The **Ravenswood** is a blockbuster, loaded with intense flavors of cassis, blueberry, black pepper, herbs and smoked meat (advantage Sonoma). Flight 4

1995 Murphy-Goode Sonoma County Zinfandel ($19) and 1994 Storybook Mountain Napa Estate Zinfandel, Mayacamas Range ($16). The Murphy-Goode is heady with lush wild-berry fruit, a strong note of black pepper and a rounded, supple feel. The Storybook is harsh and astringent (advantage Sonoma). Flight 5

1995 **Ravenswood** Wood Road Belloni Russian River Valley ($29) Zinfandel and 1995 **Ravenswood** Dickerson Napa Valley Zinfandel ($27). Both **wines,** which normally rank among California's best, were disappointing in 1995. The Wood Road was curiously ungenerous and hard-edged; the Dickerson rough and tannic. The Dickerson offers more fruit, but neither is impressive (advantage Napa). Flight 6

1994 Villa Mount Eden Sonoma Valley Zinfandel, Monte Rosso Vineyard ($20) and 1995 Frog's Leap Napa Valley Zinfandel ($20). The rough and ready Villa Mount Eden, with its black pepper flavors and mix of rusticity and complexity, leapfrogs its rival in quality. The Frog's Leap is an elegant, polite zinfandel, but lacks a certain intensity (advantage Sonoma).

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Tricks can be treats If brought down upon three deserving youth Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (Little Rock, AR) October 29, 1997, Wednesday

Copyright 1997 Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (Little Rock, AR)

October 29, 1997, Wednesday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. 5E

LENGTH: 850 words

HEADLINE: Tricks can be treats If brought down upon three deserving youth

BYLINE: Robert Neralich

BODY:

I regard it as a stroke of immense good fortune that this year Halloween coincides with a new moon. I know that some quibblers will maintain that a full moon is traditional, but I think that a moonless night is more in keeping with the puckish spirit of this venerable holiday. After all, in the murk of near-total darkness, the jack-o'-lanterns will appear brighter, noises -- or whispers -- from the shadows will seem more sinister, and our imaginations will be all the more susceptible to Halloween's ghostly magic.

For now, I turn from such wonderful considerations to describe six **wines** that would make great treats for Halloween -- or any other time.

I must admit that the first **wine** in this review is, for me, a special treat, for Rabbit Ridge 1995 Sonoma County Reserve Zinfandel ($ 20) is everything a zinfandel lover could desire. This beautifully crafted **wine** offers assertive dark berry flavors that are rich, deep, nicely rounded and well-balanced. Its generous fruit tones are matched by perfectly integrated nuances of sweet oak and complemented by a smooth texture and a polished, lingering finish. I think that this zinfandel would be altogether bewitching when matched with pasta, pizza or paella.

Great treats sometimes come in small packages, and Corbett Canyon 1996 Coastal Classic California Chardonnay ($ 7) proves that they can also come with small price tags. This altogether pleasant **wine** has attractive fruit aromas and zesty tart apple and citrus flavors enhanced by a hint of vanilla; its texture is soft, and its finish is upbeat and crisp. This delectable Chardonnay would be a ghoulishly good companion at picnics and fish fries.

A few weeks ago I reviewed the excellent, moderately priced 1996 Chardonnay from Lockwood Vineyards' sister label, Shale Ridge, and now we Arkansans can enjoy the just-released Shale Ridge 1996 Monterey Merlot ($ 12). This estate-grown and estate-bottled **wine** has been made in a fruit-forward style that is lively and accessible. Its bright currant and cherry flavors are accompanied by hints of mocha, spice and understated vanilla-oak, and its finish is focused and generous. This easy-to-like, altogether delicious merlot would go hauntingly well with grilled meats.

If you want to provide dinner guests with a truly wonderful treat, I suggest pouring them a glass of the remarkable **Ravenswood** 1995 Icon ($ 27), for it is one of California's most interesting red dinner **wines.** Blended in Rhone style from 59 percent syrah, 21 percent mourvedre and 20 percent grenache, Icon is filled with richly layered, beautifully expressive dark fruit flavors that are accented by deft touches of pepper-spice and vanilla. The texture of this **wine** is velvet-smooth, and its finish is deliciously deep and persistent. Icon is an eminently versatile dinner **wine,** and I think its presence at the table would make it especially hard to keep from "goblin" lamb or venison.

It may be Halloween, but it is not too early to be thinking about choosing a **wine** to accompany Thanksgiving dinner, and I recommend that readers who are planning to serve turkey consider matching it with the outstanding Matanzas Creek Winery 1995 Sonoma Valley Chardonnay ($ 22). This **wine's** tropical fruit and spice aromas lead to nicely orchestrated citrus, apple and tropical fruit flavors enhanced by hints of cinnamon and vanilla-oak. This superb chardonnay has a creamy texture, excellent balance and a rich, lingering finish.

I think it is appropriate to toast Halloween's irreverent spirit with a glass of sparkling **wine,** and one of America's finest such bottlings is Jordan 1993 "J" ($ 27). This elegant and complex **wine,** made from chardonnay, pinot noir and a dollop of meunier, is filled with lively pear, apple and fig fruit tones complicated by hints of yeast and vanilla. With its lovely flavors, creamy texture and brilliant finish, "J" is perfect for sipping, but it has character and substance enough to accompany a wide variety of savory fare.

I confess that I have a personal reason for being pleased that there will be a new moon Friday. Every Halloween, a group of three masked youths (who, coincidentally, have the same ages, heights and weights as my three sons) takes great pleasure in covering my home with shaving cream and toilet paper. But this year, hidden in the darkness, I am going to upstage their little prank with one of my own.

The pick of the crop.; welfare of vineyard workers; includes relatedarticle on vineyard workers Wines & Vines October 1, 1997

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October 1, 1997

SECTION: Pg. p16(5) Vol. V78 No. N10 ISSN: 0043-583X

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LENGTH: 3296 words

HEADLINE: The pick of the crop.;
welfare of vineyard workers;
Includes relatedarticle on vineyard workers

BYLINE: Goldfarb, Alan

BODY:

It was mid-morning back in 1991 when a group of Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents, supported by the Sonoma County sheriff, swooped down upon a dozen or so men who had gathered in a squatter's encampment in a vacant lot near Sonoma Creek in down-town Glen Ellen, Calif.

During the raid, the homeless men, who were migrant field workers, were rousted and taken away - the ones who didn't possess legal documents - and the others were ordered, some of whom had work permits, to leave the area.

Peter Wellington witnessed it all.

Wellington, the winemaker at nearby Wellington Vineyards, decided todo something about it. He wrote a letter to the editor of the local newspaper, decrying the treatment received by those who were rousted that morning and other vineyard workers, many of whom are taken for granted by the California **wine** industry.

"I wrote that this is not a problem of illegal immigrants, it's a problem of homeless immigrants that creates a problem both for the community and the workers who don't have decent facilities," Wellington relates. "If you're going to go out and pick grapes 10 hours a day andhave to cook over an open fire and not have a toilet or a place to take a shower or a dry place to sleep when it rains, that's inhumane."

Wellington received a lot of positive feedback because of his missive, which led directly to his founding a group in Sonoma County calling itself Vineyard Workers Services, which attempts to house field workers, offer medical services, and even teach English. Debbie Swanson,president of VWS, calls Wellington the organization's "guardian angel."

Since the VWS was formed, it seems the **wine** industry is becoming more sensitive to the needs of these workers - many of whom are employedyear-round, others of whom live legally in **wine** country, and, of course, the myriad migrant workers who travel north, mostly from Mexico,to work each harvest in the vineyards. It is estimated that in Sonoma County alone, there are 11,000-14,000 of these workers toiling in the fields during each crush.

But while the industry has raised its awareness about the very workers who are an integral link to their business (see related story), many believe much work is needed to see that these workers are treated with dignity and respect and are offered proper medical and housing services, as well as receiving due compensation for their hard efforts.

Angelo Sangiacomo, one of four brothers involved in his family's Carneros district business, has been a longtime supporter of the workerswho pick the grapes from one of California's most storied vineyards.

"These workers have been very helpful to us. I strongly support them," Sangiacomo says. "They need some services, and we're able to do itand participate in it."

Sangiacomo, who employs more than 100 field workers - most of whom come back year after year during the height of the crush - is modest when he says his workers return because "we think we do a good job of taking care of them. We try and pay 'em good money (about $75 to $100a ton), and we give them a long run (duration of the harvest)."

The Sangiacomos house some of the workers at eight single-family. dwellings and in recently-remodeled bunk houses, the latter of

which can accommodate up to 60 people. Angelo Sangiacomo says the facilities,whose amenities such as a central kitchen, electricity and plumbing are up to code, is "adequate housing." Several other ranches around Sonoma County provide housing as well, including Chateau St. Jean, buttheir numbers are dwindling.

Joel Peterson, the winemaker at the Sonoma Valley's **Ravenswood** Vineyards, has been a visible supporter of the farm workers, even donatingthe proceeds to a couple of organizations from an auction conducted by the winery.

"I think that field workers are, in many ways, the lifeblood of thisbusiness," Peterson says. "If these people (the vineyard workers) are people you work with, who are your employees you know on a day-to-day basis, they deserve to be treated with respect and dignity and paid like they're worth something, which they are."

Like the Sangiacomos, Peterson varies his pay scale depending upon the severity of the picking (hillside grapes, for instance) or if the grapes are scarce. **Ravenswood** pays by the hour ($8-12) "because they actually make more money that way, says Peterson. But if the picking is plentiful and the workers are picking a variety such as Carignane (which has huge bunches and weighs more than most varieties) "we pay them by the ton."

But what about wineries and growers - particularly the larger companies such as Kendall-Jackson and E&J Gallo? How do they treat their vineyard workers? And what about the United Farm Workers from which organizations such as Vineyard Workers Services have consciously separated themselves because of past alleged negative connotations and actions employed by the union?

We all remember the UFW actions and boycotts against Gallo in the Central Valley in the '60s and early '70s, some of which became violent; as well as actions against Heublein in the '70s.

But where does the UFW stand today in regards to the **wine** industry and full-time, regular employees?

For the most part, the union has not deemed it necessary to attempt to organize **wine** industry vineyard workers mainly because many in theindustry make an effort to pay their workers somewhat better than other agricultural industries. Some would say that is because the **wine** industry can afford to pay higher wages.

Save for negotiations with only a handful of **wine** companies, the UFWhas decided to place its efforts elsewhere, chiefly spending its energies these days with strawberry growers.

However, not all is copacetic. According to UFW director of membership Tanis Ybarra, "there's still a lot of abuse out there involving vineyard workers. A lot (of companies) don't provide benefits, and there's still a lot of workers out there earning $5 an hour.

"There are still documented cases (of workers) having to buy their own equipment, like pruning shears, when it's supposed to be provided by employers," Ybarra says. "We think we need to go in and organize (the vineyard workers). We feel employers can be doing a lot more for those workers, and they're not."

The UFW has been attempting to enter into a contract with Gallo's Sonoma County facilities, as well as the Charles Krug Winery and Vista Vineyard Management in the Napa Valley. Phone calls to Gallo have gone unreturned.

According to Ybarra, the UFW has now been negotiating, apparently ina friendly environment, with Gallo Sonoma since last February. That was not always the case. In July of '94, Gallo's vineyard workers elected to unionize by an 81-21 vote. But after court hearings and appeals by Gallo, according to Ybarra, the winery sent a letter to UFW in December '96, saying it was finally ready to begin negotiations.

"Everything's going fine," Ybarra says of the Gallo talks. "Things are progressing. The company has recognized workers and they meet withworkers on a regular basis."

What has changed since the UFW's often bitter battles with Gallo in Modesto almost 30 years before?

"There's been a change of leadership," Ybarra says, referring to thesons, daughters, and grandchildren of Ernest and Julio Gallo, whose offspring have been involved mainly in the company's Sonoma operation. Matt Gallo, who is Julio's grandson and the director of the company's North Coast operations, has been sitting in on all the negotiations with the UFW, says Ybarra.

"The negotiations with Matt have been very cordial," Ybarra says. There have been open discussions on all the issues." However, Ybarra would not elaborate on what those issues might be.

What of the periodic talks the last three years with the Charles Krug Winery?

"The whole issue is economics," says Ybarra. "The company has requested changes in language, which we took care of. Then it bogged down on wages. The workers (at Krug) haven't had a wage increase in three or four years. The company was quite adamant that they weren't going to give a wage increase," Ybarra claims, "and that's kind of sad."

But according to Krug's Marc Mondavi, the UFW, he says, "hasn't talked to us in quite a while."

Mondavi, whose company once had a contract with the union beginning in the early '80s (that contract has since expired) and has had contracts with other unions for the past 35 years, says the UFW "calls us about once a year. It's pretty much low key."

Mondavi says the two sides, who once went 2 1/2 years without talking, last spoke in January or February and "we stated what we wanted, they stated what they wanted, and we left and that was that." Mondavi wouldn't elaborate on what those issues are.

Mondavi, who claims that the verbiage to which Ybarra alluded has not been changed to his satisfaction, says he's still willing to "listen and talk" to the UFW and wouldn't mind entering into a contract "ifthe terms of the agreement are correct. We don't have an issue with them. I'm open for discussion."

While Mondavi says "it doesn't affect me one way or the other" whether or not Krug eventually enters into a contract with the UFW - and he thinks that may happen within the next two years - he doesn't really see the need for the union's involvement in Krug at this

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SONOMA IS VALLEY FOR FINE WINES Birmingham News (Alabama) August 6, 1997 Wednesday

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August 6, 1997 Wednesday

SECTION: LIFESTYLE; Pg. 2C Vol. No.

LENGTH: 768 words

HEADLINE: SONOMA IS VALLEY FOR FINE **WINES**

BYLINE: Beverly Taylor News staff writer

BODY:

The Sonoma Valley was a great inspiration to author Jack London.

So much so that he spent his last days here and brought fame to it in his novel The Valley of the Moon, referring to an Indian legend that says Sonoma means "many moons."

But long before London was born, the area inspired vintners. This is generally thought to be the birthplace of California viticulture, with vineyards planted as early as 1824 by Spanish mission fathers. There are now more than 5,900 acres of vines.

Today's visitors can still see London's aptly-named Beauty Ranch and hike, picnic and horseback ride in what is now a state historic park - if they can tear away from the vinous pleasures of the area long enough. Only 45 minutes from San Francisco lie an amazingly diverse array of **wines** from Cline Cellars fabulous Rhone varietals and zinfandels in the south to Landmark's silky chardonnays in the north.

Each winery seems to offer special reasons to stop by. At Sebastiani Vineyards you can see the site of the first mission vineyard and also one of the world's largest collections of hand-carved barrels. Buena Vista and Gundlach-Bundschu wineries both hold theatrical productions in the summer and early fall. Benziger Family Winery has in-depth exploration of the vineyards with a tram ride up the steep hills. The winery recently opened a microbrewery facility nearby, so fans of hops as well as grapes, take note!

Those looking for a food-and-**wine** adventure will want to stop by Kenwood Vineyards on weekends for a food and **wine** tasting. Cline Cellars holds periodic events such as a "Red **Wine** with Chocolate" festival. **Ravenswood** Winery has summertime barbecues in the vineyards - a perfect match for the renowned zinfandels. Gloria Ferrer Champagne Caves (the same family owns Freixenet) celebrates Spanish traditions with Catalan cooking classes. Viansa Winery offers an Italian bounty in both foods and **wines.**

Be sure to save time for a visit to The Family Wineries of the Sonoma Valley tasting room on Highway 12, which just opened in January. Here seven small wineries (500 to 5,000 case production) have banded together to showcase their efforts. Included are Mayo Family Winery, KAZ Vineyard & Winery, Deerfield Ranch Winery, Moondance Cellars, Nelson Estate Winery, Tantalus Winery and One World Winery. Winery principals take turns in the tasting room, so you'll often sip with one of the owners. The day guests arrived, P.J. and Robert Rex of Deerfield were pouring.

"It's a great opportunity for people to sample a lot of varietals and styles in only one stop," said P.J.

Deerfield has a **wine** club and one of the perks is the opportunity to stay at the ranch when members visit the Sonoma Valley. For more information call 707-833-5214.

A couple of other opportunities to stay with vintners are available in the Valley of the Moon. Landmark Vineyards has a large suite behind the tasting room that opens onto a lovely patio. There's also a cottage in the vineyards. Continental breakfast is included. Call 707-833-1144.

Beltane Ranch, a grape grower for Kenwood, offers a number of rooms furnished in antiques. Home-cooked breakfasts vary from fluffy pancakes with seasonal fruit toppings to Mexican-inspired recipes. Some of these were featured last year in Food and **Wine** magazine and a glossy Los Angeles publication named the ranch one of the best places to stay in the world. Guests can relax on the wraparound porches or read in a hammock. The more energetic can go for a hike that offers a panoramic view or take advantage of the tennis courts on the property. Call 707-996-6501.

Need yet another reason to rush to the Sonoma Valley? The fifth annual Sonoma Valley Harvest **Wine** Auction is Labor Day weekend (Aug. 30 - Sept. 1). This lighthearted event which pokes fun at more stuffy auctions begins with an old-fashioned picnic at Beltane Ranch and moves on to dinners at local wineries and an auction of fine **wines,** vacations and unique winery visits followed by a lavish

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'User-friendly zins' from Napa Valley: Wise veterinarian kept the faith with zinfandel grapes The Gazette (Montreal, Quebec) April 2, 1997, Wednesday, FINAL EDITION

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April 2, 1997, Wednesday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: LIVING: FOOD; **WINE;** Pg. C5

LENGTH: 741 words

HEADLINE: 'User-friendly zins' from Napa Valley: Wise veterinarian kept the faith with zinfandel grapes

BYLINE: MALCOLM ANDERSON; THE GAZETTE

BODY:
Kent Rosenblum is a veterinarian whose specialty is in orthopedic surgical procedures for small animals such as rabbits, mice and birds. He also makes some of the finest zinfandel **wines** coming out of California.

In fact, you cannot talk of California's finest "zins" without mentioning the "Three Rs" - Rosenblum, Ridge and **Ravenswood.**

So let's talk of Rosenblum, because he was in Montreal recently to show off his magnificent **wines.**

Zinfandel has a bit of reputation to live down. In the old days, about 15 to 20 years ago, many zin producers made huge man-eating **wines,** mainly with the goal of winning competitions, but you wouldn't have wanted to drink them.

The French called them "betes a concours" (medal monsters). Eventually, the hugeness of the **wines** dragged them into unpopularity and many growers simply pulled out their zin vines and planted something else.

Still more - sadly, some say - made white zin by running off the juice from the skins as soon as the grapes were pressed to cut down on color and flavor and to produce **wines** to blush for. Hence the name.

But many zin growers kept the faith and continued to make **wines** their way. Rosenblum was one of these.

Buying his grapes from quality-producing vineyards in the best areas, he makes a range of superb zins, all in small quantities. After tasting the whole range, I felt the one term to describe the **wines,** outside of superb, was "user-friendly."

There is one Rosenblum **wine** listed at the SAQ and it is typical of his **wines,** even though it is one of the more modest ones.

The Rosenblum, Napa Valley Zinfandel, 1993 ($ 24.50) SAQ No. 411520 comes from hillside vineyards and old vines in an area between Calistoga and St. Helena in Napa Valley. It bears its user-friendliness very well, being lovely to drink now with its vanilla and spicy (from the 15 to 20 per cent of the fruit aged in new French oak barrels) fruity nose and delicious concentrated, almost creamy, blackberry fruit on the palate, and yet it will last for another five years with ease.

A techno-intellectual **wine** writer would not describe this **wine** as "Yummy," but I would. Rating three 1/2

In its latest mail-order **wine** catalogue, the Courier Vinicole, the SAQ is offering the Rosenblum, Napa Valley Reserve, Hendry Vineyard, Zinfandel ($ 39) SAQ No. 707596. As the price indicates, the quality is up a notch or two from the Napa Valley zin. The grapes are produced in a vineyard at the foot of Mount Veeder at the southern end of the Napa Valley. Wonderfully juicy black cherry and blackberry fruit and the usual well-balanced oak aging should make the **wine** a sell-out. Rating four

Whites from Chile

The Torreon de Paredes, Reserve, Chardonnay, 1995 ($ 12.70) SAQ No. 380204 is pale straw-yellow and has a bouquet of honeyed lemon. There are the same rich, citrus flavors on the palate.

This is a **wine** that you will either love or hate for the sweetness of its fruit. I prefer my chardonnay drier than this but many readers will enjoy it. You would also probably give it half a star more than I did. Rating two 1/2

I had a similar problem with the Lapostolle, Colchagua, Sauvignon Blanc, 1996 ($ 12.60) SAQ No. 449876. The **wine** was intense in color, aroma and flavors. So rich and sweet were the almost tropical fruit flavors that the **wine** was difficult to recognize as sauvignon blanc.

It lacked the clean crispness normally associated with this grape and although it served well as an aperitif, I think it would be rather

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RICH REDS TAKE THE BITE OUT OF WINTER The Record February 5, 1997; WEDNESDAY; ALL EDITIONS

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The Record

February 5, 1997; WEDNESDAY; ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: LIFESTYLE / FOOD; Pg. F02

LENGTH: 923 words

HEADLINE: RICH REDS TAKE THE BITE OUT OF WINTER

COLUMN: WINE TALK

BYLINE: RICHARD NALLEY

BODY:
Winter is a season for self-pampering, for indulgence in the satisfactions of stick-to-the-ribs food and the accompanying drink.

For me, that means meals such as beef stew, clam chowder, risotto, spaghetti, pork chops, and mashed potatoes. I'll leave the delicate dining until spring.

As for drink, well, I've been saving up. This is the time of year I haul out my richest red **wines** and rummage around for brandies, ports, and recipes for warm drinks.

Zinfandels, the super-rich, tongue-purpling, genuine, red-**wine** article, are made for months like these. In the hands of top producers such as Ridge, **Ravenswood,** Raffanelli, Nalle, Ferrari-Carano, Martinelli, and Dry Creek Vineyard, zinfandels bloom with bouquets of exotic spice and red-berrylike fruit. These are **wines** for steaks, burritos, and sausage-and-mushroom pizzas.

The rich, remarkable red **wines** of France's Northern Rhone River Valley also are just right for taking off a chill. The steep vineyards of the Northern Rhone take the brunt of some severe weather, including the famous mistral winds that sweep out of the Alps and down the valley into Provence. The winemakers know winter. Their syrah grape **wines,** most notably from the vineyards of Hermitage and Cote Rotie, are red **wines** for red-**wine** lovers only: profoundly deep, perfumed, and attention-arresting, with more lean acidity and tannin than, say, a typical California cabernet sauvignon, and more flavors, too. There's just one big drawback to Hermitage and Cote Rotie: their $ 25-and--up price tags.

Lesser known are the Northern Rhone appellations of St. Joseph and Crozes-Hermitage, which can provide an authentic taste of the complexity and flavor punch that syrah provides to **wines** in the region, at somewhat more palatable prices (around $ 15 to $ 25). **Wines** from St. Joseph are generally the more reliable of the two, but you will rarely go wrong with **wines** by Jaboulet, Chave, Chapoutier, or Vidal-Fleury.

The syrah grape that produces these memorable **wines** is, not surprisingly, popular elsewhere around the world and in climates far more hospitable. There are some wonderful syrahs in California, from Bonny Doon, Sean Thackery, and Qupe, among many others, with a New World richness and silkiness. (There also are petite syrahs, from an unrelated, sound-alike grape that makes fine winter-weight **wines,** too.). At the most affordable end of the syrah spectrum are Australian shiraz **wines,** which are made from the syrah grape and marketed under an alias. For less than $ 10, look for the red version of Penfolds Koonunga Hill, an aromatic, juicy shiraz-cabernet blend, or the more subdued Rosemount Estate Shiraz. For a few more dollars, the Penfolds Bin 128 Shiraz is delicious, as are the Chateau Tahbilk Shiraz and Lindeman's

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RAVENSWOOD ZINFANDEL NAPA VALLEY 1994 $ 12.99 THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS January 29, 1997, Wednesday, HOME FINAL EDITION

Copyright 1997 The Dallas Morning News
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

January 29, 1997, Wednesday, HOME FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FOOD; GRAPEVINE; Pg. 5F

LENGTH: 180 words

HEADLINE: RAVENSWOOD ZINFANDEL NAPA VALLEY 1994 $ 12.99

BYLINE: Diane Teitelbaum, Special to The News

BODY:
Last week, thousands of zinfandel fans from all over the United States flocked to San Francisco for the annual ZAP Tasting (Zinfandel Advocates and Producers) - a sign of this deep red **wine's** growing popularity, which is outpaced only by merlot.

Austere or luscious, fruity or spicy, complex or easy drinking, zinfandel can be everything to everyone.

One of the best producers is **Ravenswood,** founded in 1976 by Joel Peterson, who vividly remembers his first tiny harvest. "There were billowing rain clouds moving ominously in from the east, complete with lightning and thunder. ... Two huge ravens perched on a nearby tree, sitting there as if passing judgment. It was wonderfully surrealistic."

His new vintage, the 1994 **Ravenswood** Napa Valley Zinfandel, is superb. With deep, spicy flavor and a dark, brooding blackberry character, it marries well with roast, wild mushrooms and game birds. Currently, it's available only at Sigel's.

- Diane Teitelbaum, Special to The News

Diane Teitelbaum is an independent Dallas **wine** consultant.

Prices will vary by store.

LOAD-DATE: January 30, 1997

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Gibson Headed in Right Direction Sophisticated San Mateo restaurant needs to lighten up on food a The San Francisco Chronicle JANUARY 26, 1997, SUNDAY, SUNDAY EDITION

Copyright 1997 The Chronicle Publishing Co.
The San Francisco Chronicle

JANUARY 26, 1997, SUNDAY, SUNDAY EDITION

SECTION: SUNDAY DATEBOOK; Pg. 34; DINING OUT

LENGTH: 1405 words

HEADLINE: Gibson Headed In Right Direction
Sophisticated San Mateo restaurant needs to lighten up on food a

BYLINE: Michael Bauer, Chronicle Food Editor

BODY:
Sometimes a critic begins to wonder how a restaurant like Gibson can be so close to showing its best, yet not do anything about it. A lighter touch on the music here, fewer ingredients on the plate there, and diners could be in for a real treat.

Owned by Jim Kopp and Joe Gerot, who also run the popular Rumpus near Union Square, this new venture in downtown San Mateo could be much better with only a small amount of extra effort.

"What's going on with the music?" one friend asked only a few seconds after we sat down. In fact, on all three visits different dining companions noted the loud, pounding music that ranged from jazz to soul and rock 'n' roll. At one point a '50s swing tune was cranked up so high we expected the lights to come up and a cleaning crew to sweep through. On two visits we asked staff members to turn down the volume, which they did. But by the time we left it was blaring again. Unfortunately, the music clutters up an otherwise pleasant, sleek environment that has a subtle deco look.

The peach-colored walls, high ceiling and ambient light provide an air of sophistication. The 36-foot black granite bar down one side and the mezzanine at the rear add architectural interest to the open, 120-seat space.

Another problem comes with the eclectic, California-style food crafted by Benjamin Davis, who earned his toque as chef at Cypress Club in San Francisco and Tavern Grill in Burlingame.

Davis' talent is obvious, and every preparation is technically correct. The fish is done, but not to the point of flaking. The chicken is moist, and the vegetables are cooked to bring out the maximum flavor. But, like many chefs, Davis needs to lighten up. By removing an ingredient or two from each dish, he could move to the top echelon of his craft.

Not even the pickiest critic could complain about the star ingredients in the venison salad ($ 7.95). The peppered meat and arugula offer a savory counterpoint to the bits of dates and spiced walnuts. But the crisp slices of pickled pumpkin fanned like spokes around the salad added a jarring, acidic note that diminished the salad's impact.

Another example: A dish described as marinated portobello mushrooms with roasted peppers, arugula and red onions ($ 6.95) sounds both rustic and refreshing, but it turns out to be a heavy gratin with layers of mushrooms, cooked onions, oversmoked peppers, a thick blanket of cheese and a syrupy, overly sweet drizzle of balsamic sauce.

A thick **wine** sauce with caramelized shallots also detracts from a grilled sirloin fillet ($ 16.95), nicely complemented with spinach and a wild mushroom tian. The sauce was so overpowering we moved the tender, juicy steak out of it.

Grilled chicken breast ($ 12.95) was plump and moist, encircled by white beans and cubes of butternut squash. A grilled apple half that propped up the chicken was a bizarre detraction. I also wanted to banish the pistachios scattered around the squash ravioli ($ 5.95) amid cranberries, sage and spinach. I probably could have done without the spinach, too, but that's quibbling.

A COMPLEX NUTTINESS

I was sure the seared tuna ($ 16.95) simmered with burdock root, a crunchy vegetable often used in Japanese cooking, would be marvelous. And it would have been if the fibrous root had been julienned rather than served in quarter-size lumps. Still, the root added a complex nuttiness to the blend.

Some dishes are fully realized and showcase the chef's natural talents. The preparation of the quail ($ 13.95) was memorable. The burnished grilled bird was juicy and perfectly suited to the barbecue-type sauce. With cubes of roasted pears, a julienne of crunchy endive that picked up nuances of the slightly sweet thyme demi-glace and a sweet potato custard, the combination offered a complex mix of sweet, savory, creamy and crunchy.

The roasted pork loin ($ 13.95) was perfectly cooked, and the rich fontina-infused pearl couscous was brightened by the dried fruit

sauce accompanying the meat. Another good dish, especially if you like food that packs a chile wallop, is the halibut ($ 15.95) steamed with lemongrass, ginger and scallions, and served on a bed of white rice. Another fish dish, roasted salmon ($ 14.95), was perfectly complemented by Napa cabbage underneath and a dice of root vegetables caramelized to bring out a subtle sweetness. The ruby port sauce was a bit too much, however.

REFRESHING VARIATION

For starters, the romaine with garlic dressing, balsamic onions and Parmesan cheese ($ 5.95) is a refreshing variation on a Caesar. And the spicy gulf prawns ($ 6.95), served on a mound of greens scented with lemon oil and green olives, are absolutely delicious. The white bean crostini, actually a puree on toast, didn't add anything to the combination, but it wasn't offensive.

Desserts, too, are uneven. I'd come back for the rich creme brulee ($ 4.95), but the grapefruit-Campari granita ($ 4.95) was destroyed by a perfumed Crenshaw melon ice that threw both flavors out of whack. The chocolate brioche pudding ($ 5.95) was rich and warm, but the crisp, buttery apple tart ($ 6.95) quickly grew soggy because of the baby-food-textured apple puree underneath and a soupy broth around the edges.

As for service, the staff members have all the basics down. They still seem a little ill at ease with the surroundings, but it's clear they've been aptly trained. In a month or so the self-consciousness should disappear as they settle in.

I hope the same thing happens with the food. Fortunately, the problems are easy to fix -- the food tastes pretty good now. But with a little less, it could be so much more.

EVERY **WINE** IS A WINNER ON THIS LIST

Jim Kopp, who constructed the beverage list at San Mateo's Gibson, is one of the most innovative **wine** buyers in the Bay Area. His selections are so well-rounded and distinctive you can choose any item and come up with a winner.

Almost single-handedly at Rumpus, his San Francisco restaurant near Union Square, he's created a demand for rose **wines.** At Gibson the choices have been scaled back, but there are still several interesting choices, including the 1995 Bruno Clair Marsannay Rose ($ 27) and for the bargain-conscious, the 1995 McDowell Grenache Rose ($ 18).

However, real value seekers will head for the **wines** above $ 25; at that level the markups are just over double; in the lower price ranges they can soar to three or more times what the restaurant paid for the **wine.**

At the top of the 50-item list is the 1994 Andrew Murray Syrah ($ 35) a new winery in Santa Barbara, and the 1994 **Ravenswood** Sonoma Zinfandel ($ 25), a spicy, fruity treat. In foreign **wines,** the 1994 Jean Marc Boillot Bourgone Rouge ($ 29) is a versatile choice.

White **wine** fanciers trying to look past Chardonnay will appreciate the peach and fruit nuances of the 1995 J. Fritz Dry Creek Valley Melon ($ 22). And although the markup is high, the 1995 Perrin Reserve Blanc ($ 22) is another interesting option.

The by-the-glass offerings are also out of the mainstream, with most of the 13 **wines** available for $ 4.50 to $ 6.50.

The after-dinner list features a stellar selection of Port, Madeira and sweet **wines.** In addition, Kopp has selected 21 spirits, including Armagnac, Brandy, Calvados and Eau de Vie.

GIBSON

ADDRESS: 201 E. Third St. (at Ellsworth Street), San Mateo

PHONE: (415) 344-6566

HOURS: Lunch 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. weekdays. Dinner 5:30-10 p.m. daily. Sunday brunch 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Full bar. Reservations and credit cards accepted.

CHART:

```
    OVERALL:       TWO STARS
    Food:       TWO STARS
    Service:       TWO AND A HALF STARS
    Atmosphere:       TWO AND A HALF STARS

    PRICES:       $$$
  PLUSES: Pleasant, upscale surroundings; interesting food
combinations, particularly the pork loin and grilled quail.
  MINUSES: Music is annoyingly loud; many dishes have too
many competing flavors.
*
    RATINGS KEY
    FOUR STARS:         Extraordinary
    THREE STARS:        Excellent
    TWO STARS:          Very good
    ONE STAR:           Good
    (box):              Fair

    $     Inexpensive:       entrees under $7
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RED VS. WHITE: ZINFANDELS REMAIN A MYSTERY Dayton Daily News (Ohio) January 15, 1997, Wednesday,

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Dayton Daily News (Ohio)

January 15, 1997, Wednesday,

SECTION: LIFESTYLE: FOOD, Pg. 2C,

LENGTH: 523 words

HEADLINE: RED VS. WHITE: ZINFANDELS REMAIN A MYSTERY

BYLINE: Mark Fisher

BODY:
Before Fairfield **Wine** In Beavercreek was allowed to conduct drop-in **wine** tastings at its store, the shop's co-proprietor, Roger Alexander, would set up a table inside the Mall at Fairfield Commons each Thursday and offer samples to passers-by.

This was **wine** outreach in its purest form. Folks who wouldn't set foot in a **wine** shop to sample **wines** were drawn to the idea when all they had to do was put down their shopping bags, plunk a few quarters down and take a sip.

I watched one Thursday night as Alexander was pouring a zinfandel. A "real" zinfandel, which is to say a red **wine.** The zinfandel grape is, after all, a red-**wine** grape, and the ever-popular pink version of zinfandel - made by removing the grape skins that carry all of the ruby color - bears little or no taste resemblance to the dry, robust red produced from the same grape.

Several customers approached the **wine**-tasting table, and inevitably, it seems, the conversation would go something like this:

Customer: "I'll try the zinfandel."

Alexander: "Certainly. Now this is red zinfandel, is that OK?"

Customer: "Oh, uh, no, that's not what I wanted. Um, never mind."

Alexander later estimated that 75 percent of the mall shoppers who asked for a zinfandel didn't realize it would be red.

And who can blame them? A heckuva lot more pink **wine** made from the zinfandel grape is sold in this country than the red, and although its rage has cooled somewhat, "white" zin is still a fashionable aperitif. It also serves as a consumer-friendly introductory **wine.**

This column hasn't focused much on white zinfandel because I don't know much about it and haven't tried many. I have enjoyed an occasional glass by itself or with spicy foods, but in general, the **wines** all taste so doggone similar: fruity and semisweet, and all too often lacking the acidity - that refreshing zinginess in the aftertaste - to stand up to meals.

But that's just my opinion. I'd like to hear yours. Tell me what you like most about white zinfandel, when you like to drink it (with meals? by itself?). Let me know what brands are your favorites and why.

You can e-mail me at Mark_Fisher@coxohio.com or send regular mail to Mark Fisher, 45 S. Ludlow St., Dayton Ohio 45402.

* **WINE** OF THE WEEK: **Ravenswood** 1995 Vintners Blend Zinfandel, $ 10.99. OK, back to the red version for a few moments. The "real" zinfandels are uniquely American (the grape's origins are a mystery), and they complement a variety of foods, particularly dishes that have garlicky tomato-based sauces. And for a couple of bucks more than the price of most white zins, you can sample the real thing from perhaps the finest producer of zinfandel in the world. **Ravenswood** - whose motto is "No Wimpy **Wines**" - makes a handful of single-vineyard zins that are so coveted, and so limited in production, the winery has to sell them, literally, by a lottery system to those on its mailing list. But its least-expensive offering is also delicious, especially so in the newest vintage release, the '95. Try a glass with a plate of spaghetti, or pizza or a steak. You might swear off the pink stuff forever.

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GIFT OF THE GRAPE IS ALMOST ALWAYS APPRECIATED Anchorage Daily News (Alaska) December 20, 1996, Friday,

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Anchorage Daily News (Alaska)

December 20, 1996, Friday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: WEEKEND, Pg. 6H

LENGTH: 805 words

HEADLINE: GIFT OF THE GRAPE IS ALMOST ALWAYS APPRECIATED

BYLINE: Stefan Blicker; Special To The Daily News

BODY:
If you've ever read the **Wine** of the Week column in this section, you'll know that I'm an ardent supporter of good **wine** at fair prices, usually $ 15 or less. However, this doesn't mean that I can't be coerced into drinking a great, world-class (and significantly more expensive) **wine.**

The holidays are coming up and, as any **wine** drinker will tell you, indulging in a great bottle can enhance any gathering or meal. Good **wine** also makes a great gift. I've never met on oenophile that wasn't thrilled to add a fine bottle to the collection.

Anchorage continues to have a staggering selection of top-notch juice from around the world. I put together a list of some of the best of what's available at most of the bigger, better stores. These **wines** are all exceptional in their price category and most will continue to improve with age, particularly the reds, dessert **wines** and ports.

The prices are fair estimates. Prices vary slightly depending on the store, the sale and whether you purchase by the case. While most of the **wines** listed are consistently good year to year, I have included some particular vintages to look for.

WHITE

CHAMPAGNES

Roederer Estate (California) $ 19

Scharffenberger Blanc de Blanc (California) $ 19

Mumm DVX (California) $ 32

Vueve Cliquot Yellow Label (France) $ 38

Vueve Cliquot La Grande Dame (France) $ 100

Dorn Perignon (France) $ 100

Dorn Perignon Rose (France) $ 225

CHARDONNAY

Chalk Hill (California) $ 21

Ch. Ste. Michelle Reserve (Washington) $ 26

Joseph Drouhin Meursault (France) $ 27

Girgich Hills (California) $ 28

Joseph Drouhin Puligny-Montrachet (France) $ 30

Kistler (California) $ 30-50

Talbott (California) $ 32

Far Niente (California) $ 35

OTHER WHITES

Chalk Hill Sauvignon Blanc (California) $ 15

Matanzas Creek Sauvignon Blanc (California) $ 17

Caymus Conundrum (California) $ 23

Delaporte Sancerre (France) $ 23

RED

PINOT NOIR

Steele (California) $ 22

Acacia "Reserve" (California) $ 28

Calera "Jensen," "Mills" or "Selleck" (California) $ 35

Domain Drouhin (Oregon) $ 36

Ponzi, "Reserve" (Oregon) $ 36

Joseph Drouhin Clos des Mouches (France) $ 38

Domaine de la Romanee-Conti (France) $ 125-700

CABERNET SAUVIGNON AND BLENDS

Franciscan Meritage (California) $ 23

1989 or '90 Chateau Talbot (France) $ 25

Caymus(California) $ 27

Ch. Ste. Michelle Reserve (Washington) $ 28

Arrowood (California) $ 31

Pahlmeyer (California)$ 34

Stonestreet Legacy (California) $ 35

Silver Oak (California) $ 37

Mondavi Reserve, (California) $ 46

Far Niente (California) $ 47

Penfolds Bin 707 (Australia) $ 43

Beringer Private Reserve (California) $ 50

1989 or '90 Ducru-Beaucaillou (France) $ 60

Pichon-Lalande (France) $ 65

Ridge Montebello (California) $ 70

Opus One (California) $ 75

Heitz "Martha's Vineyard"(California) $ 75

Caymus Special Selection (California) $ 100

OTHER REDS

Ravenswood Zinfandels (California) $ 14-23

Rosenblum Zinfandels (California) $ 14-23

Ridge Zinfandels (California) $ 14-23

Kenwood Zinfandels (California) $ 20

Robert Pepi Colline di Sassi (California) $ 20

Bonny Doon "Le Cigare Volante,"(California) $ 22

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'96 Nouveau will be in town for Turkey Day Florida Times-Union (Jacksonville, FL) November 21, 1996 Thursday,

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Florida Times-Union (Jacksonville, FL)

November 21, 1996 Thursday, City Edition

SECTION: TASTE; Pg. F-1; Grape Expectations

LENGTH: 1002 words

HEADLINE: '96 Nouveau will be in town for Turkey Day

BYLINE: Dick Brown

BODY:
Today we have cause for a double celebration. Thanksgiving is only a week away, time to plan the **wines** for the great feast. And today, this third Thursday of November, as specified by French law, is the annual release date of the Beaujolais Nouveau.

The enormous demand for this **wine** each year results in the air freighting of hundreds of thousands of cases to cities all over the world for release today, making it one of France's most successful export items.

The release of the Beaujolais Nouveau -- or New Beaujolais -- marks the year's first **wine** release and has become a world-wide celebration of the grape harvest. It is also a harbinger of the quality of the forthcoming vintage in the Burgundy region.

Beaujolais Nouveau is made exclusively from the gamay grape. The winemaking process is unique in that the grapes are not crushed, but dumped into the fermentation vats in full bunches. Grapes at the bottom of the vat burst because of the weight on top of them, releasing their juice and starting the fermentation process. The heat generated as a result, warms up the vat and causes the unbroken grapes to begin fermenting inside their skins where a **wine's** perfume and fruity intensity are found.

Only six weeks later, the resulting **wine** is characteristically fruity, fully perfumed, deliciously refreshing and inexpensive. Some **wine** snobs look down their noses at this **wine** and those who enjoy it. Just a quickly made, unsophisticated bistro **wine,** they say, made for immediate consumption and not worthy of all the hype.

Pay no attention to these spoilsports. Celebrate the **wine** harvest and enjoy its first fruits. The immediacy of this **wine** is one of its virtues; it should be consumed within three or four months. Serve Beaujolais Nouveau slightly chilled and try it with your Thanksgiving dinner next week.

Thanksgiving dinner, with its great variety of dishes and many styles of turkey preparation, presents a great opportunity for numerous **wine** pairings.

A simply seasoned bread stuffing and a light gravy could be matched by a lighter style Chardonnay. If the bird is accompanied by an oyster stuffing, try a Sauvignon Blanc, with its light fruit and herbaceous character. A richer dressing with, say raisins and dates and a touch of brandy, would go well with a richer, more heavily oaked Chardonnay, with lots of tropical fruit overtones and vanilla.

A stuffing with a great deal of seasoning and spice could be paired with an Alsatian Ge-wurztraminer with its characteristic lychee nose, flavor and rich spiciness.

Red **wines** can be an excellent match at the Thanksgiving table. California Pinot Noir is a wonderful partner for heavier stuffing and gravy.

If spicy sausage is used, try a Syrah or even a Zinfandel. Go for it! Be adventurous. And have a great Thanksgiving.

Here are a few notes on the ABC Fine **Wine** and Spirits third annual Vintage Grand Tasting that took place in Orlando at the end of October. This event included two excellent seminar/tastings.

The first featured Joel Peterson, winemaker and president of the legendary **Ravenswood** Winery, famous for the intense and powerful character of its **wines.** Along with a sampling of his superb Zinfandels, Peterson surprised attendees with his Sangiacomo Chardonnay 1994, aptly described by one taster as 'the reddest tasting Chardonnay on the market.'

This barrel-fermented Chardonnay is rich and full bodied with plenty of oak, apple and a very distinctive hint of spice. It is definitely out-of-the-ordinary and unfortunately in very short supply because of its very small production and the resulting smaller regional allocations. If you have the good fortune to find a bottle for sale, grab it. You won't be sorry.

The second seminar was presented by Christian Moueix, noted for his Chateau Petrus **wines** from his native France and for his Dominus Estate bottlings from California's Napa Valley.

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BARATARIA OFFERS TASTE OF FAMILY TRADITION Times-Picayune (New Orleans, LA) October 11, 1996 Friday, THIRD

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Times-Picayune (New Orleans, LA)

October 11, 1996 Friday, THIRD

SECTION: LAGNIAPPE; Pg. L36

LENGTH: 1265 words

HEADLINE: BARATARIA OFFERS TASTE OF FAMILY TRADITION

BYLINE: By GREGORY ROBERTS Restaurant critic

BODY:
For generations, the Pausina family has earned its living on Barataria Bay, pulling salty oysters from the shallow waters for sale to wholesalers and restaurants.

To Ralph Pausina, the progression from food supplier to food preparer was a natural one. So, too, was the choice of a name for the restaurant he opened as chef and owner in June: Barataria.

But despite Pausina's heritage and the neon oyster glowing outside the restaurant's home on Harrison Avenue in Lakeview, Barataria's fare ranges well beyond south Louisiana seafood. It reflects Pausina's culinary explorations, both in his hometown of New Orleans, where he cooked at Commander's Palace in the early '80s, and across the country in a variety of venues.

And so, at 37, Pausina offers a varied lineup of seafood, fowl and meat that shows skill in the preparation of well-chosen ingredients combined with a stylish sense of balance. There are familiar, down-home flavors, some Continental sophistication and an occasional cross-cultural touch. And if some dishes don't quite come together, enough do to make a meal at Barataria a pretty good bet.

Oysters, logically enough, take several turns on the menu - but none in the deep fryer.

Pausina demonstrates the virtues of simplicity with a starter of oysters grilled piping hot in their shells, their briny succulence subtly enhanced by a sprinkling of garlic and a dab of butter. Pausina bakes the oysters for his Ralphie appetizer, anointing them with melted Parmesan, Romano and Asiago cheeses blended in perfect pitch to play a tangy counterpoint to the herby crust of bread crumbs. And he sautees oysters in butter and garlic to float in a milky broth of cream and oyster liquor for a salty-good soup.

The chef buys shrimp off the boat in Port Sulphur for serving fresh in season and freezing for the lean times. Grilled and garlicky, four shell-less shrimp harmonize with luscious baked brie in a starter dusted with slivered almonds. Sauteed and seductive, they fill a pastry shell in an entree lavished by a silky sauce creamy with tomato, herbs and **wine.**

Oysters and shrimp join with andouille, celery, tomato and even bits of carrot in a chunky gumbo Pausina that traces to on-board preparations for the oystermen; it may be fortifying, but it lacks verve. Crab appears only in a cream-cheese dip among the starters that, again, could use more oomph.

What the marine biologists call finfish surfaces as a daily selection grilled on the entree menu. It might be a fine, flaky fillet of farm-raised catfish, flattered by an intriguing relish tingly with house-smoked corn, black beans, tomato and bell pepper.

Clothes, they say, make the man, and dressing certainly boosts two of Barataria's entrees. Medallions of mild pork hinting of mustard get a huge lift from an earthy and irresistible oyster dressing alongside. And thin slices of boneless chicken breast achieve liftoff on the wings of a robust boudin dressing.

Veal and lamb receive a less rustic treatment at Barataria. The kitchen's simmering pot of veal stock supplies the basis for the rich, velvety brown sauce flecked with mushrooms and spooned over a tender sauteed slice of veal Abigayle Edwige, named for the chef's daughter. An order of lamb Dane Fagan brings two imposing roasted chops, meaty and juicy and brushed with a rosemary-scented demi-glace, accompanied by browned potatoes and a little bundle of asparagus spears.

Escargot sounds elegant, but makes for a surprisingly sturdy starter when packed in mushroom caps with sauteed fresh spinach and laced with red **wine** and herbsaint. The appetizer smoked duck and goat cheese quesadilla, though, fails to establish much of an identity; it might fare better if served warmer.

Lakeview restaurant-goers shouldn't have much trouble finding Barataria: It's where Leano's used to be. And Romairs. And Bacchi, tucked into an end of a brick mini-mall on the corner of Marshal Foch Street. In its current incarnation, a few fish and ducks mounted on plaques and the name board from Grandpa Baldo Pausina's trawler suggest a marshland motif. Otherwise, the decor is suburban spare, to a fault.

Soft light from tabletop candles and ceiling spots provides a welcome mellow glow in the two dining areas, one with tile-topped tables

to the right, the other dressed in white linen to the left. A small bar holds down the center, complete with a color TV tuned to sports and a sometimes boisterous crowd.

The **wine** list, which lacks vintage dates, records about a dozen bottles each of reds and whites, ranging from less than $20 to more than $50. A mostly California collection with a few French labels, its moderately priced whites include an attractively balanced 1994 chardonnay with woodsy notes from Gloria Ferrer in California for $25.

Among reds, J. Lohr, a California label that can signify good value, provides a well-structured 1993 cabernet sauvignon under the Paso Robles Seven Oaks designation for $24. **Ravenswood,** a pace-setting zinfandel producer, supplies an appealing 1994 Sonoma Country version tempering forward fruit with firm tannins.

Barataria offers just four desserts, all made in house. The best may be the hot chocolate cake, a lush confection adorned with a frosting of chocolate mousse drizzled with chocolate sauce. In keeping with the homage to family traditions, it, too, is named after one of the chef's children, daughter Brett Claire.

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#ART:

BARATARIA

2 beans

Address and telephone: 900 Harrison Ave., New Orleans;

488-7474.

Open: Dinner nightly. Sun-Thurs 5-10 p.m., Fri-Sat 5-11

p.m.

Reservations: Accepted, and recommended on weekends.

Credit cards: V, MC, AE, DIS, CB

Prices: Appetizers a la carte, $3.95-$5.95. Soups,

$2.95-$4.25. Salads, $3.25-$5.50. Entrees (with vegetable

and/or starch), $9.95-$19.95. Desserts, $2.25-$4.25.

Parking: In lot on site and free at night in public spaces

on Harrison Avenue neutral ground.

Barataria

VIEW FULL-TEXT ON MICROFILM.

MAP

The restaurant's rating is based on:

Food: Good to very good. With the cooking of his native

south Louisiana as a point of departure, chef Ralph Pausina

draws on his wide-ranging experience to craft a varied yet

approachable menu that artfully blends style and substance.

Preparations avoid excess and show respect for the

well-chosen and mostly familiar ingredients, and the many

hits outnumber the occasional misses.

Ambiance: Good. Suggestive of a marshland motif, a few

stuffed fish and ducks mounted on the walls struggle to

enliven an understated decorating scheme that, if little

else, is clean-lined. The soft glow of tabletop candles and

ceiling spots helps warm things up a bit, but the boisterous

central bar with its color TV can strike a discordant note.

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LEAVES, WINE CHOICES SHOULD TURN TO REDKRAMER ON WINE The Sunday Oregonian (Portland, Oregon) October 6, 1996 Sunday

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The Sunday Oregonian (Portland, Oregon)

October 6, 1996 Sunday
SUNRISE Edition

SECTION: NORTHWEST LIVING; Pg. L18

LENGTH: 876 words

HEADLINE: LEAVES, **WINE** CHOICES SHOULD TURN TO REDKRAMER ON **WINE**

BYLINE: MATT KRAMER

BODY:

Sunday, October 6, 1996 LEAVES, **WINE** CHOICES SHOULD TURN TO RED

KRAMER ON **WINE**

Summary: Here are a few selections to harvest as the weather calls for heartier fall fare

This is the moment in the year -- the very week, in fact -- when Oregon **wine** drinkers start breaking out the red **wines** and Oregon winegrowers start breaking out in a sweat. The reason in both cases is the same: rain. We start getting it about now. And if not rain, then cool, crisp weather. For red **wine** drinking it's ideal.

But for those with grapes on the vine, this is the last gasp. And it can go either way, perilously so. One great week -- warm, dry and sunny -- at the beginning of October can make all the difference. An ill-timed, lengthy deluge can wash away all hopes.

So far, the 1996 growing season in the Willamette Valley has been a roller coaster. A less-than-ideal spring delayed pollination. This, in turn, set back the harvest date. Under the best of circumstances it was going to be a late harvest. As of this writing, the operatic fatsos have not yet sung. Stay tuned.

No matter which way the weather turns, this is the time when **wine** drinkers see red. The air is cooler, one's food cravings turn to heartier fare and suddenly all those summer whites seem, well, insipid.

The following red **wines** fulfill this need with uncommon elan. Zinfandel and syrah are the vehicles here. In the robust red category, you'd be hard-pressed to find two **wines** that deliver the goods better than these two grape varieties. Both are renowned for creating dramatically deep, rich, red **wines.** The best ones have balance; the lesser versions are just plain big and bullying. Suffice it to say that these **wines** have the finesse one seeks. **Ravenswood** ``Vintners Blend'' Zinfandel 1994: Among zinfandel fans -- and they are legion -- few wineries have a more passionate following than Sonoma County's **Ravenswood.** The source of a boggling array of vineyard-designated zinfandels, **Ravenswood** is acclaimed for its emphatic **wines.** Collectively, **Ravenswood** zins are not for the meek.

But it would be a mistake to dismiss these **wines** as merely burly. The greatness of **Ravenswood's** winemaker, Joel Peterson, is that however hefty his **wines** may be, Peterson also insures that his **wines** are graceful. With zinfandel, especially big, strong ones, that's no mean feat.

This particular zinfandel is unusual for **Ravenswood** in that it is a frankly (if ungrammatically) declared ``Vintners Blend.'' As the designation suggests, the grapes for this **wine** come from anywhere and everywhere. The label simply declares the source as ``California.''

Too often, such a reach leaves a **wine** without much grasp. Not here, though. This is a terrific zinfandel: rich, intense, a bit oaky but filled with classic zin savor. The **Ravenswood** touch is fully in evidence. The price is equally inviting: It is reduced in price through October to $9.95 a bottle.

Wynns Coonawarra Estate Shiraz 1993: Shiraz is the Australian name for syrah. They say, probably rightly, that shiraz is the more accurate name. The grape is thought to have come from ancient Persia, where it was called something similar to shiraz. Syrah is the French name; it's only been used for a few hundred years.

Whatever you call it, the taste of syrah needs no interpreters. Wherever it's grown, syrah emerges almost black in color, massive in

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WIN WITH ZIN;DESPITE AN UNCERTAIN GENEALOGY, ZINFANDEL IS PROSPERING Chicago Tribune September 25, 1996 Wednesday, NORTH SPORTS FINAL EDITION

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September 25, 1996 Wednesday, NORTH SPORTS FINAL EDITION

SECTION: GOOD EATING; Pg. 2; ZONE: N; Drink

LENGTH: 759 words

HEADLINE: WIN WITH ZIN;
DESPITE AN UNCERTAIN GENEALOGY, ZINFANDEL IS PROSPERING

BYLINE: By Patrick W. Fegan. Special to the Tribune.

BODY:
Zinfandel is one put-upon grape variety. Its main purpose in life, as a jug-**wine** ingredient, dried up as Americans traded up to varietal **wines (wines** named after the grape variety used).

It got a reprieve with the advent of white zinfandel, but that craze is dying. It got lost in the current rush to the Rhone-style grapes (syrah, grenache, mourvedre, etc.) and if you didn't know better, you'd think old zin was a goner. But Don't look for the obituary just yet.

- In the last three years more than 10,000 new acres of this grape have been planted in California. That increase is exceeded only by chardonnay and merlot plantings.

- If you surf America Online's Food and Drink Network, you will notice that "zinfandel" is usually the busiest folder.

- And according to Margaret Smith, director of Zinfandel Associates and Producers (ZAP), there are more than 300 producers of red zinfandel **wine.**

One of zinfandel's charms is its accessibility, according to ZAP: Its high fruit and low tannin make it drinkable earlier than cabernet or even merlot. Also, although the current rage is merlot, mature merlot vineyards are scarce in California. So zinfandel, which was planted in more than 30,000 acres before the big spree of the last three years, seems to be filling the gap.

Today, zinfandels from the Turley, **Ravenswood,** Rosenblum and other wineries are bought up before they get to retail shelves. And if a price tag is any indication, a recent survey of Chicago stores showed a per-bottle average cost for red zinfandels at about $ 15: not exactly chump change.

Zinfandel, like most grapes grown in California, is a member of the vinifera species native to Europe and the Middle East. The early European colonizers brought varieties of vinifera with them to America, but exactly how zinfandel got its name is a mystery; there are no grapes called zinfandel growing in Europe.

In 1974, researchers examined zinfandel and compared it with other varieties. They found that it was the same as one from southern Italy called primitivo. Most of it goes into jug **wines** but some is made into a finer specimen, one of which is sold here: the 1992 Primitivo di Manduria from Savese ($16 at Sam's). And one California producer, Hop Kiln, labels his **wine** "zinfandel primitivo."

About 20 years later, another scientist, Petar Males of Split, Croatia, released a monograph on a local variety called mali plavac, also known as crljenak. He maintains that the mali plavac is a variety native to coastal Croatia and that primitivo/zinfandel derives from this region. If you find any Croatian **wines** called Kastelet, Peljesac, Dingac, Postup or Marjan, they are likely to be made of mali plavac. Try Reliable Liquors on Lincoln Avenue.

At this moment, Carole Meredith, a grapevine detective from the University of California at Davis, is prepared to check out Males' claim via DNA analysis.

How do you like your zinfandel? Without a European tradition to fall back on (cabernets are usually made like Bordeaux reds, chardonnays like white Burgundies, etc.), many styles have developed.

There's the quaffing kind that closely resembles Beaujolais and includes just about anything under $7 to $8. Pedroncelli, Martini, **Ravenswood's** Vintners Blend and Krug are personal favorites.

Then there's the "lush" category: Zins that display all their plum and cranberry fruit without the need of aging them. Right off the bat--or after 10 minutes of aeration for some like Peachy Canyon's Dusi Ranch ($23)--they cover your palate with fruit in a texture you associate with cream. Saucelito Canyon, Rosenblum, Rabbit Ridge's Olson Vineyard ($25 at Whole Foods on North Avenue), Turley, Nalle, Fritz, Kunde and Steele wineries are good examples. Expect to pay $15 to $25 for these.

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California Subdivisions The Washington Post September 18, 1996, Wednesday, Final Edition

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September 18, 1996, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. E09; **WINE**

LENGTH: 868 words

HEADLINE: California Subdivisions

BYLINE: Michael Franz, Special to Washington Post

BODY:
Since almost everyone I know these days leads a life that is perilously hectic and complicated, I'd love to tell you that buying good **wine** is simple. But it just ain't so. Former refuges of simplicity like Napa and Sonoma are being subdivided into ever smaller growing areas tuned to the needs of specific grapes, and a knowledge of districts like the Russian River Valley and Carneros has become indispensable for savvy consumers.

Today, to simply search for a **wine** that hails from Napa or Sonoma is to cast your net too broadly. French **wines** provide an analogy: Buy a bottle with a heralded but overly broad designation like "Bordeaux" or "Burgundy," and you're likely to be stuck with ordinary plonk. With centuries of experience under their belts, the French have learned which little plots give exceptional **wine** from which grapes, and labels that are simple and general are the opposite of badges of honor. Intelligent buying requires that you know the best villages, vineyards and growers.

California has yet to attain this level of particularity, but Sonoma already has 11 legally designated sub-districts, and the Napa Valley has another five: Mount Veeder, Stags Leap, Atlas Peak, Howell Mountain and Carneros. Of these official "American Viticultural Areas," or AVAs, Carneros is the largest and most significant, especially for lovers of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

Carneros sits atop the San Pablo Bay at the southern ends of Napa and Sonoma counties, and the fog, cool air and breezes from the bay make for highly distinctive growing conditions. Sizable vineyards were planted in Carneros as early as the 1870s, but phylloxera and Prohibition sent the fledgling region into a tailspin until the late 1930s.

The return to significance began when Louis M. Martini and Andre Tchelistcheff (then winemaker for Beaulieu Vineyard) began buying Carneros grapes. The results were sufficiently impressive to prompt Martini to buy 200 acres in 1942; in 1961 Beaulieu also bought acreage.

Yet growth remained slow, and wineries did not spring up in earnest until the late 1970s. Carneros receives little rain, and the vines must struggle in thin, poor soils. Quality is high, but yields are too low to make anything less than premium bottlings, so it was not until the fine **wine** boom began 20 years ago that the area offered promising investment potential.

Today, with 6,200 acres being worked by 29 wineries and 51 growers, Carneros is one of America's most important sources for fine Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and sparkling **wine.** As a group, the **wines** are moderately expensive but consistently high in quality, as the following bottlings will attest.

CHARDONNAY

This grape leads the way with 48 percent of the district's plantings. Cuvaison Reserve 1994 ($ 28) was the most impressive rendition in my tastings, with fantastic richness and depth balanced out by bracing doses of acidity and toasty oak. Beaulieu Vineyard Reserve 1994 ($ 20) is also big and lush, though it manages to retain excellent finesse and definition. Softer and more broadly textured is Acacia Winery "Reserve" 1993 ($ 29), a creamy, impressively integrated **wine.**

For a brighter, more focused style, try Carmenet Winery Sangiacomo Vineyard 1993 ($ 18), which blends spicy, toasty notes along with pineapple and butterscotch, or Saintsbury 1994 ($ 18), the best **wine** for purity, subtlety and drinkability despite being lowest in price.

PINOT NOIR

This surpassingly finicky grape clearly has found a home in Carneros, where it covers 32 percent of the planted acreage. Acacia Winery Reserve 1993 ($ 29) is a flat-out great bottle, with perfect integration of rich cherry fruit, subtle French oak, sweet, ripe tannins and fine balancing acidity. Acacia's regular bottling from the outstanding 1994 vintage ($ 19) needs time to attain comparable symmetry, but the raw material is remarkably close in quality. Lighter and more delicate but every bit as lovely is Saintsbury 1994 ($ 18), a masterpiece of balance and restraint, with pure cherry fruit and very subtle oak. Domaine Carneros 1994 ($ 20) has more ripeness and a faintly sweet character, with flavors of black cherry and cola. For a similar style at a bargain price, try Truchard Vineyards 1993 ($ 14), which is soft, supple and generously flavored.

ODDS AND ENDS

Early-ripening Merlot also does well in the cool of Carneros, and it loves the clay soils. **Ravenswood** Winery Sangiacomo Vineyard 1994 ($ 27.50) is perhaps the best Merlot ever released from the appellation, with aromas of molasses, chocolate, tobacco and blackberries.

Cabernet Sauvignon ripens later than Merlot, but the northern section of Carneros is warmer due to diminished marine influence. Truchard Vineyards 1992 ($ 14) is attractively priced and perfectly ripe, with a full, fleshy texture and scents of toffee, chocolate and blackberry.

Finally, Carneros's long, cool growing season is great for sparkling **wines,** as proven by the elegant, restrained, impeccably clean Domaine Carneros Brut 1991 ($ 20). Fuller, stronger styles are also possible, as in Acacia Winery Brut 1989 ($ 32.50), with a gutsy, lees-y, toasty nose and flavors that explode on the palate.

GRAPHIC: Photo

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Zinfandels as layered, balanced as barbecue The Washington Times August 7, 1996, Wednesday, Final Edition

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August 7, 1996, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: Part E; FOOD; **WINE;** Pg. E1

LENGTH: 1245 words

HEADLINE: Zinfandels as layered, balanced as barbecue

BYLINE: Paul Lukacs; SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

BODY:

Zinfandel and barbecue. They're a classic pair, like bacon and eggs, peaches and cream or pasta and Parmesan - a combination that tastes so good it seems almost preordained.

What makes a certain **wine** go so well with a certain food? Sometimes the secret is contrast, as when a crisp sauvignon blanc accompanies rich, creamy crab imperial. More often, though, the match involves flavors that echo and complement one another. So with zinfandel and barbecue.

Although zinfandel can be made into **wine** of virtually every style and color, this grape variety reaches true glory as a vibrant, even exuberant red. As such, it tastes first and foremost of bright, slightly sweet berry fruit. A good example adds a second, deeper layer of flavor, and a really good one then harmonizes the different layers in a complex, yet seamless, whole.

Much the same is true of barbecue, where the sweetness of the sauce supports and enhances the deep, smoky taste of the meat.

Regional allegiances lead some people to insist that real barbecue be made only with ribs. Others argue for pork shoulder, still others for beef brisket. Some even hold out for chicken. But more important than the choice of meat is the basic technique - prolonged cooking over an open fire and frequent basting with sauce.

Good barbecue always involves the interplay of three basic elements - fire, meat and sauce. The fire needs to be low. Unlike other grilled foods that require intense heat to produce a charcoal sear, barbecue demands slow, often covered cooking in order to tenderize the meat, thus infusing it with flavor.

No matter what meat you choose, the key to great barbecue is the sauce. There are countless kinds, and people can get pretty huffy about this or that ingredient, but in truth, barbecue sauce is one of the easiest things in the world to make. It's so easy that there is no excuse for buying bottled sauce, which always tastes pretty much like doctored ketchup.

The trick when making barbecue sauces comes in balancing acidity with sweetness, so be sure to taste as you go along. Here is a recipe for my favorite all-purpose sauce, adapted from an old issue of Gourmet magazine:

****RECIPE

ALL-PURPOSE BARBECUE SAUCE

2 1/2 cups chopped onion

4 cloves minced garlic

1 stick (1/4 pound) unsalted but ter

1 1/2 cups tomato puree

1 cup light brown sugar

1/3 cup soy sauce

1/3 cup rice **wine** vinegar

3 tablespoons tomato paste

1 tablespoon chili powder

Cook the onions and garlic in the butter over low heat until softened, stirring often - about 10 minutes. Add all remaining ingredients and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes. Makes about 4 cups.

The soy sauce and rice-**wine** vinegar give this sauce a slight Asian tinge, while the chili powder provides Southwestern flavor, and the brown sugar adds a Caribbean touch. This melting-pot approach makes sense since barbecue has no single ethnic or geographic origin. Like so many American foods, it is an amalgam of different sources, inspirations and years of adaptation.

So, too, with zinfandel, a grape variety that came to the New World from Europe but for years was shrouded in mystery. Recent DNA tests prove that it is the same grape as the southern Italian primitivo, but the mystery remains, since primitivo may well have been exported to Italy from California, not the other way around.

A few wineries in Australia and South Africa have experimented with zinfandel, but the grape remains distinctively American. It has been grown in Northern California for more than a century, and the best **wines** tend to come from low-yielding, gnarled old vines that were planted generations ago.

Naturally sweet, zinfandel ripens very unevenly. Use too many green grapes, and the resulting **wine** will taste thin and vegetal. Use too many overripe ones, and the **wine** will take on a stewed and prunish flavor.

But when the grapes have been harvested at just the right point, zinfandel manages to produce a **wine** that tastes simultaneously light and dark, sweet and earthy, fruity and forward as well as deep and lingering. That double character is what makes it so good with barbecue.

Zinfandel is surging in popularity these days. Unfortunately, this means that it also is becoming more expensive. A few years ago, the best zins cost about $10 or $12 a bottle. Today those same **wines** are priced closer to $15 or $20.

The good news is that more and more first-rate **wines** are being made than ever before. Over the past few weeks, I tasted more than 40 zinfandels now on the market, and I found the overall quality level to be extremely high.

The following eight **wines,** listed in a rough order of preference, proved especially impressive. So take one home, light a fire and make some sauce. It's barbecue time.

* Alderbrook 1994 Sonoma ($14). From a winery that until now was known for white **wines,** this zinfandel does everything right. It has ripe, sweet berry flavors and at the same time a cedary structure that keeps the fruit from seeming candied. Powerful, but at the same time elegant, this is an enthralling bottle - the best Alderbrook **wine** I've ever tasted.

* **Ravenswood** 1994 "Old Vines" Sonoma ($15). **Ravenswood,** famous for rare and expensive single-vineyard zinfandels, excelled in 1994 with this more widely available offering. A rich and deeply fruited **wine,** it tastes simultaneously youthful and mature - a testament to both the quality of the vintage and the skill of the winemaker.

* Renwood 1994 "Old Vine" Amador County ($22). An opulent and highly perfumed **wine,** this zinfandel combines typical Amador County heat and earthiness with luscious sweet fruit. It's expensive but has the length and depth of flavor to justify the price tag.

* Fife 1994 Napa Valley "Spring Mountain District" ($19). I preferred this winery's "Spring Mountain" zinfandel to its "Napa Old Vines," but I certainly was impressed by both. They are supple **wines,** with this one a bit rounder and more polished, but both demonstrate that Fife has become a name to remember when looking for top-notch zin.

* Peterson 1994 Dry Creek Valley ($16). Deeply flavored and very earthy, reminiscent at first of a Chateauneuf-du-Pape or Gigondas, this **wine** needs time in a decanter to reveal its core of bright berry fruit. I generally think that zinfandel should be drunk young, but I wouldn't hesitate to cellar this one for a couple of years.

* DeLoach 1994 Russian River Valley ($13). I did not have the chance to taste DeLoach's single-vineyard zins, which I have enjoyed in the past, but this "regular" bottling is first-rate. Medium-bodied, it has plenty of sweet fruit, an undertone reminiscent of tobacco, and a soft but lingering finish.

* Preston 1994 Dry Creek Valley "Old Vines Old Clones" ($13). By far the best zinfandel I have had from Preston, this **wine** is smooth and stylish, full of ripe but restrained fruit, with a briary undercurrent of pepper and spice and impressive length.

* Pedroncelli 1994 Dry Creek Valley ($9). A super value from a winery known for good values, this **wine** outperformed the more expensive "Mother Clone" zinfandel from Pedroncelli in my tastings. It's the **wine** I would buy if I were making barbecue for a crowd.

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Wine of the week The Houston Chronicle May 22, 1996, Wednesday, 2 STAR Edition

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May 22, 1996, Wednesday, 2 STAR Edition

SECTION: FOOD; **Wine** of the week; Pg. 4

LENGTH: 127 words

HEADLINE: Wine of the week

BYLINE: MICHALE LONSFORD; Staff

BODY:
The 1994 vintage is being hailed and hyped as a ""vintage of the century" for California red **wines.** And certainly there are some real plums to be picked. One such **wine** is the 1994 **Ravenswood** ""Napa Valley" Zinfandel - Four and 1/2 stars - one of winemaker Joel Peterson's best efforts, and a rare effort for this Sonoma mainstay using Napa grapes.

The **wine** is briary, and has a righteous raspberry-blackberry flavor and tingly acidity. It would be great with charbroiled steaks or roasted lamb. Retail is a reasonable $ 14.99, and it's handled by the Bayou Beverage division of Glazer's.

Since today is the birthday of Arthur Conan Doyle, grab a bottle of this tasteful zin and say to yourself, ""Alimentary, my dear Watson. . . .

GRAPHIC: Photo: The label of a bottle of **Ravenswood** Zinfandel

LOAD-DATE: May 24, 1996

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the epicures The Daily Yomiuri February 15, 1996, Thursday

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The Daily Yomiuri

February 15, 1996, Thursday

SECTION: Pg. 10

LENGTH: 1099 words

HEADLINE: the epicures

BYLINE: Akiko Robinson and M. Elizabeth Campbell ; Daily Yomiuri

DATELINE: TOKYO

BODY:
Recently, the winemakers from four top Californian wineries--Calera, Laurel Glen, Nalle and Spotteswoode--journeyed to Tokyo to introduce their **wines** to local **wine** aficionados in a series of tasting events.

Each of the wineries is noteworthy for particular strengths, and we had the opportunity to sample a diverse, intriguing lineup of **wines** at a tasting party held at the Royal Park Hotel. These **wines** are available at Party (in the lower level of Yebisu Garden Place) and in the **wine** section of Tokyu department store in Shibuya, Tokyo.

Calera's chardonnays (in particular the Mt. Harlan Chardonnay) have received rave reviews from **wine** critics, and the winery ranks as one of the best U.S. pinot noir makers. Vintner Josh Jensen is credited with revolutionizing the production of pinot noir in California with his single-vineyard bottlings. We tried the Calera 1992 Central Coast pinot, which smells of cinnamon and has a lovely, lingering ripe raspberry taste--delicate, but with a warm, burnished finish. The **wine** retails for 3,000 yen.

Laurel Glen, a winery that overlooks Sonoma Valley, is known for its finely crafted cabernet sauvignon and for its traditional winemaking practices. Laurel Glen's Ray Kaufman and his daughter poured the 1993 Terra Rosa cabernet at the tasting party. Terra Rosa has gained a considerable following as a "best buy" among Laurel Glen's **wines**--many of the winery's cabernet sauvignons are hard to come by, and accordingly precious in price. We found the deep ruby-colored Terra Rosa to be full and lush with the taste of cherries. While it's priced at only $10 in the United States, in Japan, a bottle will set you back 2,500 yen.

Zinfandel fans will be interested in the **wines** of Doug Nalle; his zesty zins are dense with fruit and drink best young. Nalle's zinfandels are leaner and more restrained than some other zinfandels, such as the voluptuous powerhouse zins of **Ravenswood** Winery's Joel Peterson (more on these wild and wonderful beasts in another column). Yet the civilized Nalle zinfandels are rich with wild berry flavors, spice and a bit of the characteristic pepper burn that prevents zin's jammy flavors from tasting sticky. The 1993 vintage was a blockbuster year for zinfandel; Nalle's 1993 Dry Creek Valley zin is available now on special at National Azabu for 2,100 yen--well down from the distributor's recommended price of 3,800 yen. We recommend that readers try pairing zinfandels with yakitori.

Spotteswoode Winery of Napa Valley was represented by its general manager, Beth Novak-Milliken. Spotteswoode is acclaimed for its cabernet sauvignon. The 1990 cabernet was poured at the tasting we attended. It's a big, intense **wine,** evocative of blackberries, with an earthy, oak quality. The 1992 Spotteswoode cab is available now in Tokyo; it, too, has the ripe blackberry flavors, with a nice nutmeg-scented nose. The distributor (the **wine** and spirit merchants at Nakagawa Planning) has set a retail price of 5,500 yen.

We've heard that one of the reasons California **wines** are still relatively unfamiliar to consumers in Japan is the paucity of restaurants that serve the California cuisine to match. Spago, in Roppongi, was for some time the mainstay restaurant for creative West Coast cuisine. But the relatively recent appearance of imaginative eateries such as Relleno's in Nishi Azabu, and the new Roy's Aoyama Bar and Grill, in Aoyama, presents some welcome diversity.

If you've discovered any interesting pairings of **wine** with Japanese food, we'll happily include readers' favorites in this column. In the meantime, we'll continue researching this area and share the results in future reports.

Parisian pleasures

Our continuing investigation of worthy Tokyo cafes led us recently to Daikanyama, surely the heartland of the city's burgeoning cafe society. The long, leafy streets here are lined with intriguing-looking shops, restaurants, boutiques and--yes, cafes--catering to varied tastes and budgets. A pleasant stroll up Kyu-Yamate Dori toward Shibuya took us to Cafe de Fascie--a little patch of Parisian-style sidewalk in Saigoyama, just beyond the limits of Daikanyama. When we began our cafe series, we initially limited ourselves to the chic new places that have opened around the inner city. But Cafe de Fascie met our basic criteria--a pleasant environment where you can linger day or evening over a meal, a light snack, a glass of **wine** or even just a cup of coffee.

The look of the place is distinctly Gaullic--the rattan chairs and small round tables edge onto the sidewalk and a wide staircase leads

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Time commits wine crime; Caught red-handed: Age actually steals flavor from some of the best zinfandels. The Baltimore Sun January 10, 1996, Wednesday,

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The Baltimore Sun

January 10, 1996, Wednesday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FOOD, Pg. 1F, Vintage Point

LENGTH: 992 words

HEADLINE: Time commits **wine** crime; Caught red-handed: Age actually steals flavor from some of the best zinfandels.

BODY:
To: The Commissioner

From: Michael Dresser

Re: Geriatric zinfandel

Boss, we've finally got the evidence to bust the old Zinfandel gang.

I'm swearing out a warrant today against "Red" Zinfandel for Impersonating a Long-Aging **Wine.** It's a Class A **wine** felony, so we should be able to put a cork in him and his cronies for good.

Boss, this was one of the toughest mysteries I've seen on the **wine** beat. It still could be a difficult case to present to a jury, especially because the defendant has loads of charm and a prominent defense team. But I'm sure we've got old Zinfandel dead to rights.

Here's how it went down:

The call that cracked open the case came in about 9 a.m. one sunny Saturday morning in early December. It was Dr. Jay Miller, one of my most reliable informants.

There's a tasting going down today, he says. Zinfandel. A big haul of older vintages. If you move fast, you can catch them in the act, he says. He names a prominent Baltimore restaurant and says be there in two hours.

I knew right then and there that this could be our chance. Most of the kingpins of the Zin mob would be there -- the Ridge boys, the **Ravenswood** mob, the Turley Trio. The word was that the Coturri twins would be providing muscle. Robert Mondavi, the godfather of the California **wine** business, would be providing some juice.

I hit the rendezvous spot about noon, when the tasting was scheduled to be in full swing. It was one of those fancy downtown joints, with thick steaks and a plush velvet decor that made it look like some designer's notion of an old-time bordello. But the front door was locked and there was no sign of life. I didn't like the looks of it.

Creeping around to the rear, I found the delivery entrance unlocked. There was an eerie silence in the deserted kitchen, and no sign of life.

As I crept up the stairs, I heard sounds coming from an office. There was some flunky in there, pushing paper. I managed to sweat out of him the information that the restaurant's deal had gone sour and that the rendezvous had been moved to the Milton Inn in Sparks. Seems somebody at the joint forgot the reservations. He's probably crab bait by now.

I arrived at the Milton Inn in early afternoon and found going down just as Dr. Miller said. There was a roomful of players, all with their noses stuck in glasses. Dr. Miller, obviously in charge, flashed a knowing grin. I quickly did my best to blend in.

Boss, it was one of the most hard-core tastings I've ever seen. There must have been 60 **wines** -- zinfandels, petite sirahs and a few other big bruisers. I quickly fell into the routine of taste and spit, taste and spit. It was disgusting, but if I hadn't have done it I would have blown my cover.

At first there was little evidence of wrongdoing. The young zinfandels were exceptional -- giving every indication that they would last for decades.

It was about then that I had my Big Break -- the 1993 Cline Big Break Zinfandel, actually. It came with a perfume of framboise liqueur and a silky texture that nearly seduced me, but just as I was about to give in, an Earthquake struck.

Yes, it was the 1993 Turley Moore-Earthquake Zinfandel, a **wine** whose blackberry, black raspberry and chocolate flavors could have

been measured on the Richter Scale. Sadly, the **wine** is almost impossible to find in Maryland unless you're "connected."

There weren't a lot of 1993s there, but the ones that were raised my suspicions that we're dealing with another vintage of monster zinfandels. In particular, we should open a case file on the 1993 Ridge Pagani Ranch, Ridge Paso Robles and **Ravenswood** Wood Road-Belloni zinfandels.

Just as I was getting comfortable with the 1993 vintage, a threesome of bruisers from Ridge Vineyards jumped me. The 1992 Pagani Ranch Late Picked Zinfandel hit me across the palate with a sap of fruit, pepper and spice flavors. The 1992 Lytton Springs pinned me to the floor with its penetrating flavors of black raspberry and chocolate. And the 1991 Pagani Ranch Zinfandel nearly finished me off with its velvet blackjack fist of flavor.

The palate-pounding continued with a 1992 Ridge Geyserville to the mouth and a 1991 Ridge Geyserville to the nose. I was on the verge of giving up and joining the Zin Cult when the 1990 Geyserville arrived with a CLUNK.

Immediately my suspicions were aroused. The fruit had vanished from the **wine** like a thief in the night.

Further investigation revealed that other zinfandels showed a similar pattern. The fruit in the 1985 Geyserville was gasping its last when we found it. The 1984 Geyserville was a shell of its former self.

It's a scam, I'm telling you. And some of the biggest names in Zin City are in on the deal -- Ridge Lytton Springs, **Ravenswood** Old Hill, **Ravenswood** Dickerson.

With each one, the pattern's the same. For five or six years they're wonderful, showing promise of even better things to come, and then BAM! They go racing off the edge like Thelma and Louise. I submit as evidence the 1986 and 1987 Ridge Lytton Springs, the 1986 **Ravenswood** Dickerson, the 1987 Lytton Springs Winery Reserve and the 1985 Ridge Park-Muscatine zinfandels.

Sure, there are a few exceptions that could foul up our case. I can't say why the 1986 and 1984 **Ravenswood** Old Hill zinfandels were wonderful while the 1985 was dead as a post. Nor can anything short of an act of God explain the sheer brilliance of the 1977 Montevina Special Selection Zinfandel or 1977 Mirassou Harvest Selection Unfiltered Zinfandel.

But aside from a few freaks, I'm sure we can make our case that zinfandel, even from the greatest vineyard sites in California, can't be trusted to age longer than five years. After that it's all a crap shoot.

So boss, I say we move in on the Zinfandel Gang now and stick a corkscrew in them. It would be a shame to let any more of them get away from us.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Dresser,

Gumshoe du Vin

TYPE: COLUMN, REVIEW

LOAD-DATE: January 13, 1996

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Wines to stuff a stocking - or a case The Commercial Appeal (Memphis) December 13, 1995, Wednesday,

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The Commercial Appeal (Memphis)

December 13, 1995, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: APPEAL, Pg. 2C

LENGTH: 818 words

HEADLINE: Wines to stuff a stocking - or a case

BYLINE: Fredric Koeppel, The Commercial Appeal

BODY:
You've been as good as you can be - we don't expect perfection - and now your reward awaits. Simply add to your dog-eared Christmas list or whisper into Santa's mossy ear a request for the 1995 Christmas Case of **Wine,** 12 bottles good and true chosen to provide diverse pleasure now and in years to come, but mainly now.

As usual, the **wines** range in price from about $ 10 to about $ 35 and represent a variety of grapes, styles and regions.

-- Taurino Salice Salentino Riserva 1990. About $ 10.

-- Rex Hill King's Ridge Pinot Gris 1994, Oregon. About $ 11. (In fact, this **wine** is so attractive and appealing and priced so fairly that we'll make it the Pick of the Week as well as including it on this list.)

-- Rabbit Ridge Zinfandel 1993, Sonoma County. About $ 13.

-- Villa Mt. Eden Grand Reserve Pinot Noir 1993, Santa Maria Valley. About $ 14.

-- Chateau Granville-Lacoste (Blanc) 1994, Graves. About $ 15.

-- Burgess Cabernet Sauvignon 1990, Napa Valley. About $ 17.

-- Babcock Eleven Oaks Sauvignon Blanc 1992, Santa Ynez Valley. About $ 18.

-- Domaine du Duc de Magenta Auxey-Duresses 1993, Louis Jadot. About $ 20.

-- Shafer Merlot 1993, Napa Valley. About $ 23.50

-- Murphy-Goode Island Block Reserve Chardonnay 1994, Alexander Valley. About $ 24.

-- Chateau Franc-Mayre 1990, St. Emilion Grand Cru. About $ 28.

-- Blandy's 10-Year-Old Malmsey Madeira. About $ 32.

The tab for this case of **wines** is $ 225.50, plus tax. Most **wine** and liquor stores will give customers a 10 to 12 percent discount on a case purchase. Any one of these **wines,** of course, would make a thoughtful gift.

If you're looking for a special **wine** gift or a mature red **wine** to accompany Christmas dinner (or any other dinner), try the Carmenet Red Table **Wine** 1986, Sonoma Valley, recently re-released by the winery in magnum bottles (1.5 liters) that sell for $ 70 to $ 72 a bottle. A top-rated **wine** from a great vintage, it's a classic Bordeaux-style blend.
-- -- --

Last month we looked at a few zinfandel **wines** that were appropriate with turkey dinners.

The zinfandels we'll look at today fall more into the road warrior category than the "food **wine**" class. These are high-alcohol (14-15 percent), deeply extracted uber-zinfandels that may tend more toward monumental than decorative, but, boy, do they reek with authenticity.

Four from **Ravenswood:**

The Ravenswood Old Vine Zinfandel 1993, Sonoma County, displays tons of smoke, spice, jammy plum and black currant fruit, pepper and brambles; perfect balance assures that not an element is out of place. Excellent. About $ 21. Next is the ripe, roasted and meaty **Ravenswood** Cooke Vineyard Zinfandel 1992, Sonoma Valley, a huge smoldering smoky thing of "lots": lots of minerals, lots of forest and brambles, lots of gravity. Exceptional. About $ 26.

Even huger is the **Ravenswood** Wood Road Bellona Vineyard Zinfandel 1993, Russian River Valley, an overwhelmingly luscious **wine** if you don't mind the deep scintillating mineral elements and the broad layers of forest and underbrush. Excellent. About $ 29. Leaving one close to speechless (or breathless) is the **Ravenswood** Old Hill Vineyard Zinfandel 1993, Sonoma Valley, which practically gleams in the glass with a fitful flame, if intoxicating spice, pepper, plums, smoke, brambles and a dense dusty chewy structure could be likened to fire. Exceptional. About $ 33.

Three from Renwood:

The vines that provided grapes for the Renwood Old Vine Zinfandel 1992, Amador County, average 65 years old; the **wine** opens with an immense bouquet of ripe roasted plums and brandied blackberries; in the mouth, it's intensely spicy and peppery, exotic, meaty and very dry. Give it three to five years. Excellent. About $ 15. Incredible weight characterizes the Renwood Old Vine Zinfandel 1992, Fiddletown, made from an 82-year-old vineyard. Scents of sandalwood, cloves and walnuts stream from the glass, blended with iron-like minerals; in the mouth, huge amounts of oak bolster concentrated blue and black fruit flavors. Give it four to six years. Excellent. About $ 21.

Finally, the appropriately designated Renwood Grandpere Zinfandel 1993, Shenandoah Valley (the vines are 125 years old), is a port-like **wine** of staggering presence, concentration and intensity; if you could turn Old Ironsides into a beverage, this would be it. Give it five to eight years. Beyond exceptional. About $ 24.

We won't omit the Lytton Springs Zinfandel 1992, Sonoma County, a deep, intense and concentrated **wine** that retains a clean, fresh, spicy edge; the black currant and blackberry flavors are ripe and nutty, tending toward plum jam, and the texture is chewy and dusty. Excellent. About $ 18.

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CURTAIN RISES ON HOLIDAY SHOWS San Jose Mercury News (California) December 1, 1995 Friday MORNING FINAL EDITION

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San Jose Mercury News (California)

December 1, 1995 Friday MORNING FINAL EDITION

SECTION: EYE; Pg. 29

LENGTH: 2883 words

HEADLINE: CURTAIN RISES ON HOLIDAY SHOWS

BYLINE: Judith Green and Paul Hertelendy, Mercury News Staff, Writers

BODY:
IT COMES upon the midnight clear: Sunday, in fact, is the official first day of Advent, the month that heralds Christmas. Canned carols began trickling out of P.A. systems in the malls weeks ago, but real holiday entertainment unfolds on Bay Area stages this weekend.

Here's our annual guide to "The Nutcracker," "A Christmas Carol," the sing-along "Messiah" and a lot more. See the eye calendar for details in the coming weeks.

DANCE 'THE NUTCRACKER'

A confection offered by nearly every ballet company in the area.

* San Francisco Ballet. The first annual production in the United States is still the standard. The 1995 version is a last hurrah before SFB goes into 18 months of exile while War Memorial Opera House is shut down for a seismic retrofit. Dec. 12-31. (415) 865-2000.

* Oakland Ballet. A Bay Area sports all-star night (real pro jocks as toy soldiers and Arabian eunuchs) is planned for Dec. 15. Judy Tyrus, Dance Theater of Harlem, is the Sugar Plum Fairy in final performances. Dec. 9-24, Paramount Theatre, Oakland. (510) 465-6400.

* Kirov Academy. Despite the advertising, it's really a stretch to call the production that comes to San Jose just before Christmas "the original 'Nutcracker,' " or to intimate that the Kirov Ballet will dance it. Most of the performers are students from the Kirov Academy in Washington, D.C., associated with and underwritten by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. A dozen Kirov corps dancers stand in as Snowflakes, and three sets of Kirov soloists appear as the Sugar Plum Fairy and her cavalier. Choreography (by Vassily Vainonen) dates from 1934, and the decor is a copy of the original. Dec. 20-24, Center for the Performing Arts, San Jose. (800) 895-4708.

* Pacific Ballet Theater. With Rima Chaeff Cooke and Lawrence Pech, San Francisco Ballet. 7:30 tonight, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday. Center for the Performing Arts, Mountain View. (415) 903-6000.

* Western Ballet. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 8, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 9, 1:30 and 6 p.m. Dec. 10, Center for the Performing Arts, Mountain View. (415) 903-6000.

* Santa Clara Ballet. With Andre Reyes, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle, and his wife, Cynthia Drayer. 2 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 9, 1 and 5 p.m. Dec. 10, Santa Clara Convention Center; 1:30 and 5:30 p.m. Dec. 17, Mello Center, Watsonville. (408) 264-1462, (408) 247-9178.

* Peninsula Ballet Theater. 8 p.m. Dec. 9, 2:30 p.m. Dec. 10, 4 p.m. Dec. 16, 2:30 p.m. Dec. 17, Performing Arts Center, San Mateo. (415) 340-9448.

* San Jose Dance Theater. 8 p.m. Dec. 15, 2 and 8 p.m. Dec. 16, 1 and 6 p.m. Dec. 17, Center for the Performing Arts, San Jose. (408) 293-5665.

Alternatives

* "The Revolutionary Nutcracker Sweetie." A spoof by the Dance Brigade. Music by American Jazz Theater. Performances signed for hearing-impaired. 2 and 8 p.m. Dec. 16-17, Scottish Rite Theater, Oakland. (510) 652-0752.

* Mills College, Oakland. Through Dec. 17. (510) 430-3308.

* Northside Theater Company. Through Dec. 30, Olinder Theater, San Jose. (408) 288-7820.

* San Jose Children's Musical Theater. Dec. 8-17, San Jose Civic Auditorium. (408) 288-5437.

* "The Music of Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol.' " A stage adaptation of the film musical "Scrooge" by Leslie Bricusse. Dec. 8-17, College of Notre Dame, Belmont. (415) 508-3429.

* "Ebenezer." Children's Play House of San Jose. 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 9, Oak Grove High School, San Jose. (408) 578-7529.

* "Noh Christmas Carol." A Japanese-theater adaptation by Theater of Yugen. Dec. 12-30, 2840 Mariposa St., San Francisco. (415) 621-7978.

* "Scrooge's Christmas Carol." Easy Street Theater Company. Dec. 14-16, Louden Nelson Center, Santa Cruz. (408) 458-3614.

* Unicorn Theater, Monterey. Dec. 14-23. (408) 375-1855.

FOR THE FAMILY:

* "Deck the Hall." San Francisco Symphony children's party concert: decorated trees, refreshments, entertainment. 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Saturday, Davies Symphony Hall. (415) 864-6000.

* "The Wizard of Oz." Center Rep. Saturday-Dec. 16, Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek. (510) 943-7469.

* "Mr. Toad's Wild Ride." An adaptation of "The Wind in the Willows." Pacific Rep. Through Dec. 17, Golden Bough Playhouse, Carmel. (408) 622-0100.

* "Fiesta Navidad." Las Posadas procession with Mariachi los Camperos de Nati Cano and Ballet Folklorico Ollin. 2 p.m. Sunday. Center for the Performing Arts, San Jose. (408) 292-5197.

* "San Francisco Bay Revels." Medieval celebration of the winter solstice, with Geoff Hoyle as the Fool. Thursday-Dec. 10, Scottish Rite Temple, Oakland. (510) 452-8928.

* "Children's Holiday Celebration." Nell and Pegi Young, Golden Gate Boys Choir, Corollary Handbell Choirs, "The Night Before Christmas" by Santa Clara Junior Theater, San Jose Symphony Youth Orchestra. 7 p.m. Dec. 9, Mission Santa Clara. (408) 727-5775.

* "The Adventures of Reynard the Fox." The French fairy tale with grand costumes and masks. Dec. 9-Jan. 7, 450 Geary (St.) Studio Theater, San Francisco. (415) 673-1172.

* "Jump Cuts." Pickle Family Circus spoofs the movies. Dec. 9-Jan. 1, Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center, San Francisco. (408) 998-2277, (510) 762-2277.

* "Breakfast With Santa." 8:30-10 a.m. Dec. 9 (silly songs by Lisa Atkinson) and 16 ("The Mouse Cracker," by Snapdragon Puppets). Los Altos Bar & Grill. (415) 949-5282.

* "**Ravenswood** Victorian Christmas Fair." Victorian decor, shopping, music, refreshment. Dec. 9-10. 2647 Arroyo Road, Livermore. (510) 373-5770.

* "Victorian Christmas." Victorian decoration, trolley car rides, horse-drawn wagons, roasted chestnuts, music. San Jose Historical Museum, Kelley Park. Dec. 9-10. (408) 287-2290.

* "Candlelight Christmas." San Francisco Symphony Chorus and Sonos Handbell Ensemble. 3 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 10. Davies Symphony Hall. (415) 864-6000.

* "Holly Sings Holiday Dreams." Traditional and original songs by Holly Near. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 11, Montgomery Theater, San Jose. (408) 291-2255.

* "An Old-Fashioned Christmas." Docent-guided tours, **wine,** refreshments, musical entertainment. 6-9 p.m. Dec. 13. San Jose Museum of Art. (408) 287-5973, Ext. 125.

* "Peter and the Wolf." Narrated by Michael Tilson Thomas. With carols. 1 and 4 p.m. Dec. 17. Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco. (415) 864-6000.

* Union Square menorah lighting. Traditional Jewish music. 5:30 p.m. Dec. 17. Union Square, San Francisco. (415) 922-0770.

* "The Colors of Christmas." With Peabo Bryson, Roberta Flack, James Ingram and Melissa Manchester. Dec. 18-20, Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco. (415) 864-6000.

* "A Karen Carpenter Christmas Concert." Katie Guthorn as Karen is joined by Meg Mackay, Big Bang Beat, J. Raoul Brody and others for songs from the Carpenter canon and carols. Dec. 21-28, Transmission Theater, San Francisco. (408) 998-2277, (510) 762-2277.

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CELLAR SELECTION The San Francisco Chronicle NOVEMBER 29, 1995, WEDNESDAY, FINAL EDITION

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NOVEMBER 29, 1995, WEDNESDAY, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. 4/ZZ1; CELLAR SELECTION

LENGTH: 281 words

HEADLINE: CELLAR SELECTION

BYLINE: GERALD D.BOYD

BODY:
Dickerson Vineyard

1993 Ruby Cabernet

$ 9.20

Appellation:

Napa Valley

Grape-grower Bill Dickerson established an admirable reputation for a Zinfandel that helped **Ravenswood** attain its success. Under his own name, Dickerson also makes small lots of Zinfandel, Merlot and Ruby Cabernet.

Ruby Cabernet is a hybrid grape created from Cabernet Sauvignon and Carignane. Harold Olmo, of the University of California at Davis, developed the hybrid many years ago to attain the prolific yield of Carignane and to capture the flavor and aromatic qualities of Cabernet Sauvignon. Most of the Ruby Cabernet grown today is in the Central Valley, where high heat reduces **wine**-grape quality.

Dickerson grows Ruby Cabernet in a three-acre plot in the Napa Valley he estimates to be 35 years old. For years he sold the grapes for blending. Later, when he and winemaker Joel Peterson tasted the **wine,** they were astounded at its quality.

This limited reserve Ruby Cabernet is a blend of 76 percent Ruby Cabernet, 12 percent Cabernet Sauvignon and 12 percent Cabernet Franc. The color is a deep plummy- black cherry red and the nose is packed with ripe berries and spicy/ anise accents. The smoky flavors are bright and fruity with great structure and hints of ripe raspberries and herbs. It has wonderful length. Although drinking very well now, this **wine** will age for up to 10 years.

Normally, **wines** chosen for Cellar Selection are available at most retail stores, but even though Dickerson made only 203 cases, this **wine** was too good to pass up. The cost per case, with California taxes and shipping, is $ 133.25. For more information, fax Dickerson Vineyard at (415) 435-7619.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO

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HOW TO;Choose the Right Wine for Thanksgiving TEXAS MONTHLY November, 1995

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TEXAS MONTHLY

November, 1995

SECTION: REPORTER; Pg. 32

LENGTH: 173 words

HEADLINE: HOW TO;
Choose the Right **Wine** for Thanksgiving

BYLINE: PATRICIA SHARPE; EDITED BY EVAN SMITH

BODY:
You want to *serve* turkey this holiday season, not *be* one. To help you avoid embarrassment, we called sommelier Pierre Beloeil of Dallas' Mansion on Turtle Creek; the restaurant's **wine** list was just named one of the four best in the world by ***Wine*** *Spectator* magazine. Speaking in a French accent as thick as *creme brulee*, Beloeil uncorked some expert advice.

What **wine** would go well with turkey?
My first choice would be a rose champagne like Veuve Clicquot nonvintage. It is pretty and festive, and it also goes well with sweet potatoes and dressing.

But what if our guests don't like champagne?
Then you could go with a full-bodied Chardonnay, such as Sanford.

And if they don't like white **wine?**
A light red like a Pinot Noir would be fantastic; it's not too heavy or too earthy. Saintsbury and Wild Horse both make good Pinots. Or, if you have some spices in your meal -- like what we'll be serving here at the Mansion -- a fine selection would be ***Ravenswood*** *red Zinfandel.*

GRAPHIC: Illustration, no caption

SUBJECT: **WINE** (90%); THANKSGIVING (90%); HOLIDAYS & OBSERVANCES (90%); RESTAURANTS (77%);

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MOUTHING OFF Denver Westword (Colorado) October 18, 1995, Wednesday

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Denver Westword (Colorado)

October 18, 1995, Wednesday

SECTION: Mouthing Off, Pg. 62

LENGTH: 1215 words

HEADLINE: MOUTHING OFF

BYLINE: Kyle Wagner

BODY:
Soon after trying Denver's version of Napa (see Cafe, previous page), I visited the original for the first time. The weather was beautiful, but my California dreams of a leisurely vacation strolling through vineyards sipping vintage **wines** went down the crusher with the grapes. Since it was the busy season, nearly all of the larger wineries in Napa and Sonoma wanted us to make appointments for tours, but the tours never started on time, because somebody always showed up late. So then we had to race to the next vineyard, which meant that we were the ones who were late. Still, the experience was invaluable--there's a lot of information (and **wine**) in them thar hills.

But we quickly realized that most of it was to be had at small operations. Our first stop was the Robert Mondavi Winery, which turned us off large wineries forever. The group taking the tour was too big, which made for endless jostling to hear the guide. We caught about a third of her spiel, and most of that was dirt about the rift between the Mondavi brothers. Once we'd been herded through the massive complex and shown only the most basic elements of winemaking, we were treated to three glasses of what tasted like grape water and then told to have a nice day.

After that, we stuck with the smaller wineries and had a blast. Athough at first we thought we would tire of hearing the same speech over and over, we found that each winery featured some different twist (American or French oak, egg white or diatomaceous earth filter, domestic or imported yeast) that was key to the end result; determining the cause and effect made for quite an education. We visited too many wineries to write about all of them, but some were particular standouts. The first gem was Grgich Hills Cellar, which makes beautiful **wines** that we have admired for years but can't afford to buy for anything other than a special occasion. The speech here made much ado about decanting, and we got a strong sense of the art of winemaking. Like many of the wineries, Grgich doesn't charge for tastings if you take the tour; we managed to sample several superb vintages. Our favorite **wine** here (which means we shelled out bucks for a bottle): the 1993 fume blanc.

At the tiny **Ravenswood** winery in Sonoma, we were the only people touring at the time, and we were treated to a series of tasters right out of the barrels, showcasing the various grapes **Ravenswood** buys from other wineries (only a small percentage of their **wines** comes from grapes grown right there). This was the soul of winemaking, and we came away with a feeling of the chemistry involved when people who love **wine** make it whatever way they can. (**Ravenswood** actually had its fermentation tanks under tarps, because there's not enough room for them anywhere else.) This winery is known as a mecca for zinfandel fans (and we're not talking about that aberration, white zinfandel), and while we weren't bowled over by most of the zinfandels we tried from the bottle--with one exception, the 1991--we can hardly wait until May, when the stuff we tasted out of the barrels will be bottled. Particularly exemplary were the 1994 Wood Road zin, the 1994 Cook zin and the 1994 San Giacamo merlot.

The **wines** at Benziger, also in Sonoma, are among my favorite values, and we were delighted to find the largest roster of tasters offered right here. The Benziger tour hit hard on the scientific and agricultural aspects of winemaking with an interesting demonstration of how the amount of sun affects the fruitiness of the product, as well as a lesson on soil structure that showed how the winery is actually able to isolate the types of dirt that cause grapes to give off the flavors of chocolate, blackberries, smoke--you name it. There was also a lively story about how the family acquired the property from a dope-smoking Hugh Hefner type who clinched the deal sitting next to his pool while scantily clad babes looked on. Here the 1992 merlot, the 1993 zinfandel, the 1992 Alexander Valley petit verdot and an intense dessert riesling stood out. The staffers behind the tastings bar explained the **wines** thoroughly, and they seemed genuinely happy to answer questions and keep the glasses coming.

No one had anything on the generosity of Orville Magoon and his staff at Guenoc, however. We had met Magoon months ago at a **wine** dinner at the Augusta, where we were repeatedly bowled over by his **wines.** We grilled him about our impending trip to **wine** country, and he had insisted that we stay at Guenoc, a 23,000-acre piece of property at the north edge of Napa County. This was an offer we couldn't refuse, particularly since his description of the place was so inviting--the land once belonged to the Victorian actress Lillie Langtry, whose face appears on most of Guenoc's **wines**--and Magoon himself was so intriguing (he came to the dinner in a suit and filthy work boots).

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A TALE OF SUCCESS: ZINFANDEL ZOOMS IN PRICE AND KICK Orlando Sentinel (Florida) September 21, 1995 Thursday, METRO

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Orlando Sentinel (Florida)

September 21, 1995 Thursday, METRO

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. H4

LENGTH: 1026 words

HEADLINE: A TALE OF SUCCESS: ZINFANDEL ZOOMS IN PRICE AND KICK

BYLINE: By Michael Dresser, Baltimore Sun

BODY:
Have zinfandel fanatics created a monster? As a lonely band in the early 1980s, they stuck with California's most underrated red **wine** grape at a time when most of the industry was trying to turn it into - horrors! - a white **wine.**

We believed in it even as producer after producer dropped zinfandel from their programs. We pursued it even when tasting room staffers started looking at us as if we were idiots when we insisted zinfandel could indeed be a red **wine.**

And slowly the tide turned our way. The keepers of the zinfandel flame, notably Paul Draper of Ridge Vineyards and Joel Peterson of **Ravenswood,** began to get the recognition they deserved for their monumental old-vine zinfandels. Once shamefully underpriced, red zinfandel began to fetch prices that made growers think twice before they dug up historic vineyards.

For longtime zinfandel fanciers, this has been most gratifying. Finally others take us seriously when we praise the concentration, the intensity and the berry flavors of a great zinfandel.

And yet, maybe things are getting a little out of hand. Prices for the best zinfandels are skyrocketing, with some of the best single-vineyard **wines** well on their way to $30 a bottle.

And so, it seems, are alcohol levels. A series of vintages, capped by the current 1993 releases, have produced an abundance of zinfandels that shatter the 14 percent alcohol barrier. Some are flirting with 15 percent - a far cry from the 12 percent to 13 percent in the typical California table **wine.**

That does not mean the **wines** are unpalatable. Many high-alcohol red zinfandels are exceptional **wines** that conceal their alcohol under layers of complex, rich fruit.

But **wines** with 14.5 percent or 14.9 percent alcohol pack quite a wallop, and walloping is not what **wine** is all about. Nobody is advocating a return to the bad old days of stripped-down **wines** with no more personality than an eggplant, but it wouldn't hurt to tone down some of these monster zinfandels just a little in future vintages.

Take it from a friend of zinfandel: 14 percent is enough. And $25 price tags look unseemly on a grape of such humble origins.

This rant has been inspired by a recent series of zinfandel tastings involving the 1992s and 1993s from some of the most respected producers in California.

Prominent among them, as always, is Ridge Vineyards - a hallowed name among zin-fanatics.

Ridge's 1993 Pagani Ranch Zinfandel ($22.49) is a perfect illustration of the problem. Its 14.9 percent alcohol is too much to conceal, but the blackberry, herb and chocolate flavors are so intense and so lovely you can't help but forgive it.

The 1993 Ridge Lytton Springs ($24) is a little more subdued at 14.5 percent alcohol. But although it is an impressively concentrated, complex **wine,** there are rough edges that leave it short of past performances.

The 1993 Ridge Sonoma Zinfandel ($13.49) seems well on its way to port-hood at 14.6 percent alcohol. The enormous fruit concentration almost manages to conceal the evidence, but not quite. It's an excellent **wine** at the price, but don't expect anything subtle.

Another **wine** that can't quite conceal its 14 percent alcohol is **Ravenswood's** 1993 Sonoma County Old Vines Zinfandel ($19). The flavors are wonderful - black raspberry, red meat and black pepper. Match it with a generously topped pizza and the rough patches smooth out quickly.

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Now's the time to appreciate the quality of scarce Zinfandel The San Diego Union-Tribune September 14, 1995 Thursday

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The San Diego Union-Tribune

September 14, 1995 Thursday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. FOOD-15

LENGTH: 937 words

HEADLINE: Now's the time to appreciate the quality of scarce Zinfandel

BYLINE: ROBERT WHITLEY

BODY:

Of all the **wine** grapes grown in California, only one qualifies as a national treasure: the increasingly scarce Zinfandel grape. The origin of Zinfandel is murky at best.

One popular notion is that Zinfandel is related to Italy's Primitivo grape, but there is evidence Primitivo isn't native to Italy and may have sprung forth from cuttings obtained in the New World. Whatever its lineage, this much is indisputable: There is no other red **wine** in the world quite like Zinfandel. Exotically spicy, with vivid raspberry and blackberry flavors, an absence of aggressive tannins, and explosive length on the palate, Zinfandel from a good vintage is unique and increasingly rare. Many of the best Zinfandel vineyards were planted near the turn of the century, and their gnarled vines are nearing the end of the viticultural life cycle.

Yields are low, and so are the profits for the Zinfandel grower, who can squeeze more cash per acre from a vineyard of Merlot or Cabernet Sauvignon. The finest Zinfandels still retail for less than $20 a bottle, and they represent significant value compared to other red **wines** of comparable quality.

The biggest problem for the **wine** lover with a taste for Zin is availability.

Many of the best producers are small boutique wineries with limited production. That's the bad news.

The goods news is that every vintage since 1990 has been very good to excellent, and 1994 (now maturing in barrel) could be the best year yet. I have compiled a short list of outstanding Zinfandel producers from numerous tastings this summer and have concluded that among the vintages currently available, there are no really bad Zinfandels.

But some are better than others. Sweet 16 Here's my Sweet 16 of Zinfandel: [] **Ravenswood:** This boutique Sonoma winery is dedicated to vineyard-designated Zinfandels that reflect the importance of location to the taste of the **wine.**

Ravenswood is expensive for Zin; you can expect to pay $17 or more for one of the vineyard-specific bottlings.

A "Vintner's Blend" that sells for less than $8 is excellent, too. [] Ridge: This small winery in the Santa Cruz mountains has set the standard for California Zinfandel for 20 years.

Purchasing grapes from outstanding Zinfandel growers throughout the state, Ridge persevered even when Zinfandel fell out of favor in the 1980s. No other winery is more associated with Zinfandel than Ridge.

Prices are moderate to expensive, but generally below $20, even for some older vintages that are available at the winery. [] Lytton Springs: A Zin superstar of the Dry Creek Valley, Lytton Springs was purchased by Ridge several years ago but has continued under the Lytton Springs name.

It produces richly flavored **wines** that age beautifully. [] A. Rafanelli: Another superb Dry Creek Valley producer, Rafanelli makes Zins that are much sought after and moderately expensive.

The Rafanelli **wines** have a bigger style than is currently in vogue, but they have a staunch following. [] De Loach: Always smooth and supple, with bright fruit and wonderful length.

It is extremely difficult to find the De Loach vineyard-designated **wines,** but the Sonoma Zin is one of the best.

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WINE HAS A PLACE AT A BARBECUE Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (Little Rock, AR) July 26, 1995, Wednesday

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Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (Little Rock, AR)

July 26, 1995, Wednesday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. 2E

LENGTH: 891 words

HEADLINE: WINE HAS A PLACE AT A BARBECUE

BYLINE: Merle Ellis

BODY:
By far the beverage of choice with barbecue is beer. Indeed many of my barbecuing buddies consider it the most important barbecue sauce. For the meat, it's used sparingly and only at the end; for the cook, it's used liberally throughout the cooking process!

Barbecue and beer are tradition.

But I'm a **wine** drinker! I love a glass or two with a meal. Yet I'm no authority. I don't volatize my esters violently, if at all, I seldom suck a lot of air in when I sip, and I hardly ever chew my **wine.** All of these things, I understand, are what you should do, and one day perhaps I'll be "sokistifated" enough to do all that. I've taken a couple of classes on the pairing of **wine** and food and have a couple of books on the subject, but nobody, it seems, has given much thought to the paring of **wine** and barbecue. Or so I began to think until the National Barbecue Association Convention this spring in Memphis.

A barbecuing buddy of mine, John Camamis, and I flew to Memphis for the convention. We talked barbecue all the way. Which we do quite a lot, John and I, usually sitting at the corner of the bar at Sam's Anchor Cafe in Tiburon, Calif., where we live and work.

At one of the seminars in Memphis the subject of pairing **wine** and "Q" came up. It was obvious that I was not the only one having trouble. John offered a few thoughts on the subject and it suddenly occurred to me that my buddy may be one of the country's foremost authorities on the subject. Soon he was surrounded by fellow barbecue buffs from all over wanting to pick his brain.

I was amazed! I shouldn't have been. He is, I have known for years, a serious and talented barbecue cook, and he is also a **wine** salesman. He works at the Windsor Vineyards, a shop that specializes in private-label **wines.** You can order **wines** for special occasions and have them personalized with a special label and shipped most anywhere in the country.

The reason, I guess, that John's expertise has eluded me is that John is not a **wine** snob. He doesn't volatize his esters any more violently than I do, and I have never heard him suck in a lot of air when he sips or chew his **wine.** How was I to know?

Now that I do know, I take every opportunity -- sitting at the bar at Sam's -- to pick John's brain about **wine** and "Q." I even take notes!

"Matching **wine** and barbecue can be difficult at best and in some cases, impossible," says John. The impossible is matching a **wine** with a vinegar-based sauce or mayonnaise (eggs). Better with those to stick to beer. In my opinion, for brisket, beef and pork ribs and pork butt, generally speaking, only the heaviest full-bodied reds can stand up to the smoke flavor and cut spicy tomato-based sauces.

"These would be the big Zinfandels (raspberry and blackberry flavors) such as those made by **Ravenswood** and Sausal -- both from Sonoma, Calif. **Ravenswood** is my personal favorite. Their best Zinfandels are expensive, but they also market an inexpensive Vintner's Blend (about $ 7.) that remains true to the **Ravenswood** style. Our '92 Signature Zin (Windsor) is very good and so is Rodney Strong's '93 Old Vines Zinfandel. Other Zins that can be had for $ 10 or less come from Amador County in the Sierra Foothills. They include Shenandoah Vineyards, Santino, Deaver, Montevina, Sobon Estate and others. Other than these, many of the Zinfandels may be too light.

"Petite Sirah is another fine red, and because it is not trendy it can be had for a reasonable price. It is generally characterized by big grapey flavors, pepper and heavy tannins. It may be the best barbecue red because most of them exhibit these desirable qualities. Not many wineries make Petite Sirah; we do. Our (Windsor) '92 is one of my personal favorites with the barbecue that I do. Some other good ones are Ridge, Foppiano and Stag's Leap. There is also a Syrah, a different but similar grape.

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CRUSHORAMA Los Angeles Times July 13, 1995, Thursday, Home Edition

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July 13, 1995, Thursday, Home Edition

SECTION: Food; Part H; Page 13

LENGTH: 896 words

HEADLINE: CRUSHORAMA

BYLINE: By DAN BERGER

DATELINE: HOPLAND, Calif.

BODY:
Within the next three years, Associated Vintage Group will be crushing enough grapes to make 3 million cases of **wine,** estimates company president Allan Hemphill. This would make the firm, founded less than two years ago, one of the 20 largest wineries in California.

But don't look for the Associated Vintage Group's brand on the shelf of your local **wine** store. AVG is a custom-services winery, designed specifically to do work for other wineries. "It's just too expensive (for them) to own all the mortar and bricks," says Hemphill.

The economies of scale are obvious. AVG bottled 350,000 cases of **wine** last year; Hemphill says he'll bottle 700,000 cases this year and more than 1 million next year. Doing this kind of business, AVG can buy huge numbers of bottles and other supplies and pass along the savings to its clients.

AVG's greatest service is to existing wineries that are growing rapidly and need extra capacity to crush and ferment but can't justify the added expense of new fermenting tanks, new buildings and the headache of getting the permits needed to operate a larger winery. Those contracting for space at AVG can have their **wine** made either by a contract winemaker or AVG's head winemaker, Kerry Damskey.

Among those who use AVG are Laurel Glen Vineyards, **Ravenswood,** Hidden Cellars, and McDowell Valley Vineyards.

"It's great working with them," said Patrick Campbell of Laurel Glen, who makes his Terra Rosa Cabernet Sauvignon there. "I couldn't make Terra Rosa any other way."

Campbell's small winery on Sonoma Mountain can't be expanded without great cost. Terra Rosa is a third-label **wine** made mainly from purchased **wine** and grapes. (Laurel Glen and Counterpoint are the primary and secondary brands. Both use Campbell's home-grown Sonoma Mountain fruit.)

The best example of AVG's services is the case of **Ravenswood,** whose single-vineyard Zinfandels are nationally famous. Some years ago, **Ravenswood** owner Joel Peterson decided to make a Vintner's Blend Zinfandel that could be produced in larger amounts. Expanding his small Sonoma winery would have been very costly, so Peterson crushed a few tons of grapes at AVG's Hopland facility in 1993 and found it to his liking.

"The key issue for someone like me is the control I have over the **wine,**" says Peterson. He makes the one-hour drive from the Sonoma valley to the Mendocino winery twice a week during peak periods, but he has able help at AVG when he's not there.

"Kerry acts as the super-cook," he says. "I give him my guidelines and talk with him almost on a daily basis, and most of the time it works very well."

He says that last year he also used AVG's winemaking facility in Glen Ellen, in the former home of the Grand Cru Winery.

Working with AVG is beneficial to small producers, he says. "One great example happened last year. I'm always looking for top-quality old-vines Zinfandel, and I found one grower who had the fruit I wanted, but he also had French Colombard, and I had to buy it to get the Zinfandel.

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Wine Talk The New York Times May 17, 1995, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

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May 17, 1995, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section C; Page 9; Column 1; Living Desk

LENGTH: 1096 words

HEADLINE: Wine Talk

BYLINE: By Frank J. Prial

BODY:
IN Siena, Italy, last summer, a group of some 75 Tuscan **wine** makers gathered to discuss the status and future of the sangiovese grape. Sangiovese is the principal grape found in Chianti; it is also a basic constituent in a variety of other fine Italian **wines** like Sassicaia, Tignanello and Carmignano, in which it is blended with cabernet sauvignon.

Since sangiovese has become popular in California -- some 30 versions of it are made there now -- the Italians invited several American **wine** makers to bring their sangiovese **wines** to Siena. To make things interesting, the Americans took along some zinfandels. And why not? Isn't there a theory that zinfandel came from Italy in the first place?

The Italians liked the California sangiovese but loved the zinfandel.

And well they should have because zinfandel is on a roll. With a succession of splendid vintages in recent years, the once-lowly blending grape has come into its own. Zinfandels are now spoken of in the same reverential terms as the best cabernet sauvignons and pinot noirs. Prices have climbed steadily, but on average are still lower than the prices of cabernets of similar quality.

The coming months could provide a golden opportunity for zinfandel producers -- and all American **wine** makers, for that matter -- to solidify their position in the retail market. In France, prices have already risen by 10 percent to 20 percent for the 1994 vintage **wines,** and with the weak dollar, that could mean serious price increases for American consumers.

Unfortunately, California **wine** makers are as vulnerable to hubris as their vines are to the phylloxera louse. They tend to see any price disparity between their **wines** and Europeans' as a sign that theirs are underappreciated, and they quickly move to close the gap.

But for the moment, there are some excellent buys to be found among the zinfandels on the shelves.

Fifty years ago, zinfandel was a familiar grape to thousands of home **wine** makers, mostly Italian immigrants, who bought their grapes in railroad yards and took them home to the basement. Zinfandel was a thick-skinned, no-nonsense grape raised in immense quantities in Central Valley in California and capable of withstanding the train trip East.

When Italian **wine** growers like Sebastiani and Parducci began bottling the **wine** as a varietal in the 1950's, the best that could be said of it was that it was "sturdy," "earthy" or "rustic." To this day, zinfandel rarely displays the elegance of the best cabernets, but the descriptives have changed. "Rich" is most often heard, but "intense," "big" and "complex" are not far behind. Rich and intense usually refer to the flavor, which can include anything from tobacco to ripe cherries to chocolate to tar to the old **wine**-writer's standby, a cigar box. And of course, the more of these sensations there are, the more complex the **wine.**

Big is often a code word for the alcohol content. Zinfandels are often high in alcohol. Where 12.5 percent alcohol is acceptable for most cabernets, zinfandels tend to come in at 13.5 and often ferment out at 15.6. Because of the intense flavors, the high alcohol content is not always obvious until the **wines** age and the fruit flavors wane. But collectors of older zinfandels are very rare.

The first name in California zinfandel is, and has been for 25 years, Ridge Vineyards, in Santa Clara, where the **wine** maker Paul Draper continues to field an astonishing variety of fine zinfandels made from grapes from all over California. From the 1992 vintage, currently in the market, Ridge has produced a good selection. Geyserville, perhaps its best-known one; Paso Robles, from the Dusi Ranch; Dry Creek Valley, from Lytton Springs, and its late-picked Sonoma Valley, from the Pagani Ranch, are all indications of what a fine **wine** zinfandel can make.

The late harvest **wine** from the Pagani Ranch is a good example of a high-alcohol **wine;** it registers 15.8 percent, which is quite high on the **wine** Richter scale. As is often the case with Ridge, it is a blend of 80 percent zinfandel; 15 percent mataro, which

is the California name for the grape known as mourvedre in France, and 5 percent petite sirah. These **wines** range in price from about $15 to $20.

If any winery can challenge Ridge's dominant position in zinfandel, it is **Ravenswood,** in Sonoma County. Joel Peterson, owner and **wine** maker, regularly manages to combine power and subtlety in a range of zinfandels that begins with the widely popular Vintner's Blend, an introductory **wine** that sells nationally for about $8.

Ravenswood individual vineyard **wines** are very special. They include Dickerson Vineyard, Old Hill Ranch, Cooke Vineyard and Monte Rosso. A Sonoma County zinfandel, made in 1992, is an excellent buy at about $13.

A relatively new name in the zinfandel world is Renwood. None of the standard texts or **wine** atlases even mention it, because Scott Harvey, who owns it and makes the **wines,** changed the name just about the time the current batch of **wine** reference books was published. Renwood, in Shenandoah Valley in Amador County, east of Sacramento, used to be known as the Santino winery. For many years, Amador was a principal source of Ridge Vineyard grapes.

Mr. Harvey's best **wine** is Grandpere, which has nothing to do with his grandfather. Grandpere is the name of one of his vineyards that boasts of vines up to 125 years old and is, he says, the oldest known producing zinfandel vineyard in California. Bigwith perhaps less finesse than it should have, this **wine** is for zinfandel connoisseurs. It sells for about $24 a bottle when it can be found. A simple but still delicious Amador County zinfandel is about $12.

TASTINGS
Conde de Valdemar Reserva (Rioja), 1989. About $10.

In 1984, Jesus Martinez Bujanda, the director of Bodegas Martinez Bujanda, opened one of the newest wineries in the Rioja region of Spain and turned the original family bodega into a museum. It was more than a symbolic break with the past; since then, his **wines** have been markedly different from what we have come to expect from tradition-minded Rioja. The youngest Conde de Valdemar, the Crianza, bears more resemblance to a fresh young Beaujolais than to a Spanish **wine.** This Reserva gives ample evidence of its Spanish heritage; it has deeper color, more body and intensity, and a touch of the sweetness that comes from time well spent aging in oak barrels. Mr. Martinez Bujanda further separates himself from the herd: he puts this **wine** in Burgundy bottles, though the Rioja tradition calls for the Bordeaux style.

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ON WINE Wineries bring out best in zinfandel's exuberance ZINFULLY GOOD / The $25 price range may grate on those who view these California wines as second class, but each one is delicious The Globe and Mail (Canada) March 18, 1995 Saturday

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March 18, 1995 Saturday

LENGTH: 923 words

HEADLINE: ON **WINE** Wineries bring out best in zinfandel's exuberance ZINFULLY GOOD / The $25 price range may grate on those who view these California **wines** as second class, but each one is delicious

BYLINE: DAVID LAWRASON; GAM

BODY:

BY DAVID LAWRASON
THERE'S no better way to learn about California zinfandel than by going to school on the three Rs - Ridge, **Ravenswood** and Rosenblum. These wineries are responsible for the grape's modern-day respectability, each taking a different stylistic tack, but all making great **wine.** Having them appear shoulder to shoulder on today's release at Vintages will be a 'zin'phony to the ears of zin fans.

The $25 price range may grate on those who view zinfandel as a second- or third-class citizen, but each **wine** is delicious, scoring over 90 ("excellent" on my 100-point scale).

In the 1960s Ridge was the first California winery to resurrect zinfandel by sourcing fruit from old pre-Prohibition vineyards. They blend small portions of Rhone varieties such as petite sirah and carignan, then age generously in American oak barrels to impart vanilla, smoke and wood complexity. Like the 1991 Lytton Springs ($24.85), most are very rich and dense, perhaps missing some of the berryish florality of some zins, but often displaying majesty and substance others lack (92).

Ravenswood chisels out a finer, more elegant tone, which is not easy with a grape whose acid, tannin and alcohol can get very surly. **Ravenswood** 1992 Old Vines ($25.05) carries lovely blackberry fruit, spice, cedar flavours in a lush, supple style that barely hints of the 14.5-per-cent alcohol (92).

Rosenblum, with two **wines** on this release, goes for total fruit attack, with lovely, floral plummy and black raspberry flavours against a backdrop of exotic lavender-like spice and oak. The 1992 Mt. Veeder ($23.90) has explosive fruit, great density and structure (93), while the less expensive Rosenblum 1992 Old Vines ($18.90) is slightly lighter with more obvious oak, leather and spice around the fruit (89).

The $25 price may suggest these **wines** deserve some reverence, some special occasion and bottle age. They will age very well - at least a decade - but it's not required. Youthful exuberance is the reason I most like zinfandel, so I would save it only until I felt some extra exuberance was required.

Among other **wines** on today's release, Sassicaia 1991 ($52.90), Italy's pre-eminent cabernet, will draw the customary attention from collectors. It has trademark elegance with well-woven cassis and oak flavours, but is not as concentrated as in the best years (90).

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HE ACQUIRED A "TASTE' FOR MAKING GOOD WINES AT AN EARLY AGE Birmingham News (Alabama) January 25, 1995 Wednesday

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January 25, 1995 Wednesday

SECTION: LIFESTYLE; Pg. 3B Vol. No.

LENGTH: 641 words

HEADLINE: HE ACQUIRED A "TASTE' FOR MAKING GOOD **WINES** AT AN EARLY AGE

BYLINE: Beverly Taylor News staff writer

BODY:

01/25/1995

Most 5-year-olds raid the cookie jar.

But then most 5-year-olds don't grow up in a family like that of Joel Peterson of **Ravenswood** winery. Peterson's father was a founding member of the San Francisco **Wine** Sampler's Club, the forerunner of the renowned Vintner's Club, which often tasted vintage French **wines.**

"I grew up with the illusion that everybody sat down to first-growth Bordeaux **wines** at dinner," said Peterson, on a visit last week with Chris and Lorna Strauss, owners of the Pickberry vineyard, for a **wine** tasting and a dinner at Highlands Bar and Grill.

Awakened to hear his father's group in the dining room, he slipped down the stairs into the kitchen to see the bottles that seemed to give his father's friends so much pleasure. He quickly grabbed one and upended it into his mouth, only to drop it in shock.

"It was loaded with the most grotesque sediment," Peterson said.

His father rushed into the kitchen, saw the smeared pajamas and howled with laughter. Five years later, Peterson was allowed to join the tasters - with stipulations. The amount of **wine** poured in his glasses and the amount in his spit bucket had to match when he finished. Otherwise he wouldn't be allowed to join the next tasting. "My father's theory was you didn't drink to get drunk, you drank because the taste was important," Peterson said.

Taste is still primary to him in making intensely rich and flavorful **wines.**

Peterson started out as a medical technologist in cancer research, but wanted to make **wines** to rival those he grew up tasting. Scouting vineyards, he realized the untapped potential of Zinfandel. The Zinfandel fruit available matched the criteria of fine **wine** grapes in Europe with closely spaced old vines which produced low yields. In the '70s, much of this high quality fruit went into jug **wines.** Peterson began to search out the best vineyards and tells disaster stories that would give his Sonoma neighbors, the Smothers Brothers, comic competition.

In his early days, Peterson made **wine** at other wineries, sometimes working in the off hours at night. Once he stationed a helper at the top of a vat with a flashlight, telling him to yell when the vat was full. The yell came much earlier than expected. Peterson ran out to find the man had dropped the flashlight into the vat.

"My first thought was this might be the first light **wine** I ever made," Peterson said, joking.

He then realized he'd best get the those batteries out of the **wine,** so he dove into the vat. "As you might imagine, it was an energizing experience - I kept going and going and going," Peterson said.

On another occasion, Peterson was driving a load of grapes when he hit a pothole and spilled four tons of grapes into a busy intersection. Quickly he ran to his nearest grape grower and borrowed five picking crews with all their trucks. The workers were able to scoop up the grapes in 10 minutes, just before the officials turned on high pressure hoses to wash them away.

"We got rave reviews on the **wine,** with mentions of the "tarry' qualities," said Peterson and he laughed. "As a winemaker, you go out of your way to get unusual nuances in the **wine.**"

Comic relief aside, a well thought-out blend of traditional methods combines with scientific knowledge to produce the concentrated, complex flavors of **Ravenswood wines.** Zinfandel ranges from the value-priced Vintners Blend to distinctive single vineyards efforts, including a fragrant '93 Dickerson with vivid raspberry and a spicier '93 Monte Rosso with lush cherry fruit. Equally good are the Bordeaux-style Pickberrry and the Merlot.

If like Peterson, who hands out "No Wimpy **Wines**" buttons, you like big red **wines, Ravenswood** is just your style.

About **Wine** appears each Wednesday in The Birmingham News.

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CALIFORNIA CABERNETS DISPROVE FAULTFINDER Plain Dealer (Cleveland, Ohio) January 18, 1995 Wednesday, FINAL / ALL

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January 18, 1995 Wednesday, FINAL / ALL

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. 3E

LENGTH: 875 words

HEADLINE: CALIFORNIA CABERNETS DISPROVE FAULTFINDER

BYLINE: By MICHAEL DRESSER; BALTIMORE SUN

BODY:
There is a worthy gentleman of my acquaintance who simply cannot abide California cabernet sauvignon.

In his refined English drawing room voice, he recently explained that the cabernets of the Golden State are leaden in their crudity and molten in their alcoholic heat.

No matter that some of these **wines** fetch $50 to $100 a bottle. No matter that some of the leading proprietors in Bordeaux have set up shop in the Napa Valley. To my friend, even the greatest names in California cabernet cannot compare with a middling Bordeaux.

Poor guy. It seems nature itself has turned against him since the glory days of the 1980s and 1990. Since then Bordeaux has gone into a four-year slump. This fall, just as it appeared that a string of three subpar vintages would be broken, harvest rains washed away vintners' hopes. It could be a long decade for the Bordeaux-or-bust crowd.

Fortunately, most of our palates aren't nearly as sensitive as my friend's. We veer from California **wine** to imports and back again, promiscuously loving both. Our dirty little secret is that sometimes we can't tell the difference unless we peek at the label.

While Bordeaux has battled winter freezes, rampant rot, chilly springs and harvest rains, California has been on a roll since 1990.

Right now, some of the best on the market are the 1991 California cabernet sauvignons that are proliferating on retail shelves.

None of the 1991s I have tasted recently has been finer than the Robert Mondavi Reserve Cabernet, a $40 **wine** that justifies every penny of its price.

There have been many great Mondavi Reserve Cabernets over the last 2 1/2 decades, but this ranks among the best. The intense, multilayered flavors of cas- sis, cedar and black currant do a long, slow lap of honor across the palate. It's a huge **wine**, but elegant, with the structure to last 20 years or more.

Another winery that scored a triumph in 1991 is Joseph Phelps Vineyards. Its Insignia ($40) is the granddaddy of California's Bordeaux-style blends, often called Meritage, and the 1991 is one of the best. Suffused with intense flavors of black cherry, chocolate, cassis and herbs, this seductive **wine** is supported by a firm structure of tannin. It could last 30 years and never have a bad day.

If you're not a wealthy collector, the most exciting news from Phelps is that its 1991 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, $16, is the finest "regular" Phelps since the excellent 1975. With its long, ripe black cherry and mint flavors, it delivers as much complexity and aging potential as many **wines** twice its price. It could be the bargain of the vintage.

The 1991 Groth, $19, shows plenty of black cherry, black currant and sweet oak. Give it five to 10 years and it could be exceptional.

If any California cabernet could fool my Cali-phobic friend into thinking he is tasting fine Bordeaux, it would be the 1991 from Stag's Leap **Wine** Cellars, $27. Its flavors of black cherry, cedar and sweet new oak are reminiscent of a St. Julien, and its acidity is higher than one usually finds in the Napa Valley. You could cellar this **wine** 15 years if you can keep your hands off it.

Perhaps the most unusual 1991 cabernet blend I have tasted is **Ravenswood's** 1991 Pickberry, $30. Joel Peterson, **Ravenswood's** winemaker, is one of California's greatest zinfandel makers. With its intense blackberry flavors, the Pickberry comes about as close to the flavors of zinfandel as cabernet can. Classic? No. Delicious? Yes.

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CONNOISSEURS WILL BE ABLE TO COMPARE THE BEST AT RITZ-CARLTON WINE FESTIVAL Morning Call (Allentown, PA) January 11, 1995, WEDNESDAY,

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SECTION: A.M. MAGAZINE, Pg. D1

LENGTH: 1338 words

HEADLINE: CONNOISSEURS WILL BE ABLE TO COMPARE THE BEST AT RITZ-CARLTON **WINE** FESTIVAL

BYLINE: DIANE STONEBACK; The Morning Call

BODY:
Wine connoisseurs soon will be able to tour California's Napa and Sonoma valleys as well as taste some of the other outstanding **wines** from the United States and the world -- without traveling any farther than the Ritz-Carlton Philadelphia.

The hotel's **Wine** Festival will feature big names in the **wine** industry like Tim Mondavi of Robert Mondavi Winery, Dan Duckhorn from Duckhorn Winery, John Williams from Frog's Leap and Dick Ward from Saintsbury Winery.

A special Napa Valley **Wine** Weekend will include several tastings and a **wine** dinner. There also will be special **wines** like the Alsace whites of Domaine Zind-Humbrecht which will be served during an April 7 **wine** dinner.

The festival at the hotel (located at 17th and Chestnut streets at Liberty Place) will begin late this month and run through mid-May, with special **wine** dinners and **wine** tastings.

"Participants gain access to **wines** that are impossible or very difficult to acquire on their own. Sometimes the wineries will release prestigious small bottlings or use some of their older **wines** for the events," said festival organizer David Fischer, who also is the hotel's sommelier.

Forty Napa Valley winemakers will offer their **wines** during a Friday-evening benefit tasting and buffet that marks the start of the March 10-12 Napa Weekend of **Wines.** The benefit is for the Philadelphia chapter of ALS in its fight against Lou Gehrig's disease. At 3 p.m. March 11, there'll be a comparison tasting of some of Napa's best Cabernet Sauvignons as well as a discussion of the production techniques used for these **wines.** The hotel's Sunday brunch March 12will feature Napa sparkling **wines.**

Finally, participants who sign up for the entire $ 349 weekend package of Napa Valley events will be able to attend an elaborate Saturday evening dinner matching vintages of the Napa Valley's superstar wineries with foods prepared by Thomas von Muenster, Ritz-Carlton executive chef. Duckhorn, Williams, and Don Weaver of Merryvale Vineyards will pour their **wines** and lead discussions during the dinner.

Wine-tasting events are $ 50 to $ 70 per person. **Wine** dinners are $ 95 to $ 125 a person. For details and to make reservations for any of the events, call 215-563-1600 and ask for restaurant reservations. **WINE** DINNERS

These events include 6:30 receptions. Dinners are served at 7 p.m.

* Jan. 31: Joy Sterling of Iron Horse Vineyards presents her products, including sparkling **wines.**

* Feb. 7: Cecil De Loach of the Sonoma Valley presents De Loach Vineyards' Chardonnay and Zinfandels.

* Feb. 21: Tim Mondavi of California's Robert Mondavi Winery joins participants for a Napa Valley appellation tasting and dinner. (The tasting is at 5:30 p.m. with a reception at 6:30 and dinner at 7 p.m.

* March 7: Laurel Glen Winery winemaker and owner Patrick Campbell pours Cabernet Sauvignon-based **wines** from his Sonoma Valley winery.

* March 11: Merryvale, Duckhorn and Frog's Leap wineries' vintages are featured during this special Napa Weekend of **Wines** event. Space available only to those participants who sign up for all four events in the Weekend of **Wines** package.

* March 16: Jim Clendenen of Au Bon Climat and Brian Talley of Talley Winery discuss the two Santa Barbara wineries and their Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays.

* March 21: Randall Grahm of Bonny Doon and Bob Lindquist of Qupe wineries present their **wines** during a reception and dinner.

* March 22: The Loire's Phillipe Poniatowski, one of Vouvray's top producers, presents older vintages during a special dinner. Limited to 40 people.

* March 28: Becky Wasserman, acknowledged as one of the finest importers of Burgundy, presents a selection from her portfolio including D. Rion, Lafarge and Pavelot.

* March 30: The Santa Cruz Mountains' David Bruce Winery, known for Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, is featured during a reception and dinner.

* April 4: France's greatest producers, including Alsace's Marcel Deiss and Rhone's Andre Brunel, will be featured during the presentation by importer Bobby Kacher. The meal will be prepared by Chef Gunther Seeger from the Ritz-Carlton Buckhead, Atlanta, GA.

* April 7: Olivier Humbrecht presents the **wines** of Domaine Zind-Humbrecht, considered to be the greatest **wines** in Alsace during a reception and dinner.

* April 11: Joanne Gorode presents Penfolds, one of Southern Australia's most prominent producers and known for its Grange Hermitage and Bin 707 Cabernet.

* April 18: Bob Betz of Chateau Ste. Michelle presents Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon from this Washington State winery.

* April 24: Dick Ward of the Carneros region's Saintsbury winery presents Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

* April 26: Importer Terry Theise presents a "Chardonnay Shootout," in which each course is paired with a Chardonnay and a German **wine** so participants can determine which is a better match for each food course.

* May 2: Winemaker Ed Sbragia and the Beringer Winery present their Private Reserve Chardonnays and Cabernets and their Bancroft Ranch Merlot.

* May 11: Stars of the Kermit Lynch catalog, Dagueneau in Pouilly-Fume, Kuentz Bas in Alsace and Vieux Telegraphe in Chateauneuf-du-Pape are some of the highlights of this French winery "tour."

WINE TASTINGS

With the exceptions of the tastings during the Weekend of **Wines** including the Napa Valley Vintners Association benefit tasting and buffet at 6:30 p.m. March 10, the Cabernet Conspiracy at 3 p.m. March 11 and the Sunday brunch sample of Napa sparkling **wines** 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. March 12, tastings generally being at 7:30 p.m.

* Jan. 26: A tasting of Barolo & Barbaresco, great **wines** from Italy's Piedmont that are made from the Nebbiolo grape. Producers included are Gaja, Ceretto and Voerzio.

* Feb. 2: Hosted by Mary Ewing Mulligan, Master of **Wine** and director of New York's International **Wine** Center, the tasting will feature Merlots which are America's fastest selling **wines.** California, Washington State and Bordeaux examples will be tasted.

* Feb. 9: The great Domaines of Alsace will be featured in a tasting conducted by David Schildknecht, **wine** director of Kentucky's The Party Source and writer for The New York **Wine** Cellar.

* Feb. 16: A non-vintage champagne showdown will focus on how small producers such as Ployez Jacquemart, Diebolt-Vallois and Drappier compare to their bigger and well-known neighbors such as Louis Roederer, Pol Roger and Taittinger.

* Feb. 23: A look at Hermitage, the **wines** of J.L. Chave and P. Jaboulet's La Chapelle will include a tasting of the 1985, 1988, 1990 and 1991 vintages of these two Northern Rhone masters.

* March 2: Importer Jeanne-Marie de Champs leads a tasting of the red and white Burgundies from Meo-Camuzet, Michelot and Naddef.

* March 14: A celebration of Zinfandel with **Ravenswood's** Joel Peterson. The tasting will feature more than 30 of California's best Zinfandels.

* March 17: The world's finest Pinot Noirs, a session that pits the Pinot Noirs of America against the best of Burgundy, will be hosted by Au Bon Climat owner and winemaker Jim Clendenen and Talley Vineyard's winemaker Brian Talley.

* April 6: Eric Miller of Chaddsford Winery leads a blind tasting of some of the world's most highly regarded Chardonnays.

* April 13: James Rossbach of **Wine** & Spirits Magazine leads a blind tasting and seminar on the best of XO cognac, including Remy Martin, de Fussigny, Hine and others.

* April 20: Sussex **Wine's** Jim Weintort demonstrates how talented **wine**-making and good ground produces outstanding Sauvignon Blanc.

* April 27: A tasting of 1986 Bordeaux by Chateau and Estates' Jerome Hasenpflug will focus on some of the finest chateau-bottled **wines** from the 1986 vintage.

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No bones about it: Chateau Souverain is year's top winery The San Diego Union-Tribune December 29, 1994 Thursday

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December 29, 1994 Thursday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. FOOD-7

LENGTH: 918 words

HEADLINE: No bones about it: Chateau Souverain is year's top winery

BYLINE: ROBERT WHITLEY

BODY:

More than one visitor to Chateau Souverain has been startled to come upon a small collection of dried bones during a tour of the Sonoma County winery. This is winemaker Tom Peterson's mojo gris-gris. "The mojo gris-gris keeps the evil spirits away from my Pinot Noir," Peterson deadpans, with a twinkle in his eye. Peterson is no witch doctor, and his success can hardly be attributed to voodoo, but it is safe to say he has driven the evil spirits from the once star-crossed chateau.

Souverain has risen from the dead since its purchase from a growers' cooperative five years ago. The new owner, the Swiss chocolate giant Nestle, turned Souverain on its head, giving Peterson badly needed new equipment, larger vineyards and the wherewithal to buy the best grapes available to augment the winery's Alexander Valley plantings. The result is a transformation of historic proportions.

Once known for mediocre **wines** that were difficult to give away, Chateau Souverain has become one of the hottest brands in the United States with a two-pronged attack: great **wines** at affordable prices.

Retailers are hard pressed to keep the Souverain **wines** in stock because of their tremendous quality/value equation. Chateau Souverain had another bumper crop of outstanding releases in 1994 and is my choice as the Winery of the Year. Once again Souverain scored with Cabernet Sauvignon, particularly the 1991 Alexander Valley that retailed briefly for $8. The **wine** was so well received that the price quickly soared . . . all the way to $10.99 -- still a bargain.

The 1990 Winemaker's Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon ($13.50) was another bargain, even at the higher price. Merlot lovers who missed the 1991 or 1992 Merlot from Souverain should not repeat that mistake.

At about $9 in most discount **wine** shops, it undoubtedly is the best Merlot anywhere for less than $10. Zinfandel, Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay from Souverain also were stellar. Rounding out my Top 10 wineries: 2. SWANSON VINEYARDS: This Napa Valley winery is making some of the most exciting new **wines** in the world, particularly its Sangiovese and Syrah. Swanson is best known, however, for its high-quality Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot and an outstanding Chardonnay. While the Swanson **wines** don't sell at the bargain levels of Souverain, they are reasonably priced.

The most expensive **wine** is the Syrah at $25, followed by the Cabernet at $20. Everything else, including the best Sangiovese made in California, is less than $20. 3. MURPHY-GOODE: With the 1990 and '91 vintages, winemaker Christina Benz's Cabernet Sauvignon rose to the level of world class.

In '92 it was her Merlot.

Previously, her Fume Blanc and Reserve Fume Blanc (two **wines** that stylistically are light years apart) put the Alexander Valley winery on the map.

Benz now has Murphy-Goode cranked up and releasing winners with every vintage.

And here's the best part: All of the **wines** are priced less than $20. 4. RICHARDSON VINEYARDS: These **wines** are hard to find but well worth it when you do.

Two great releases last year were a 1991 Zinfandel and a 1992 Merlot.

Winemaker-owner Dennis Richardson operates a tiny (2,500-case) winery just outside the town of Sonoma and purchases his grapes from a couple of choice growers.

He makes intensely flavored red **wines** with loads of character, and you won't pay more than $15 for any of them. 5. MORGAN WINERY: This small winery in Salinas is producing the best Pinot Noir in Monterey County and some of the best in California.

Winemaker Joe Davis also turns out fine Chardonnay.

The reserve **wines,** which are clearly the best, range as high as $25 a bottle. 6. BERINGER VINEYARDS: Sister winery to Chateau Souverain, Beringer is a Napa Valley giant running amok.

Its top-end **wines,** Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon ($45) and Howell Mountain, Bancroft Ranch Merlot ($28), are two of the best red **wines** produced in California.

But its under-$15 **wines** from the Knight's Valley region of Sonoma (Cabernet Sauvignon and a red and a white Meritage) represent some of the finest values in high-quality California **wine.** 7. **RAVENSWOOD:** Yet another overachiever from Sonoma.

A bit pricey, **Ravenswood's** vineyard-designated Zinfandels sell for close to $20. That's high for Zinfandel.

Are they worth it?

You bet.

Winemaker Joel Peterson is the king of Zinfandel, and he had another very good year.

The 1992 Vintner's Blend Merlot ($9) is super, too. 8. SEQUOIA GROVE: They're not into the 57 varieties like many of their California brethren, but what brothers Jim and Steve Allen do, they do well: Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay.

Jim makes the **wine** and Steve takes care of the vineyards.

It's a combo that makes sweet music and fine **wine.** The only fault is that the **wines** are in the $20 range, which puts them out of the reach of many consumers. 9. LAURIER: Winemaker Merry Edwards makes but one **wine,** Chardonnay, but it's very, very good.

Plans are in the works to produce a Pinot Noir soon. The winery is near the Russian River and Green Valley in western Sonoma County. 10. FOXEN: This is a hole-in-the-wall winery north of Santa Barbara near the Santa Maria Valley.

You could drive right past and not know it's there.

But winemaker-owner Dick Dore has extremely high standards.

Foxen's Cabernet Sauvignon might be the best in the Central Coast, and his Chardonnay is top-notch. Also worth noting is an outstanding Chenin Blanc, one of the few produced in California with excellent structure. SEND QUESTIONS about this column to Robert Whitley, P.O. Box 2253, San Diego, CA 92112.

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Winemakers have individual approach The San Diego Union-Tribune December 1, 1994 Thursday

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December 1, 1994 Thursday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. FOOD-10

LENGTH: 530 words

HEADLINE: Winemakers have individual approach

BYLINE: ROBERT WHITLEY

BODY:

One of the most persistent mysteries of California **wine** is, who makes it? Outside the industry they are largely unknown, these men and women who have catapulted California **wines** onto the world stage. Dennis Schaefer, who writes about **wine** for the Santa Barbara News-Press, attempts to shed some light on the question in his new book, "Vintage Talk, Conversations With California's New Winemakers" (Capra Press, $15.95). Schaefer conducted wide-ranging interviews with 20 of California's most successful winemakers, probing them for the philosophies and techniques they bring to their craft.

The book provides a rare glimpse inside California's new cult of winemaking. Winemaking isn't rocket science.

The winemaker needs three things: grapes, yeast and a vessel for fermentation. Winemakers are apt to give all of the credit for their best **wines** to the quality of the grapes, and there is no denying that good grapes are the single most important ingredient in fine **wine** production.

But some winemakers do better than others with nature's bounty. Jim Clendenen of Au Bon Climat can purchase Pinot Noir from the same Santa Barbara County vineyard that supplies five or six other wineries and produce a superior **wine.**

Randy Dunn's Cabernets are like no others in the Napa Valley.

Randall Graham of Bonny Doon has built a following for Rhone-style blends from grapes that were once difficult to give away. The picture that emerges from Schaefer's interviews clears up much of the mystery.

The principles of winemaking are the same, but the winemakers are vastly different.

Schaefer has chosen 20 individuals with finely tuned opinions, many of them in conflict. Winemaking is not a matter of whose variation on a theme is most correct, for, in fact, they are all right in their own way.

What works for one winemaker may not work for another, for their goals are not the same. It is this individualism that has lifted California **wines** from the mundane and made them competitive with **wines** produced anywhere, a fact that is proven time and again in blind taste comparisons. Schaefer's 20 winemakers represent an interesting cross-section. Patrick Campbell of Laurel Glen makes the best Cabernet Sauvignon in Sonoma County, while Dunn can lay claim to that distinction in neighboring Napa. Dawnine Dyer of Domaine Chandon is the gregarious champion of California sparkling **wine,** and her husband, Bill, is the quiet genius at Sterling Vineyards. Joel Peterson of **Ravenswood** is the master blender of the group, creating **wines** that are greater than the sum of their parts. It is an eclectic, interesting, talented, spirited group that accounts for some of the most superb bottlings of **wine** in the world.

The journalistic questions and their articulate answers reveal a side of California **wine** that is rarely exposed. This is a good read for the casual **wine** drinker and an excellent resource for the more serious collector. "Vintage Talk" is available throughout San Diego County, but it also can be purchased by mail from Capra Press, P.O. Box 2068, Santa Barbara, CA 93102. Include $15.95 plus $3 for handling. SEND QUESTIONS about this column to Robert Whitley, P.O. Box 2253, San Diego, CA 92112.

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It's time to keep company with Calif. cabernets The Baltimore Sun November 30, 1994, Wednesday,

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November 30, 1994, Wednesday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FOOD, Pg. 1E, VINTAGE POINT

LENGTH: 1099 words

HEADLINE: It's time to keep company with Calif. cabernets

BYLINE: Michael Dresser, Sun Staff Writer

BODY:
There is a worthy gentleman of my acquaintance who simply cannot abide California cabernet sauvignon.

In his refined English drawing room voice, he recently explained to me that the cabernets of the Golden State are leaden in their crudity and molten in their alcoholic heat.

No matter that some of these **wines** fetch $ 50-$ 100 a bottle. No matter that some of the leading proprietors in Bordeaux have set up shop in the Napa Valley. To my friend, even the greatest names in California cabernet cannot compare with a middling Bordeaux.

Poor guy. It seems nature itself has turned against him since the glory days of the 1980s and 1990. Since then Bordeaux has gone into a four-year slump. This fall, just as it appeared a string of three subpar vintages would be broken, harvest rains washed away vintners' hopes. It could be a long decade for the Bordeaux-or-bust crowd.

Fortunately, most of our palates aren't nearly as sensitive as my friend's. We veer from California **wine** to imports and back again, promiscuously loving both. Our dirty little secret is that sometimes we can't even tell the difference unless we peek at the label.

It's unfair, but sometimes fate favors the fickle. This is such a time.

While Bordeaux has battled winter freezes, rampant rot, chilly springs and harvest rains, California has been on a roll since 1990.

Right now, some of the best on the market are the 1991 California cabernet sauvignons that are now proliferating on retailers' shelves.

The 1991s might not be as monumental as the 1990s, but the best of them are showing a degree of structure and complexity that rival or exceed the best of that great vintage.

If any California vintage could appeal to my tender-tongued friend, it would likely be 1991. Instead of a typically blazing summer, the vines of California's North Coast enjoyed a long, cool growing season. With an unusually long "hang time," the grapes were able to develop an abundance of flavor nuances, not just high sugar levels.

None of the 1991s I have tasted recently has been finer than the Robert Mondavi Reserve Cabernet -- a $ 40 **wine** that justifies every penny of its price.

There have been many great Mondavi reserve cabernets over the last two and a half decades, but this ranks among the best. The intense, multilayered flavors of cassis, cedar and blackcurrant do a long, slow lap of honor across the palate. It's a huge **wine,** but elegant, with the structure to last 20 years or more.

While it is possible the Mondavi could win my Francophile friend's grudging admiration, there's no way that could happen with the 1991 Dalla Valle Maya. This rare and expensive ($ 45) blend of cabernet sauvignon and cabernet franc is a California blockbuster through and through.

The Maya is a huge **wine,** with deep chocolate, coffee and black cherry flavors barely masking fierce tannins. For now, all a taster can do is admire it. But in 15 to 30 years, it could be pure perfection. Unfortunately, it could be almost impossible to find.

You might have a slightly better chance of landing some 1991 Dalla Valle Napa Valley cabernet sauvignon, a **wine** that is almost as concentrated and complex as the Maya but about half the price ($ 25).

Another winery that scored a double triumph in 1991 is Joseph Phelps Vineyards. Its Insignia ($ 40) is the granddaddy of California's Bordeaux-style blends -- often called Meritage -- and the 1991 is one of the best. Suffused with intense flavors of black cherry, chocolate, cassis and herbs, this seductive **wine** is supported by a firm structure of tannin. It could last 30 years and never have a bad day.

If you're not a wealthy collector, the most exciting news from Phelps is that its 1991 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon ($ 16), is the finest "regular" Phelps since the excellent 1975. With its long, ripe black cherry and mint flavors, it delivers as much complexity and aging potential as many **wines** twice its price. It could be the bargain of the vintage.

A relatively new name on the Napa Valley **wine** scene is Saddleback Cellars, but the man behind it is no stranger. As the winemaker at Groth Cellars, Nils Venge has established himself as one of the best cabernet makers in California.

In 1991, he succeeded under both labels. The Saddleback is an exuberant, chunky **wine** packed with sweet blackcurrant, chocolate and coffee flavors. It might not be the most complex '91, but it's among the most hedonistic, and justifies its $ 19 price.

The 1991 Groth, also $ 19, is a trifle more complex, though not as immediately appealing. It shows plenty of black cherry, blackcurrant and sweet oak. Give it 5 to 10 years, and it could be exceptional.

If any California cabernet could fool my Cali-phobic friend, it would be the 1991 from Stag's Leap **Wine** Cellars ($ 27). Its flavors of black cherry, cedar and sweet new oak are reminiscent of a St. Julien, and its acidity is higher than one usually finds in the Napa Valley. You could cellar this **wine** 15 years if you can keep your hands off it.

Perhaps the most unusual 1991 cabernet blend I've tasted is **Ravenswood's** 1991 Pickberry ($ 30). Joel Peterson, **Ravenswood's** winemaker, is one of California's greatest zinfandel makers. With its intense blackberry flavors, the Pickberry comes about as close to the flavors of zinfandel as cabernet can. Classic? No. Delicious? Yes.

The following cabernets -- and cabernet-based blends -- were also very successful:

* 1991 Anderson's Conn Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley ($ 25). Dominated by new oak now, this could be exceptional in 5 to 10 years.

* 1991 Shafer Hillside Select Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley (barrel sample). A middleweight **wine** with ample black cherry fruit.

* 1991 Caymus Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley ($ 22). Maybe not quite as good as you'd hope from Caymus, but still delicious.

* 1991 Rodney Strong Alexander's Crown Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Alexander Valley ($ 20.49). A very elegant cabernet.

* 1991 Kendall-Jackson Cardinale ($ 40). The lush chocolate and black cherry fruit are very seductive even if the grip and finish don't live up to the first taste.

* 1991 Philippe Lorraine Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon ($ 15). A very pleasant middle-weight **wine.**

The following **wines** were palatable but disappointing in the context of the vintage:

* 1991 Mount Eden Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon, Santa Cruz Mountains ($ 19). Paradise lost.

* 1991 Murphy-Goode Murphy Estate Cabernet Sauvignon, Alexander Valley ($ 18). Not as Goode as 1990.

* 1991 Carmenet Dynamite Cabernet, Sonoma Valley ($ 20). A dud.

TYPE: REVIEW

LOAD-DATE: December 2, 1994

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The Best of Times; The 1992 California Zinfandel vintage is 3rd straight high quality vintage, placing racy red wine ahead of Merlot & Pinot Noir Wine Spectator October 15, 1994

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Wine Spectator

October 15, 1994

SECTION: Pg. 60 ISSN: 0193-497X

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LENGTH: 233 words

HEADLINE: The Best of Times;
The 1992 California Zinfandel vintage is 3rd straight high quality vintage, placing racy red **wine** ahead of Merlot & Pinot Noir

BODY:

The 1992 California Zinfandel vintage is the 3rd straight high quality vintage, placing the racy red **wine** ahead of California's Merlot and Pinot Noir, according to James Laube. A normal, mild summer permitted the grapes to develop evenly, while a heat wave near harvest pushed sugar levels up, creating alcohol levels of up to 15% vs 14% for the 1991 vintage. The grapes were picked just before raisining, with the higher alcohol content creating a smooth, lush, rich glycerin-like texture with added thickness. The 1992 vintage has a ripe, opulent quality with cherry, raspberry, wild berry and spicy flavors, positioning itself behind Cabernet Sauvignon in red table **wine** popularity. Many of the best red Zinfandels come from Sonoma, including **Ravenswood,** Rafanelli, Rochioli and Rosenblum, although Napa Valley also producessome good **wines.** The grape itself, although lacking in a European pedigree, is hearty and versatile, blending well with other grapes. Itsresurgence, with the boom in white Zinfandel popularity, creating a pink **wine** using red grapes and white **wine** techniques, has improved quality and led to a new wave of small, vineyard-designated offerings, although such large operations as Robert Mondavi have also revived their Zinfandels. The article contains 2 tables detailing the best-selling and top-scoring Zinfandels in 1991-92 and a profile of 3 California Zinfandel wineries.

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A GUIDE TO THE DISNEY WINE FESTIVAL Orlando Sentinel (Florida) July 14, 1994 Thursday, 3 STAR

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July 14, 1994 Thursday, 3 STAR

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. H1

LENGTH: 461 words

HEADLINE: A GUIDE TO THE DISNEY **WINE** FESTIVAL

BYLINE: By Heather McPherson of The Sentinel Staff

BODY:
It's time for one of Central Florida's most-looked-forward-to happy hours. But in this case it's more like one big happy weekend.

The 13th Annual Walt Disney World **Wine** Festival starts today with the Winemakers' and Chefs' Grand Pairing. At 7 p.m., Disney chefs will kick things off by matching some of their signature dishes with **wines** from American vineyards and Michel Chapoutier's acclaimed French **wines.**

The rest of the three-day gathering will include seminars, more **wine** tastings, cooking demonstrations and a barbecue - all held at Disney's Yacht and Beach Club Convention Center.

"We have several wineries participating that have never exhibited before," said John Stambaugh, manager of beverage research and director of the Disney **Wine** Society. Among the newcomers are **Ravenswood's** Joel Peterson (maker of fine zinfandel), Calera's Josh Jensen (creator of extraordinary pinot noir and chardonnay) and John Alban (maker of excellent Rhone varietals).

This is the event in Central Florida for novice and expert **wine** enthusiasts. Novices will have an opportunity to learn about the nuances of properly made **wine. Wine** experts will be able to see how consistent their favorite winemakers have been with recent releases. Here's a rundown of this year's events:

Chefs' and Winemakers' Grand Pairing, 7 p.m. today: Fourteen of Walt Disney World's executive chefs are cooking for this event, and a selection of **wines** will be matched with the foods.

Highlight: A chance to hobnob with the **wine** elite and eat very well.

Cost: $68.90.

Grand Tasting, 7 p.m. Friday: Eighty winery principals will pour 160 **wines,** and celebrity chefs will do cooking demonstrations.

Highlight: Meet Paul Prudhomme, the chef who helped make Cajun and Creole household words.

Cost: $53.

"Food and **Wine,** or Love the One You're With" seminar, noon Saturday: Food and **wine** critic Anthony Dias Blue and master sommelier Frederick L. Dame team up with chefs for a discussion on pairing food and **wine.** Chef Prudhomme is scheduled to participate as well.

Highlight: You get to sample while you learn.

Cost: $31.80.

"The Rhone Connection" seminar, 2:30 p.m. Saturday: Michel Chapoutier heads up the "Rhone Ranger" posse for this predictably irreverant discussion on winemaking.

Highlight: Learn from the best. The House of M. Chapoutier owns 175 acres in all of the major appellations of the Rhone Valley.

Cost: $26.50.

Beach Blanket Barbecue, 5:30 p.m. Saturday: A casual evening that will include Disney characters, food and **wines.**

Highlight: You don't have to hire a sitter. This is a family event and kids are welcome.

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ZAPping Zinfandel The Washington Post June 1, 1994, Wednesday, Final Edition

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June 1, 1994, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: FOOD; PAGE E9; **WINE**

LENGTH: 825 words

HEADLINE: ZAPping Zinfandel

SERIES: Occasional

BYLINE: Dick Rosano, Special to The Washington Post

BODY:
No one seems to know the birthplace of the original red Zinfandel; some say the grape has its roots in Italy and others say in Hungary. We do know that it has been cultivated in California since the 1860s and is a true American treasure. Whatever its origin, in May, the Zinfandel Advocates and Producers -- ZAP -- brought their favorite grape to Washington and dared the world to doubt its quality.

Throughout its history, the Zinfandel grape has been vinified in many ways. Originally planted merely as a stock grape for jug **wine,** its name hardly ever showed on the label. When Americans were first discovering finer **wines** in the 1960s and 1970s, varietal **wines** -- those named after the principal grape rather than places such as Chablis, Burgundy and Champagne -- began making an appearance, but Zinfandel still couldn't get out of the starting gate.

In the late 1970s, as U.S. wineries were still trying to find out what Americans wanted to drink, Sutter Home in the Napa Valley discovered a way to make money from Zinfandel vines: They did it by making white zinfandel, actually a blush **wine** produced when the red Zinfandel grapes are crushed and immediately pressed off the skins to minimize absorption of color. The resulting **wine** was light, fruity and vinified with the touch of sweetness so favored by an American market not yet weaned from sugary-sweet sodas.

In turning zinfandel white, Bob Trinchero of Sutter Home turned a tidy profit. But more important, he saved the Zinfandel vine in no less dramatic a way than home winemakers did during Prohibition. If Trinchero hadn't proved that Zinfandel could make a bundle, the vines would probably have been ripped out to make way for the European grapes that had captured Americans' still-budding enthusiasm for **wine.**

So for years, a lot of the zinfandel produced was white. But now that Americans' taste in **wine** is turning red, true red zinfandel can come to the fore. And ZAP is here to make sure it does.

ZAP was founded in 1991 by Jerry Seps of Storybook Mountain Vineyards, a winery that proudly produces only zinfandel -- and some of the best zinfandel you'll ever taste. The purpose of ZAP can be read in the middle word of its full name, Advocates, and its membership includes more than 60 wineries and thousands of consumers. ZAP's "Goals and Purposes" do not appear to specifically exclude white zinfandel, and Sutter Home is a member. But one of its goals is "to emphasize those qualities in the grape which make it one of the world's classic red **wines.**"

ZAP's promotional events in Washington included a trade tasting in the Cannon House Office Building, followed by a "Red Zinfandel Only" dinner at the Embassy Row Hotel, followed, the next day, by a public tasting of red zinfandels.

Regardless of its true birthplace, no one disputes that Zinfandel is a member of the Vitis vinifera family of grapes that includes such famous siblings as Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay. Producers such as Storybook Mountain Vineyards, **Ravenswood** and Seghesio have been wowing the zinfandel faithful for years with their reds, and newcomer Chateau Potelle offers an excellent, though Bordeaux-style, zin. But there are dozens of wineries, both in and out of ZAP, producing wonderful, luscious zinfandels that highlight its deep, full flavors and raspberry tones and delight its fans.

So many zins, so little time! But here are a few to remember.

1990 Storybook Mountain Vineyard Zinfandel Napa Valley ($ 14): Full, rich flavors nearly jump out of the glass. Notes of raspberry accompany loads of fresh fruit. Semi-dry, but with a lovely, elegant finish. Any vintage from Storybook Mountain should be good.

1991 Storybook Mountain Vineyard Howell Mountain Zinfandel ($ 13): As rich and rewarding as the Napa Valley sample, but

with an additional, though minor, hint of licorice. This **wine** evolves quickly in the glass and is absolutely gorgeous after 30 minutes.

1991 Topolos Old Vineyard Reserve ($ 15): Smoky, tobacco scents fill the nose. This full, rich, slightly minty **wine** is finely tuned and would play a superb co-star to a grilled steak or char-broiled chicken.

1990 Chateau Potelle Zinfandel VGS ($ 28): Jean Noel Fourmeaux, the owner/winemaker of Chateau Potelle, admits he is trying to make a Bordeaux-style **wine.** I doubt that zinfandel needs to pretend to be French, but Fourmeaux has produced a silky-smooth **wine** with subdued grapey flavors. It is unfortunately pricey, suggesting that the style is not the only thing that has been Frenchified.

1992 **Ravenswood** Zinfandel Cooke Vineyard ($ 20): Another rich **wine,** enjoying strong aromas of raspberries highlighted with a suggestion of cinnamon.

1992 Chateau Souverain Zinfandel Dry Creek Vineyard ($ 9): With a taste melding raspberries and cherries, this semi-dry **wine** should be especially popular with those who are only lately starting to drink red **wine.** The price is superb given the level of quality.

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WINE, ETCNO SNOB APPEAL WHEN IT COMES TO ZINFANDEL The Capital (Annapolis, MD.) May 25, 1994, Wednesday

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The Capital (Annapolis, MD.)

May 25, 1994, Wednesday

SECTION: Food; Pg. B1

LENGTH: 613 words

HEADLINE: WINE, ETC

NO SNOB APPEAL WHEN IT COMES TO ZINFANDEL

BYLINE: By Tom Marqruardt and Patrick Darr

BODY:
Zinfandel conjures up some of the most passionate disagreements in **wine** circles. Serious collectors hoist their noses well into the air while a loyal following effusively praises the grape like it was Holy water.

Zinfandel has never reached the noble status of the chardonnay and cabernet sauvignon, the grapes used to make great burgundy and bordeaux. Identified only with the United States, zinfandel has never caught on in Europe even though its roots have been traced to Italy.

California winemaker Peter Haywood concedes that zinfandel hasn't enjoyed cabernet's success because "there's just no snob appeal."

Maybe that's why we like zinfandel so much. It's not for snobs.

Zinfandel was fading in California when Sutter Home accidentally made a blush **wine** from the grape. As we now know, it was the most profitable mistake made in California.

Once blush **wine** took off in sales, grape growers replanted zinfandel. Ironically, the blush **wine** fad gave red zinfandel a reprieve.

Consumers will find great values in zinfandel, but even more appealing are its generous berry flavors. While merlote most interesting point about zinfandel's popularity among occasional **wine** drinkers. Raspberries, blueberries and strawberries are flavors easy to identify.

Mr. Peterson agrees. "It's like biting into a raspberry. People relate to it because of childhood experiences in a berry patch.

The best zinfandel can be found in the warm Dry Creek region of California. Wineries like Quivera, Dry Creek Vineyards, Rosenblum and **Ravenswood** have built reputations on just this grape.

"People in California are now recognizing that there is a future for zinfandel," says Joel Peterson, winemaker at **Ravenswood.** Mr. Peterson's zinfandels are monsters.

Zinfandel is not an easy grape to grow. The uneven ripening of the grapes require workers to pick the vines several times. The grapes are susceptible to mites and can shut down periodically during heat spells. Worse, the grapes can split open.

Here were some of our top choices at the Washington zinfandel tasting:

1992 Chateau Souverain Zinfandel. ($ 7) Berry nose, medium body, soft tannins and good finish. From Dry Creek vineyards.

1992 Rosenblum Mount Veeder Zinfandel.($ 13) Brambly, intense and big, berry fruit, dense color and firm tannin. Made from 88-year-old vines. Rosenblum's Paso Robles zin is a great **wine** too, but the Mount Veeder version is a knockout.

1991 Storybrook Mountain Zinfandel. ($ 13) Made from Howell Mountain grapes, this blockbuster has an intense berry flavor with a finish that goes on and on. Winemaker Jerry Ceps says he has been tempted by the Rhone grapes sometimes used for blending in the zinfandel, but adds quickly, "What would a Rhone grape provide for this **wine?**" Nothing.

1992 Topolos Sonoma County Zinfandel. ($ 12) Cedar nose, blueberry flavors and a deep, rich texture. Topolos has a cult following and now we know why. If you can find these **wines,** buy them. Michael Topolos also makes a 1991 field blend of

mouvedre, petite syrah, palomino, carlagne and zinfandel.

1992 **Ravenswood** Cook Vineyard Zinfandel. ($ 18) Berry, brambly flavors with loads of spice. Made in volcanic soil and a cool climate. Mr. Peterson's Belloni Vineyard zinfandel is also a stunning **wine. These wines** are not easy to find, but the **Ravenswood** Vintner's Blend and the old-vine zinfandel are plentiful and good, too.

1992 Cline Cellars Zinfandel ($ 10). This is a big **wine** for a regular bottling. But just try the 1992 Cline Reserve Zinfandel! The regular bottling is drinkable now although its softness masks its aging potential. Good alcohol, lots of spice and a good finish.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR The San Francisco Chronicle APRIL 27, 1994, WEDNESDAY, FINAL EDITION

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APRIL 27, 1994, WEDNESDAY, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: EDITORIAL; Pg. A20; LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LENGTH: 2832 words

HEADLINE: LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BODY:
'NOW HE BELONGS TO THE AGES'

Editor -- Richard M. Nixon now belongs to the ages, and history will judge him, in my view, by giving greater weight to the good that was in him rather than the evil.

No "strange drift of circumstance" could ever explain the complexity of this strange man, his dark side and his remarkable understanding of world affairs.

Richard Nixon brought peace and hopes for peace to millions throughout the world. It is perhaps an American tragedy that he failed to find peace for his own troubled soul. God rest him and let us hope that the good that he did will live after him.

JOSEPH O. HEDGPETH

Carmichael (Sacramento County)

A GREAT STATESMAN

Editor -- We have just lost one of the greatest statesman of our times, Richard Nixon. When he entered the political arena, the media and the liberals tried to destroy him, and they almost did. But he came back again and again to give service to his country, and he gave invaluable advice on foreign affairs to Presidents Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush and Clinton.

His family life was exemplary with a beautiful, very gracious first lady and two lovely daughters and their families.

He will be greatly missed.

SALLY McKEE

San Rafael

NIXON'S REAL CRIME

Editor -- President Nixon was not impeached for his real crime.

Richard Nixon's Watergate escapade was as adolescent as Michael Fay's spray-painting in Singapore. Both deserved spankings.

President Nixon's dark side is seen in his cynical continuation of the bloody Vietnam War, which he, as leader of the world's greatest superpower, could have terminated at will. I believe he deliberately prolonged the war so he could, on election eve, ensure his re-election by promising war-weary Americans, "Peace is at hand!"

President Nixon has now joined in death thousands of Americans who died unnecessarily in Vietnam because he valued his re-election as president above their lives and limbs.

ROBERT Q. CUNNINGHAM

San Marino (Los Angeles County)

NIXON'S WAR

EDitor -- It is an insult to the memory of the hundreds of thousands of both Americans and Southeast Asians who died in the war he led to honor Richard M. Nixon today, April 27. Do the American people remember them?

Sonoma in the south.

The quintessential Zin: Joel Peterson at **Ravenswood** makes some superb Zins, but the current release that most clearly states the Sonoma Valley "cherries and berries" theme is the 1991 Kenwood "Sonoma Valley" Zinfandel ($ 12).

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MAYACAMAS MOUNTAINS

The mountains that separate Sonoma and Napa counties contain some excellent Zinfandel vineyards, among them Chateau Potelle, 2,000 feet up on Mount Veeder, with a view of the Napa Valley to the east, and Sky Vineyards on Cavedale Mountain, overlooking the Bay Area to the west and south. The high elevation contributes to a sinewy structure.

Wine characteristics: Well- structured, tannic and powerful **wines.** A dried Bing cherry flavor is noticeable, plus masculine spiciness and some blackberry fruit.

Soils: The mountain vineyards, with their volcanic soils, usually slope, forcing the vines to work hard to produce short crops.

Climate: Lots of sunshine and cool temperatures mark vineyards at high elevations, producing **wines** of great finesse.

The quintessential Zin: The 1991 Chateau Potelle Zinfandel ($ 27.50) is a massive **wine** with strong dried cherries and dried fruit flavors. Similar but not as powerful is the 1991 Sky Vineyards Zinfandel ($ 14).

.

NAPA VALLEY

(STAGS LEAP)

The Stags Leap appellation hugs the eastern hills of the relatively cool southern end of the Napa Valley and runs out onto the valley floor. You'll find a great deal of Cabernet Sauvignon -- and Clos du Val's 10 acres of Zinfandel.

Wine characteristics: The fruitiness in this Zinfandel is subdued, with a juicy, peppery quality.

Soils: The soil on the flat bottomland is alluvial -- a deep sandy loam, with some clay that drains fairly well.

Climate: Summer days are hot, but breezes from San Pablo Bay usually keep evening and night temperatures moderate to cool.

The quintessential Zin: The 1990 Clos du Val Zinfandel ($ 14) is the most claret-like of all the Zins, with the fruit sotto voce.

.

NAPA VALLEY

(ST. HELENA)

Here in the warm mid-valley, Cabernet is still king, but there are many old, head-trained Zin vines producing gorgeous **wine.** This region runs from approximately Big Tree Road at the north end of the valley to Rutherford to the south.

Wine characteristics: The different soils produce different **wines,** but usually they are blended in the finished product, giving **wines** great complexity, with a strong tannic structure. Look for notes of red and black currant fruit, pepper, chocolate, tobacco and briar.

Soils: The Napa River's flood cycles leave three types of soil behind: pebbly, rocky soil closest to the river; gravelly soil farther out; and sandy, silty soil beyond that as the waters deposit lighter material away from the riverbed.

Climate: Days are hot around St. Helena, and evenings are warm before the cool nights set in; the overall climate is warm.

The quintessential Zin: The 1991 Schuetz-Oles Zinfandel ($ 13.50) is a newcomer, but the grapes from the old vineyard that makes this superb **wine** have been going into the best mid-valley Zins (Frog's Leap, for example) for many years. This **wine** is loaded with fruit that's perfectly balanced with alcohol, tannins and acid.

.

NAPA VALLEY

(CALISTOGA)

The Napa Valley narrows considerably as it approaches Calistoga. High mountains on either side keep in the heat, and the area is still volcanically active, with geysers and hot springs.

Wine characteristics: Stern and sinewy Zinfandels, with strong acidity and tart cherry flavors. The strong acids keep the fruity **wines** from becoming soft and flabby, even when very ripe. Soils: The hillsides east and west are rocky and volcanic, with loamy topsoil in certain spots. Valley floor soils are mostly sandy loam, with rocky bands of silty clay.

Climate: Days are hot and nights remain warm. Cooling fogs tend to stay west of the mountains that separate the northern end

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Zinfandel back from the brink The Age (Melbourne, Australia) February 1, 1994 Tuesday

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The Age (Melbourne, Australia)

February 1, 1994 Tuesday
Late Edition

SECTION: EPICURE; Pg. 5

LENGTH: 388 words

HEADLINE: Zinfandel back from the brink

BODY:

IN CALIFORNIA, the battle is over and zinfandel has won. Ten years ago it was a grape variety on the road to banality, if not outright extinction. Grape growers could not dig up their old zinfandel vines fast enough. Vineyard land planted in anything other than chardonnay or cabernet sauvignon was "underutilised".

Red zinfandel was forced to adopt a disguise in order to survive. Torn from its colorful dark skin, it produced something erroneously called "white zinfandel". It became a joke in the tasting rooms of California that tourists would reject a proffered glass of **wine** if it wasn't pink, asserting that they knew what zinfandel looked like and that red stuff wasn't it.

As many wineries ceased making red zinfandel, it became the speciality of a few fanatics _ Paul Draper of Ridge Vineyards, Joel Peterson of **Ravenswood,** Jerry Seps of Storybook Mountain.

These individuals knew what so many of their colleagues did not _ that despite their lack of French pedigree, those gnarled old zinfandel vines could produce **wines** that were as rich, complex and exciting as any in the world.

Their faith was religious, and the religion has spread. American **wine** drinkers increasingly are turning to zinfandel as an alternative to cabernet, rather than a step down.

So respectable has zinfandel become that George Riedel, the Austrian glassmaker who fashions glasses specifically tailored for the world's greatest **wine** varieties, has just added a zinfandel glass to his lineup.

Regrettably, there are still many who believe red zinfandel is merely a poor man's cabernet. Admittedly, the greatest cabernets can reach levels of complexity and durability zinfandel never touches, but there are precious few of these prodigies _ and they'll cost you dearly.

Zinfandel's advantages aren't limited to price. They need less ageing than cabernet, and they go better with grilled foods. Seldom are their fruit flavors masked by oak.

But despite the resurgence in popularity, 'The Los Angeles Times' reports that zinfandel was overtaken by cabernet sauvignon as the No.

1 red grape grown in California for the first time last year, according to the 1992 Grape Acreage Survey, released by the California Agricultural Statistics Service. Zinfandel has dominated red **wine** plantings in California since the 1800s, when the industry began._ Baltimore Sun

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DOMESTIC WINES EARN PLACE AT HEAD OF HOLIDAY TABLE Orlando Sentinel (Florida) December 19, 1993 Sunday, 3 STAR

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December 19, 1993 Sunday, 3 STAR

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. L6

LENGTH: 520 words

HEADLINE: DOMESTIC **WINES** EARN PLACE AT HEAD OF HOLIDAY TABLE

BYLINE: By Bob Hosmon Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel

BODY:
American **wines** deserve a place at the head of the table this holiday season. Here's a look at some of them:

Chardonnay

It's the world's favorite white **wine,** prominent among the expensive whites of Burgundy and produced in such faraway places as Chile and Australia. But it is in California that two dozen winemakers have perfected it.

Among the expensive ($15 and up) are Arrowood, Beringer Private Reserve, Far Niente, Frog's Leap, Jordan, Kunde Reserve and Sonoma-Cutrer Russian River.

For less than $10 a bottle, consider the chardonnays from Beringer, Liberty School, Estancia and Monterey Vineyard Classic.

Zinfandel

A grape varietal unique to American vineyards, zinfandel is arguably the most misunderstood and underrated of all red **wines.** Those who are devotees of red zin appreciate the earthy flavors that make this the **wine** of choice for meals of wild game, rich-sauced pasta and grilled meats.

Some of America's - and, therefore, the world's - best red zinfandels are produced by Rosenblum, Grgich Hills, Joseph Swann, **Ravenswood** and Ridge; all are priced at less than $15.

For less than $10, satisfying red zins can be found from Bel Arbors, Beringer, Woodbridge and Trentadue.

Merlots

This is the red **wine** that matures more quickly than cabernet sauvignon - perfect for those who don't have access to a **wine** cellar stocked with aged cabs.

Delicious with poultry and red meats, merlot also has a soft taste, making it popular even with those who don't usually like red **wine.**

Among America's best merlots are Duckhorn, Robert Keenan, Shafer, St. Francis Reserve, and Gundlach-Bundschu, priced from $14.

In the $10 or less price range, consider the merlots from Monterey Classic, Wyndham and M.G. Vallejo.

Sparkling **wines**

For good holiday cheer, there are several American-made sparkling **wines** (they don't use the word "Champagne," leaving that to the French) that can add lots of bubble and flavor to any holiday occasion. Most are expensive (more than $15 a bottle), but, in this case, you get what you pay for.

Look for Domaine Carneros Brut, Domaine Chandon Etoile, Gloria Ferre Royal Cuvee, "J" from Jordan, Mumm Napa Prestige and Piper Sonoma Blanc de Noirs.

Dessert **wines**

As a special ending to any holiday meal, consider serving an American dessert **wine,** either as the dessert itself or as a complement to cakes, souffles or tarts.

Superior choices include Far Niente Dolce, Freemark Abbey Edelwein and Clos

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Wines of Somona make an impression The Washington Times December 1, 1993, Wednesday, Final Edition

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December 1, 1993, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: Part E; FOOD; **WINE;** Pg. E1

LENGTH: 1382 words

HEADLINE: Wines of Somona make an impression

BYLINE: Michael Franz; SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

BODY:

No other two words in the English language can sell a bottle of **wine** as well as "Napa Valley."

The words have become almost synonymous with fine **wine** from the United States, and, other factors being equal, nine customers out of 10 would select a bottle of Napa Valley **wine** over a bottle bearing any other American appellation.

It may be a surprise to learn that an overall assessment will indicate that during the past 10 years the **wines** of Sonoma County have surpassed those of Napa County.

I freely acknowledge that a judgment of such generality is potentially misleading, since **wine** is the drink of specificity par excellence. One does not drink the amalgamated **wine** of a country, but rather the **wine** of a specific grape, grown on a specific site, made by a specific producer, under the specific conditions of a given vintage.

Yet, many consumers buy **wines** with nothing to rely upon but a very general impression of the viticultural area designated on the label. If this applies to you, take Sonoma County **wines** at least as seriously as those hailing from Napa. Better still, you should learn which grapes are being grown more successfully in which county and which wineries are the best for quality and consistency.

Toward these ends, the following comparisons evaluate the **wines** of the two counties grape by grape and identify the leading Sonoma producers:

Chardonnay: In this case, as with that of pinot noir, we must compare the standing of the two appellations without considering the Carneros district, which is evenly divided between the two counties. The two portions of Carneros are, viticulturally speaking, much more like one another than the rest of the counties in which they happen to fall, as conditions are dominated by the proximity of the San Pablo Bay.

Carneros aside, Sonoma tends to be cooler and is generally better-suited to chardonnay. Ever more Napa winemakers admit this and do so ever less grudgingly, though the most candid are those who have already moved their chardonnay production into cooler regions and grafted their valley floor vines over to cabernet sauvignon.

Sonoma's top chardonnay producers are Kistler, Marcassin, Hanzell, Matanzas Creek, Sonoma-Cutrer, Ferrari-Carano, De Loach.

Pinot noir: Recalling the caveat regarding Carneros noted above, Sonoma is vastly superior for producing fine pinot noir; I cannot recommend a single pinot noir made in the heart of the Napa Valley.

There is good reason why one finds no cabernet sauvignon in Burgundy and no pinot noir in the warmer climate of Bordeaux, and those bent on making world-class pinot noir have long deserted the Napa Valley in favor of such cool regions as Oregon, Santa Barbara, the Santa Cruz Mountains, Carneros, Mendocino County and Sonoma's Russian River Valley.

Sonoma's top producers of pinot noir are Williams-Selyem, Dehlinger, Gary Farrel, Kalin, Hanzell, Kistler.

Cabernet sauvignon: This is the only major varietal in which Napa's **wines** are indisputably superior.

Parts of Sonoma's Alexander Valley and Sonoma Valley appellations are similar to prime Napa cabernet lands in slope and climate. Yet, due to differences in soil composition, drainage and a host of lesser variables, the Oakville, Rutherford and Stags Leap areas in Napa produce perhaps 25 **wines** that overshadow all but the best bottlings from Sonoma. For medium-priced

cabernets ($10 to $18), Sonoma can hold its own, but Napa is unmatched at the highest level.

Sonoma's top producers of cabernet sauvignon: Laurel Glen Vineyard, Kenwood's Artist Series, Chalk Hill and Silver Oak's Alexander Valley bottling. Tellingly, when Laurel Glen's Patrick Campbell purchases grapes for his Terra Rosa label, he sometimes buys them from Napa, as in 1990. Nevertheless, Sonomans must be proud that Napa cabernet heavyweight Silver Oak Cellars buys the fruit for its largest-selling bottling from Alexander Valley in Sonoma, and many tasters prefer this **wine** to Silver Oak's Napa releases.

Merlot: Here we have a virtual draw. California merlot can be quite pleasant, but few releases deserve to be mentioned in the same breath as right-bank Bordeaux from Pomerol and St. Emilion. The general run of Sonoma County merlot is no better and no worse than that from Napa.

Sonoma's top merlot producers are Matanzas Creek, St. Francis and Gary Farrel, which are effectively canceled for purposes of our comparison by Napa's standardbearers, Duckhorn, Newton and Beringer Howell Mountain.

Zinfandel: Sonoma's **wines** easily win this comparison. The Dry Creek Valley in Sonoma County is the world capital of zinfandel, but outstanding examples are also made in the Russian River and Sonoma Valleys, as well as on Sonoma Mountain.

There is no question that Napa can produce great zinfandel, but for every top-flight Napa bottling one can cite five from Sonoma.

Sonoma's top zinfandel producers are **Ravenswood** (Old Hill, Cooke and Belloni vineyards), Ridge (Lytton Springs and Geyserville vineyards), A. Fafanelli, Rosenblum, Williams-Selyem, Quivira, Topolos, De Loach, Dry Creek Vineyards, Scherrer, Limerick Lane, Lytton Springs.

Sauvignon blanc: Sonoma takes this category by virtue of sheer numbers. Although it is not clear that Sonoma is more hospitable to sauvignon blanc than Napa, many more of the best bottlings carry the Sonoma name.

Napa producers such as Grigich, Duckhorn, Groth and Robert Mondavi have demonstrated that their valley's potential is as strong as Sonomas's, but astronomical prices for vineyard land in Napa have gradually reduced plantings of sauvignon blanc, which does not command prices approaching those of chardonnay, cabernet or merlot.

Sonoma's top sauvignon blanc producers are: Kalin, Matanzas Creek, Murphy-Goode, Quivira, Dry Creek, Kenwood, Carmenet, Simi, Chateau St. Jean La Petite Etoile, Chalk Hill, Preston.

Other varietals: Constraints of space and insufficiently established track records preclude detailed comparisons of less prominent grapes, but Sonoma producers have shown themselves at least equal - and arguably superior - to their Napa counterparts in many varietal categories: Gewurztraminer (Z Moore); petite sirah (Field Stone and Hop Kiln); sparkling **wines** (Iron Horse); alicante bouschet (Topolos and Trentadue); late-harvest sauvignon blanc and semillon (Ferrari-Carano and Chalk Hill) and late-harvest Riesling (Chateau St. Jean).

These comparisons will have served their purpose if they heighten your estimation of Sonoma's potential or dissuade you from confining your purchases to Napa Valley **wines.** But don't stop with the addition of Sonoma to your area of experimentation, because many of California's greatest **wines** are produced in even lesser-known regions.

Indeed, the California locations most propitious for the cultivation of your favorite grape may not be known for another hundred years, and some of the most promising **wines** are now being made by iconoclastic vintners in very remote areas.

It will take some work to learn about them and their **wines,** but the rewards and bargains can be commensurately great. Read, taste and travel widely so you can get in on the ground floor, because shortly after everyone else learns that your favorite discovery is California's answer to Chateau Margaux, the **wine** will be priced accordingly.

****BOX

WINE OF THE MONTH

Terra Rosa Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon 1991, $9.95, produced (but not grown) by Laurel Glen Vineayard. This **wine** will surely prompt audible gnashing of teeth throughout California's **wine** country, because Patrick Campbell's competitors will discover that he has actually made the cabernet everyone else has been striving for.

This beautifully proportioned **wine** has softness but also backbone, ripe fruit but also balancing acidity and immediate drinkability but also several years of ageworthiness.

Delicious chocolate and blackcurrant flavors lead into a long, classy finish.

It is nearly impossible to buy a **wine** with $20 worth of depth and character for under $10, so jump at the chance. Grade: A-minus.

GRAPHIC: Box, **WINE** OF THE MONTH

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Take another look at export markets. Wines & Vines November 1, 1993

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November 1, 1993

SECTION: Pg. p48(2) Vol. V74 No. N11 ISSN: 0043-583X

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LENGTH: 1898 words

HEADLINE: Take another look at export markets.

BYLINE: Rondeau, Rene

BODY:

When the going gets tough, the tough get going. And with tough timesin the **wine** industry, many are going out of the country. Sales within the United States are in decline, so now may be the time to look atexport markets more seriously.

There are plenty of reasons to consider European and Asian markets. For some wineries, image alone is enough incentive. After all, to truly be considered a world-class **wine**--which is how most winemakers rightfully perceive their products--it is important to compete in a world market.

Fortunately, interest in California **wine** is growing worldwide. Many people can recall the struggle for recognition that California endured for so many years. The big break case in 1976, at the famous Paris tasting staged by Steven Spurrier. In this blind tasting, a jury of French winemakers and restaurateurs ranked California **wines** above the best France had to offer in both red and white categories. Once the screaming and finger pointing died down, Europeans begrudgingly acknowledged that something was happening in the Golden State, and California's image began to shine internationally. Today there is no doubt inmost foreign consumers' eyes, and many people are eager to experience the best California has to offer.

Couple that with the fact that the dollar continues to trade at relatively weak levels, making the price of California **wine** attractive toforeign buyers, and it's easy to see why our **wines** are becoming fashionable.

So, if there are so many positives in the export scene, why isn't everyone doing it? Like anything else, nothing is quite as simple as itseems.

Building demand for a particular label is a hard, slow process anywhere, but when that market is six to ten thousand miles away it becomes a very daunting challenge. For some producers it may seem enough totake a vacation to Europe, knock on a door or two and sell a few cases, and write off the trip as a business expense. But to keep sellingit requires developing a relationship with the buyer and his market--just as it does in Florida, Georgia, or anywhere else.

It probably also comes as a surprise (or shock) to some wineries to learn that fame in this country doesn't necessarily translate to the same in foreign markets. A high-profile, tightly-allocated **wine** may be well-known to American **wine** buffs, but to most European or Asian buyers it's just another brand name.

Its also hard for many Americans to understand old-world business styles. We live in a world of instant gratification; a quick sale over lunch and the deal is done. Europeans, and especially Asians, look atthings differently. They move slowly, by our standards, and believe strongly in supportive relationships with suppliers. Exporters learn quickly that patience is a virtue, and breaking into the export market is a long-term investment. There may not be many quick profits, butthe incredible potential more than justifies the time and expense today.

There are some logistic problems to consider as well. Labels must conform to the standards of the destined country; samples are difficultand expensive to ship; expediting small quantities to specific customers can be complicated; **wines** must be analyzed and accompanied by correct documentation; and so on.

So how does a winery get into the export market? The first step taken by most producer/members is to contact the **Wine** Institute. The Institute's role in export is much the same as in the U.S. market--that is, primarily an educational and

promotional function. There are ways,however, that WI can benefit individual wineries.

Currently, the **Wine** Institute has agents in eight foreign countries who can help with the ins and outs of the legal and distribution tangles. Often they can aid in identifying distributors and key buyers within the country, though setting up distribution is up to the producer. WI also works extensively in organizing trade shows, and can help coordinate joint promotions combining several wineries under one pavilion.

Recently WI has also sponsored special events, particularly in Japan, aimed at the local **wine** trade. For example, they target sommelier societies with contests and seminars, and have brought many top sommeliers to California to visit member wineries in person.

The **Wine** Institute also administers the government's Market Promotion Program, which allows for matching funds for certain expenses such as advertising and trade shows. (However, travel and samples are not included in the program.)

They also organize an annual seminar for California winemakers, covering all the essential points to consider in branching into export. Currently, about one quarter of the total membership of 400 wineries participate in export.

All this is obviously very helpful, but for the busy winemaker it may not be enough. Obviously, even with WI support there is a lot of legwork to be done in meeting potential distributors and ultimately doing the necessary follow-up in the marketplace. Larger wineries may beable to hire staff to concentrate on these matters, but for any smaller operations it isn't possible to devote the time or money required.

Enter the brokers, a relatively new breed of agents who represent a portfolio of wineries and spend most of their time on the road visiting their foreign distributors and working the market. These are people who are in the market regularly and understand the peculiarities ofeach locality. Their role is to build brand recognition and cultivate the all-important relationships.

Among the brokers in the export scene one of the most aggressive is Tempe Relchardt of San Francisco (413-775-5714). Her company is only a few years old, but already boasts some key players in her portfolio(**Ravenswood,** Alexander Valley Vineyards, Flora Springs, and MatanzasCreek among others). She sees herself as more than just a sales agent. "When I'm in a foreign country I'm not only looking to make a sale, but to promote the winery, cultivate the local press, and educate the retailers and restaurant buyers." None of this is easy. "It takes a lot of time. Foreign buyers don't respond to a 'here today, gone tomorrow' kind of approach. They're not looking for a one-shot purchase. When they commit to a product they expect to have ongoing support. They believe in consistency, both of product and marketing."

The time is right, she believes. "American products are increasinglychic in Europe and Asia, and the potential market for California **wine** is larger than ever before. Those wineries who are willing to make the commitment, with a long-term approach, are going to do incrediblywell."

Like other brokers, her company handles all of the complex legal andpaperwork issues that must be confronted, but she has an advantage over most on the European continent. She maintains a bonded warehouse in Antwerp where she holds small stocks of **wines.** "This gives me a lot of flexibility. Not only can I expedite sample requests cheaply, but I can handle small shipments and give my European clients better and faster service."

Chris Weber is a veteran in the export business, having founded WineVentures International in St. Helena in 1984. (707-963-3183.) Following a less than successful attempt to crack the Asian market, he now concentrates on Europe. Among others, he lists Raymond, Kenwood, Caymus, and Sebastiani as clients.

Weber is very blunt about the export market: "we're making progress,but it's tough." He cites the fact that most European countries are also **wine** producers. "It takes a lot of convincing to get people to accept that our **wines** are as good as theirs, and that the price is right." Price is a very real problem, with Europe racked by recession and serious competition coming from Australia. "What sells in Europe now is in the |pounds~3.99 to |pounds~5.99 (about $6 to $9 a bottle) range. Our production costs are high, and it makes it hard to fit in that range. The Australians either have lower production costs or are just willing to sell cheaply. It seems they have to export."

Like Tempe Relchardt, Weber emphasizes that breaking into the exportmarket is a long-term investment, both in time and money. "Wineries have to commit to the export market, and it will take at least five years to become established. If you want to be in it, you have to makea commitment."

Weber points out that wineries have an advantage in working with brokers, because they essentially share the costs with other wineries represented by an export agent. Still, it can be expensive. "Trade shows and consumer fairs are very important in Europe--the main venue. They are expensive but necessary, because after all you've got to show off your **wines.**" He praises the **Wine** Institute for its help in organizing trade shows.

Wineries that are in the export market have various motivations. While the larger producers look on export as an important income generator, many "boutique" wineries are more interested in the exposure and image. At Flora Springs, John Komes says "our philosophy is to make astatement that we exist and that we belong in the finer locations." He goes on to say that "we don't see Europe as a 'dumping ground.' Some wineries have used export to get rid of **wines** they'd rather not see anymore. We concentrate on our higher-priced **wines,** and make a quality statement." While the market is growing slowly, he accepts that "it's not really a profit center for us." For him, an export broker isa key player in maintaining the "continuity of connection" with foreign buyers, something which is essential but which takes more time than he can devote personally.

Joel Peterson, winemaker and co-owner of **Ravenswood,** takes a slightly different approach. "As things get tighter in this country, with taxation, competition, and fewer **wine** drinkers, export is the way to broaden your market. It enhances your reputation to be sold internationally, but sales are the important motivation."

Ravenswood has been exporting for about three years, with broker Tempe Relchardt. According to Peterson, "we can sell as

much overseas aswe want to sell. Demand isn't a problem for us."

Still, building the market has been a "very slow, arduous process. It's been an interesting experience." Currently, export sales represent about seven to ten percent of **Ravenswood's** volume. "It's a small scale experiment, but it has the potential to be very important in the overall process."

Looking at export as an important part of the overall marketing plan, **Ravenswood** has concentrated its efforts primarily at the low end ofthe price spectrum, with its popular "Vintner's Blend" **wines,** which compete head-to-head with local **wines,** as well as the increasingly popular Australians. As a result, **Ravenswood** has already passed throughthe expensive "build-up" phase, and now finds export to be as profitable as out-of-state markets in this country.

How should other wineries look at export? According to Joel Peterson, "export is important to California overall. It's a market that has been neglected in the past. In the 1970 sales were so easy that people didn't need to work so hard developing a distant market."

Tempe Reichardt echoes his opinion. "Export is not a simple solutionto the problem of depleting inventory, but it can be an increasinglyimportant avenue for wineries who are looking toward the future."

(Rene Rondeau is a 23-year veteran of the **wine** trade. He now is a custom watchmaker in Corte Madera, Calif.)

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The Zen of 'Zin' The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia) August 25, 1993, Wednesday, FINAL EDITION

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The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

August 25, 1993, Wednesday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FOOD; **WINE;** Pg. D3

LENGTH: 637 words

HEADLINE: The Zen of 'Zin'

BYLINE: ANTHONY GISMONDI; VANSUN

BODY:
Experts disagree on the origin of the zinfandel grape. Some say it's Italian, others claim it's Hungarian, while still others think the former Yugoslavia may be zinfandel's first home.

@bodyrag:Whatever its past, today's zinfandel is almost exclusively an American affair, grown mainly in the vineyards of northern California.

Normally this alone would ensure its commercial success. But zinfandel sales remain more cult than corner store; the only zinfandel consumed in measurable quantity is the sweet, pink "blush" variety.

It's a completely different style of "zin" that interests the more experienced taster. Real zinfandel is a big, dark, plush **wine.** The best boast a huge brambly fruit character that is often laced with pepper and spice overtones. Zinfandel's naturally high alcohol and its affinity for American oak casks serve to further enrich the **wine's** character on the palate.

Throw in some old vines - producing low quantity but high quality grapes - and a long fermentation on the skins and you have the makings of a giant, blockbuster red that is not for the faint hearted.

If you're interested in knowing more, you're in luck. The current crop of zinfandels listed in B.C. liquor stores may be the best list to make it into B.C. in the last decade.

Here's a brief synopsis of my tasting tour of zinfandels, beginning with the general listed products.

Best bets include: the 1990 Fetzer Zinfandel ($ 10.15), a former Vancouver Sun **Wine** of the Week. A real crowd pleaser, it offers both extract and fruit in the same package.

The 1990 Chateau Souvrain ($ 12.95) is also a **wine** to investigate. Soft, supple and eminently drinkable, it represents very good value in this category.

The 1988 Parducci ($ 11.20) and the 1991 Sutter Home ($ 8.95) round out the general-listing "zins." Both rely primarily on a lighter style, where the emphasis is on fruit, not wood.

Among the dozen or so zinfandels currently listed in specialty stores, some top quality **wines** stand out.

The 1989 Beringer Vineyards ($ 14.95) and the 1989 Preston Vineyards ($ 17.35) are both excellent values. The Beringer relies on a soft, oaky, spicy style to entice you, while the Preston has a much more fruity bent, pushing the oak subtly into the background.

The 1989 Fetzer Barrel Select ($ 17.60) sits just under the heavyweights with plenty of peppery extract to attract your attention, as does the 1991 **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend ($ 17.30), a **wine** that showed extremely well earlier this year at the Playhouse **Wine** Festival.

After that it's hard to choose between the old-vine **wines** of the 1991 De Loach Vineyards ($ 22.60), the 1988 Grgich Hills ($ 25.60) or the 1990 Kenwood Jack London ($ 22.60). The De Loach is perhaps the most intense **wine** with excellent extract. The Grgich charms you with its gorgeous sweet oak, and black cherry flavors. And the Kenwood offers plenty of plush, plum-like fruit to fill your glass.

The current show stopper on LDB shelves is the dramatic 1991 **Ravenswood** Sonoma Zinfandel ($ 27.40). This was the first

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A dream cellar, with no thought given to prices or availability The San Diego Union-Tribune July 29, 1993 Thursday

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The San Diego Union-Tribune

July 29, 1993 Thursday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. FOOD-12

LENGTH: 701 words

HEADLINE: A dream cellar, with no thought given to prices or availability

BYLINE: ROBERT WHITLEY, SEND QUESTIONS ABOUT this column to Robert Whitley, P.O. Box 2253, San Diego, CA 92112.

BODY:

Much has been made of the new Gallo Chardonnay that comes with a hefty price tag of $30 a bottle.

The **wine** has been released to a couple of very nice reviews that beg the question: Is it worth it? The answer isn't so easy.

Quality in the bottle is but one measure of a **wine.**

There is little doubt Gallo can make a good **wine.**

The company controls some of the finest **wine** grapes in California, employs an army of competent enologists and has the cash flow to buy a forest of the best French oak for barrels. What's missing from the Gallo price equation are prestige, a tradition of fine winemaking, romance, a certain je ne sais quoi. Consumers buy expensive **wines** for various reasons.

To impress friends is one of them.

The Gallo name on the bottle won't do that.

In fact, the impression might be the opposite. Gallo conjures up a vision of 50 years of jug **wine.**

With time, perhaps, the company's marketing geniuses might be able to alter that image.

From a marketing standpoint, that's a huge hill to climb. Ponying up the $30 ultimately is an individual decision for each consumer, but I think I'll pass. **Wine** wish lists The price of Gallo's Chardonnay raises another question repeated often by **wine** lovers: All things being equal, such as quality and relative value, which California **wines** are at the top of the heap? I have compiled personal rankings in several **wine** categories.

These are the **wines** I would purchase if availability and money were no object.

My recommendations are based upon current releases.

Suggested retail price is included. CHARDONNAY 1. Byron, Reserve ($18) 2. Hanzell ($24) 3. Lockwood, Partners' Reserve ($16) 4. Guenoc, Magoon Vineyard ($24) 5. Ferrari-Carano, Alexander Valley ($19) Best value under $15: Kunde; J. Lohr, Riverstone; Beringer, Reserve; Silverado; Byron, Santa Barbara. CABERNET 1. Pahlmeyer ($35) 2. Phelps, Backus ($30) 3. Rocking Horse, Robinson Vineyard ($24) 4. Spottswoode ($36) 5. Murphy-Goode, Estate ($18) Best value under $15: Phelps, Napa; Beringer, Knight's Valley; Meridian; Lockwood, Monterey; J. Lohr, Paso Robles Seven Oaks; Silverado; Alexander Valley Vineyards. RED MERITAGE 1. Phelps, Insignia ($35) 2. Kendall-Jackson, Cardinale ($50) 3. Opus One ($65) 4. Dominus ($45) 5. Sterling, Reserve ($45) Best value under $15: Lyeth; Cain Cuvee. WHITE MERITAGE 1. Caymus, Conundrum ($20) 2. Simi, Sendal ($20) 3. Flora Springs, Soliloquy ($20) 4. Merryvale ($12) 5. Carmenet, Reserve ($12) Best value under $10: Vichon, Chevrignon; Beringer; Lyeth. PINOT NOIR 1. Williams Selyem, Allen Vineyard ($40), Rochioli Vineyard ($40) 2. Robert Mondavi, Reserve ($35) 3. Calera, Mt. Harlan ($35) 4. Au Bon Climat, Benedict Vineyard ($30) 5. Saintsbury, Carneros ($17) Best value under $15: Saintsbury, Garnet; Calera, Central Coast; Meridian. MERLOT 1. Beringer, Howell Mountain ($27) 2. Matanzas Creek ($30) 3. Markham ($15) 4. Duckhorn, Three Palms ($25), Napa ($20) 5. Cuvaison ($24) Best value under $10: **Ravenswood,** Vintner's Blend. ZINFANDEL 1. **Ravenswood,** Dickerson ($13), Old Hill ($15) 2. Gary Farrell ($13) 3. Rocking Horse, Lamborn Vineyard ($12) 4. Ridge, Geyserville ($12) 5. Kenwood, Jack London ($12) Best value under $10: Kenwood, Sonoma; Chateau Souverain; **Ravenswood,** Vintner's Blend; J. Fritz; Caymus. SAUVIGNON BLANC 1. Rochioli, Russian River ($10) 2. Murphy-Goode, Estate ($9) 3. Matanzas Creek ($12) 4. Ferrari-Carano ($11) 5. Robert Mondavi, Reserve ($15) Best value under $7:

Kenwood; Kendall-Jackson; Geyser Peak; Ventana. SPARKLING 1. Schramsberg, J. Schram ($50) 2. Byron, NV Brut ($15) 3. Mumm Napa Valley, Winery Lake Brut ($24) 4. Scharffenberger, NV Brut ($16) 5. Domaine Chandon, Etolle ($24) Best value under $10: Culbertson. OTHER RED 1. Atlas Peak, Sanglovese ($24) 2. Atlas Peak, Consenso ($22) 3. Stags' Leap Winery, Petite Sirah ($16) 4. Meridian, Syrah ($15) 5. Cline Cellars, Oakley Cuvee ($12) Best value under $10: McDowell, Bistro Syrah; Fetzer, Red Table **Wine;** Preston, Faux Castel; Bonny Doon, Clos du Gilroy. OTHER WHITE 1. Phelps, Viognier ($25) 2. Calera, Viognier ($30) 3. Chalone, Pinot Blanc ($25) 4. Bonny Doon, Le Sophiste ($25) 5. Qupe, Marsanne ($14) Best value under $10: Lockwood, Semillon; Bonny Doon, Il Pescatore.

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ZINFANDEL IS TAKEN MORE SERIOUSLY THESE DAYS The Seattle Times June 30, 1993, Wednesday, Final Edition

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June 30, 1993, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: FOOD; TOM STOCKLEY; Pg. F3

LENGTH: 678 words

HEADLINE: ZINFANDEL IS TAKEN MORE SERIOUSLY THESE DAYS

BYLINE: BY TOM STOCKLEY

BODY:

Someone once described zinfandel to me as the "step-child of the **wine** industry." In many ways it is, for its origins are cloudy (although it is generally believed to be the primitivo grape of Italy) and it certainly doesn't belong to that strata of classic reds such as cabernet sauvignon or pinot noir.

But it tries hard to be liked with its frisky, forward style and fruit that reminds nearly everyone of raspberry. I like zinfandels most of the time because they are easy to drink and match up to so many foods. Right now those summertime hamburgers right off the grill just wouldn't be the same without zin.
Zinfandel is taken a lot more seriously these days, and a few winemakers have elevated it to its rightful position. Zinfandels from the likes of A. Ravanelli, Nalle and **Ravenswood** produce ooohs and ahhhs from **wine** lovers. Of those, the most accessible on the market is **Ravenswood,** a Sonoma County winery that specializes in it (making only small amounts of other **wines** such as chardonnay and merlot).

Joel Peterson, the winemaker and co-owner, was in Seattle last week, recalling how he began by making 327 cases in someone else's winery in the mid-1970s and is now producing 52,000 cases at his own facility.

One of his Seattle sales representatives jokingly asked him why he bothered to travel here "when his **wines** sell out anyway." There was truth to the question. Supermarkets generally carry his less-expensive but nicely made Vintner's Blend version of zinfandel and it sometimes runs out.

Wine shops often feature his special vineyard-designated zinfandels, each one with its own unique personality and style. They are extremely limited.

We started with the 1991 Vintner's Blend, then proceeded to taste and argue about which of the five different vineyard versions was best. It was never resolved, except to agree that it was like having five children, all different. Note: My comments are on the '91s which are just being released. If you find '90 vintage, fear not.

Ravenswood Vintner's Blend Zinfandel, $ 10: Peterson calls this, his least expensive, "accessible, appealing and affordable." He's right. It's got all the berry fruit and spice one could hope for in a full zinfandel.

Ravenswood Sonoma Zinfandel, $ 15: While this is a blend of several vineyards, much of it comes from the Dry Creek area where red grapes seem to flourish and show off their abundant fruit. Peterson refers to this as a "tipple" zin for reasons that are obvious when you sip.

Ravenswood Dickerson Zinfandel, $ 24: Not as heavy or robust as some but clearly showing a cedar, smokey character with some mint. Once again, raspberry is the overriding fruit.

Ravenswood Cooke Zinfandel, $ 24: This comes from the youngest vineyard, which literally had to be blasted out of the hillside because of the rocky terrain. The fruit leans more toward cherry with spice and almost cabernet flavors.

Ravenswood Old Hill Zinfandel, $ 27: Often cited as the cream of the crop, this comes from century-old zinfandel vines that

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Wimps Don't Drink Ravenswood Wines The San Francisco Chronicle JUNE 23, 1993, WEDNESDAY, FINAL EDITION

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JUNE 23, 1993, WEDNESDAY, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. 4/ZZ1; **WINE** Q&A

LENGTH: 407 words

HEADLINE: Wimps Don't Drink **Ravenswood Wines**

BYLINE: LARRY WALKER, Chronicle Staff Writer

BODY:
Q: I recently spotted a bumper sticker that read "WIMPY **WINES**" with a red circle and slash through the "WIMPY" -- the universal "no" sign, I guess you would call it. Does that bumper sticker come from a particular winery or is it some kind of group slogan? If it is a winery, I want to try to get one and I also want to buy some **wines** from a winery with a sense of humor.

* J. S., Berkeley

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A: The bumper sticker is from **Ravenswood** Winery in Sonoma County. And **Ravenswood** is no joke, either; it produces some of California's best Zinfandels.

Look for the **Ravenswood** Dickerson Vineyard Zin or Old Hill Zin. It makes a pretty good Cabernet Sauvignon, too.

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Q: I finally discovered a red **wine** I could drink but can't find it anymore. The name of the **wine** was Barbera. Is it still available? -- W. S., Lucerne

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A: I can't imagine why there would be a problem finding Barbera, which is a grape variety, not a brand of **wine.** There are about 10,000 acres of Barbera planted in California, with much of that production going into inexpensive jug **wines.** However, it is sometimes bottled as a single variety by some leading producers, including Louis Martini, Sebastiani, Montevina and Preston Vineyards.

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Q: You recently mentioned Gloria Ferrer Carneros Pinot Noir, which I haven't been able to find. Could you tell me where it is being sold? Also, what do you think of Morgan California Pinot Noir, 1991? -- R. S., Oakland

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A: The Gloria Ferrer was just being released in mid-April, so it may not have reached stores near you. However, it is now in full distribution and you should have no trouble finding it at any major **wine** shop. I have tasted the Morgan Pinot Noir and like it very much, although I like their Monterey Pinot Noir even more.

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Q: Several years ago I received a 1.5-liter bottle of Chateau Montelena Sonoma Cabernet Sauvignon, 1974. Am I saving this in vain? Should I drink it now or dump it?

* P.D., Brentwood

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A: Some '74 California Cabs should have been drunk a few years ago -- dumping might be extreme, but many of them are over the hill. However, I checked with Chateau Montelena in Calistoga and they feel their Sonoma Cabernet is drinking very well now,

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REBORN: A FAITH IN ZINFANDEL Plain Dealer (Cleveland, Ohio) June 16, 1993 Wednesday, FINAL/ SPORTS FINAL/ALL

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June 16, 1993 Wednesday, FINAL/ SPORTS FINAL/ALL

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. 2E

LENGTH: 753 words

HEADLINE: REBORN: A FAITH IN ZINFANDEL

BYLINE: By MICHAEL DRESSER; BALTIMORE SUN

BODY:
The battle is over and zinfandel has won.

Ten years ago it was a grape variety on the road to banality, if not outright extinction. California grape growers couldn't dig up their old zinfandel vines fast enough. Vineyard land planted in anything other than chardonnay or cabernet sauvignon was "underutilized."

Like Bonny Prince Charlie escaping the English wrath, honest red zinfandel was forced to adopt a disguise to survive. Torn from its colorful dark skin, it produced something erroneously called "white zinfandel." It became a joke in the tasting rooms of California that tourists would reject a proffered glass of **wine** if it wasn't pink, asserting that they knew what zinfandel looked like and that red stuff wasn't it.

As many wineries ceased making red zinfandel, it became the specialty of a few fanatics - Paul Draper of Ridge Vineyards, Joel Peterson of **Ravenswood,** Jerry Seps of Storybook Mountain.

These individuals knew what so many of their colleagues did not - that despite their lack of French pedigree, those gnarled old zinfandel vines could produce **wines** that were as exciting as any in the world.

Their faith was religious, and the religion has spread. **Wine** drinkers increasingly are turning to zinfandel as an alternative to cabernet, rather than a step down. Zinfandel specialists such as Rosenblum, Nalle and Peachy Canyon now make **wines** that collectors seek as avidly as they once chased after rare cabernets.

So respectable has zinfandel become that George Riedel, the Austrian glassmaker who fashions glasses specifically tailored for the world's greatest **wine** varieties, has just added a zinfandel glass to his lineup of excellent products.

Regrettably, there are still many who believe red zinfandel is merely a poor man's cabernet. Admittedly, the greatest cabernets can reach levels of complexity and durability zinfandel never touches, but there are precious few of these prodigies - and they'll cost you several semesters of tuition. For under $20, your chances of buying a truly delightful **wine** are much better in the zinfandel aisle than the cabernet corner.

Zinfandel's advantages aren't limited to price. They need less aging than cabernet, and they go better with grilled foods. Seldom are their fruit flavors masked by oak. The point isn't that **wine** drinkers should avoid cabernet, but that they ought not choose it reflexively when such an attractive alternative exists.

Perhaps no vintage in California's history has done so much to burnish the reputation of zinfandel as 1990, which produced an abundance of classic **wines.**

The 1991 vintage, now coming on the market, is not the equal of its illustrious predecessor, but there's little reason for complaint. Judging by a dozen early arrivals, 1991 was a better-than-average vintage that will keep the good times rolling.

One winery that is clearly a zinfandel superstar is Rosenblum Cellars. So far it hasn't won the fanatic following of Ridge or **Ravenswood,** but word is spreading fast.

If you prefer your zinfandel structured and stylish, with rippling lean muscle and athletic grace, try Rosenblum's Contra Costa County bottling. If you prefer a warm, rich, comforting **wine** with a silky texture, go for the Sonoma County version. If you fancy the burly bear-hug of a truly massive zinfandel, the Brandlin Ranch bottling from Napa Valley's Mount Veeder district might be just the ticket. Any of these 1991 Rosenblums are excellent.

(If you want to try a truly exceptional zinfandel that synthesizes the best of all three, look for the celestial 1990 Rosenblum

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WINE TALK;A Feud and a Book Unplug the Cork On the Gallo Empire The New York Times April 14, 1993, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

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April 14, 1993, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section C; Page 1; Column 1; Living Desk

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HEADLINE: WINE TALK;
A Feud and a Book Unplug the Cork On the Gallo Empire

BYLINE: By FRANK J. PRIAL

BODY:
IN the spring of 1983, Joseph Gallo Jr., the younger brother of Ernest and Julio Gallo, opened a cheese factory near his home in Livingston, Calif. Joseph Gallo was a rancher and farmer who had grown rich selling grapes to his brothers' E. & J. Gallo winery, 40 miles north of Livingston in Modesto. He envisioned the cheese project as a way to use surplus milk from his large dairy farm.

In 1986, the winery sued Joseph Gallo, who had also previously managed vineyards for his brothers, for trademark infringement. And for the first time, from documents and depositions, the public got an inside look at one of the biggest wineries in the world and the remarkable man who created it, Ernest Gallo.

Using a mountain of court documents, old newspapers and records and independent research, Ellen Hawkes, a freelance writer, has written "Blood and **Wine:** The Unauthorized Story of the Gallo **Wine** Empire" (Simon & Schuster, $25), an engrossing account of the Gallo family and their **wine** business.

Ms. Hawkes focuses on the battle over Joseph Gallo Jr.'s use of the Gallo name and his counterclaims that his brothers had cheated him out of a one-third interest in the winery business. Along the way she tells the story of the immigrant family's rise from obscurity in the dusty farm towns of California's Central Valley to its overwhelming pre-eminence in the American **wine** business.

Like so many immigrant sagas, it's a colorful tale. Here is the boys' uncle, Mike Gallo, whose confidence schemes landed him in San Quentin, and who was later prosecuted for bootlegging; he ended his days living in a trailer in Nevada, where he regularly received cases of Gallo **wine** from his nephews. Here, too, is Giuseppe (Joseph) Gallo Sr., the father of Ernest, Julio and Joseph Jr., a saloonkeeper who turned grape grower with the onset of Prohibition. He became a major supplier of **wine** grapes to Eastern markets, which sold them to home **wine** makers who were allowed to make 200 gallons of **wine** a year.

Joseph Gallo Sr., according to Ms. Hawkes, was a moody, uncommunicative man who mercilessly drove his older sons; in 1932, shortly before Prohibition ended, he bought a rundown grape ranch near Fresno, Calif. He moved there with his wife, Susie, and on June 21, 1933, shot her to death and then turned the gun on himself. Police ruled it a murder-suicide, but no one, Ms. Hawkes writes, has ever determined why it happened.

According to the official Gallo history, Ernest, 24 at the time, and Julio, 23, were farm boys so ignorant of the **wine** business that, with the repeal of Prohibition, they had to learn how to make **wine** from a pamphlet borrowed from the Modesto public library. Ms. Hawkes contends that Joseph Gallo Sr. founded the Gallo **Wine** Company in 1909 and that the company Ernest and Julio claim to have begun in 1933 was merely a continuation of that business.

That's the position that the lawyers for Joseph Gallo Jr. later took when they argued that Ernest Gallo, acting as executor of his parents' estate, excluded his then 13-year-old brother from the new business. Eventually, though, the winery won both suits. The countersuit charging that Joseph Jr. was entitled to a share of the winery business was dismissed in the Federal District Court for Eastern California on the grounds that no fraud could be proven. A year later, a different judge in the same court ruled that the cheese name represented an infringement on the Gallo trademark, and Joseph Gallo Jr. was prohibited from using his family name. Both opinions were upheld by the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in February 1992.

Ms. Hawkes sketches the picture of a family riven by feuds and unhappiness. Along the way she recounts the stories of Thunderbird, Gallo's notorious fortified **wine** that critics have charged is targeted at inner-city markets; the extremely aggressive tactics of Gallo salesmen; the company's political clout, and its efforts to shed its jug-**wine** image.

Most of these stories have been known in the **wine** industry for years. In fact, the Gallo story is not too different from the

histories of a number of other California **wine** families. The story of John Daniel, the founder of Inglenook, was the subject of a book three years ago; the Mondavis and the Sebastianis, two other prominent Italian-American **wine** clans, also suffered through highly publicized family feuds in recent years.

What sets the Gallos apart is a matter of scale. One out of every four bottles of **wine** sold in this country is made by Gallo. Their wineries in Modesto and Livingston are the size of oil refineries. Their production is so large -- more than 67 million cases of **wine,** brandy and other **wine**-based drinks last year -- that they make their own bottles. In some years, they buy almost half of the entire California **wine**-grape crop.

Being privately owned, the company discloses neither its income, estimated to be more than $800 million last year, nor the family affairs.

Central to Ms. Hawkes's story is the feud between the brothers, but that is really a sideshow. This is really a story about power, about how one man, Ernest Gallo, achieved it, how he maintains it, and how he plans to pass it on. It is the story of an astonishing achievement, the creation of the largest **wine** company in the world in the face of immense odds. It is the story of how neither Julio nor Joseph Gallo Jr. are any match for Ernest Gallo. Nor, for that matter, is anyone else.

Ms. Hawkes's narrative is informed by her evident dislike for Ernest Gallo. Instead of a dispassionate study of ambition and the immigrant dream, the book ends up as melodrama. Perhaps it takes a connoisseur of power to understand what drives a man like Ernest Gallo. Machiavelli, the first modern student of the subject, would have appreciated the man who makes Gallo **wine.** Five hundred years ago, he wrote: "Anyone who determines to act in all circumstances the part of a good man must come to ruin among so many who are not good."

Not that Ms. Hawkes's story disappoints. She's particularly good on the Gallos and politics. One delightful passage traces Ernest Gallo's relationship with Senator Alan Cranston, the California Democrat, whom he first backed in 1968. According to the book, the Senator returned the favor in 1978 when he guided a bill through Congress giving the Gallos' many heirs a 10-year payout of estate taxes, a perquisite previously available only to family corporations with fewer than 15 members.

Eleven years later, the Gallos are still nurturing Mr. Cranston. In 1989, Ernest Gallo, Ms. Hawkes writes, arranged for him to receive 20 checks for campaign donations, each for $1,000, from 10 family members.

Not that all the Gallo eggs are in the Cranston basket. According to Ms. Hawkes's book, Citizen Action, a Washington-based public-action group, disclosed that in 1989 and 1990, the Gallos contributed $294,100 to Federal candidates (mostly Democrats), more money than any other American family contributed.

Still, Ms. Hawkes's unflagging indignation is wearing. We need another book about Ernest Gallo, a fair but critical biography. Too bad Machiavelli isn't still around. He must have known a few 16th-century Ernest Gallos to have written:

"The prince needs to be a fox that he may know how to deal with traps, and a lion that he may frighten the wolves."

TASTINGS

Ravenswood Zinfandel 1990 Vintner's Blend; about $7.

Ravenswood Winery, just outside the town of Sonoma, Calif., in Sonoma County, usually specializes in zinfandel, particularly in single-vineyard zinfandels. Such **wines** are made entirely with grapes picked from one specific vineyard, like the Dickerson Vineyard in the Napa Valley. These can be powerful, tannic **wines** that need time to develop.

The Vintner's Blend is not from a single vineyard but is just what the name implies, a blend of **wines** from various sources. Some of it may be **wine** made at **Ravenswood** and some of it **wine** made elsewhere. The blend can change from year to year but the product will always meet the exacting standards of the **wine** maker, Joel Peterson. This Vintner's Blend **wine** has the rich berry-like flavor characteristic of zinfandel and a hint of the intensity of **Ravenswood's** single-vineyard **wines.** But it is lighter in body, softer and less tannic, so it is approachable now.

GRAPHIC: Photo: Ernest Gallo, of E. & J. Gallo, with his wife, Amelia. (J. Patrick Forden) (pg. C8)

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Zinfandel: as versatile as its producers.; Wine & Spirits; Culinary Currents; Column Nation's Restaurant News February 22, 1993

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Nation's Restaurant News

February 22, 1993

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LENGTH: 810 words

HEADLINE: Zinfandel: as versatile as its producers.;
Wine & Spirits;
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Column

BYLINE: Hochstein, Mort

BODY:

ABSTRACT

Tribeca Grill **wine** director Daniel Johannes organized three zinfandel **wine** producers to speak at one of a series of **wine** dinners. The producers were Paul Draper, Joel Patterson and Doug Nalle. Diners were able to sample from each winery and all the **wines** demonstrated that they could stand in place of the more expensive Cabernet Sauvignon. Zinfandel popularity has grown since the 1970s when Sutter Home and Macayamas began bottling the varietal.

If ever anyone needed to experience the many faces of Zinfandel, the opportunity was available at Tribeca Grill one recent winter evening.

Wine director Daniel Johnnes, in a move that may set a troublesomeprecedent, brought together three outstanding and varied Zinfandel producers for a **wine** dinner. Most **wine** dinners usually have just one speaker, but this was the start of a series featuring several winemakers each evening.

Guests could sample Paul Draper's intense and concentrated Ridge Zinfandels; Joel Peterson's burly, rounded, honeyed tar **Ravenswoods**; and Doug Nalle's rich and complex bottlings. In the words of Johnnes,they "are three guys determined not to make the same **wine** (lack of distinction being all too common in California **wine** these days), and they are outstanding in what they do."

The '91s were first up, and the samples, though different in style, showed '91 a powerful and rich vintage that like '90, will be a keeper. The '90s were a bit more rounded, less fleshy with more visiblefruit.

Nalle makes only zin, while Ridge and **Ravenswood** have fuller lines. Dinners were able to try the '90 Ridge Santa Cruz Chardonnay and **Ravenswood's** '91 Sangiacomo vineyard bottling with grilled scallops. The **Ravenswood** had some of that inimitable French barnyard stink emblematic of good Burgundy, which Peterson prizes. He says he works to achieve the effect by keeping the **wine** on its less for a long time, approximately 11 months, and letting malolactic fermentation occur during that period. The Ridge was more subtle in scent and equally complex, somewhat more elegant.

All of these zins came from old vine vineyards that, though yielding less than 2 tons an acre, impart an unmatchable intensity to the grapes and the **wines** they produce. One of the features was **Ravenswood's** '86 Old Hill, a **wine** that brought a blush to the cheeks of Britishwine authority Michael Broadbent. Tasting it blind, Broadbent pronounced it one of the finest California Cabernets he'd ever sampled. Upon being corrected, he recouped by terming it one of the all-time great California **wines**.

Ravenswood's '82 Sonoma, heavy and full bodied, also figured in

aninternational incident when it was served to knowledgeable guests atLa Mission Haut Brion in Graves. The cellarmaster called it a "nicewine like a beautiful woman with too much makeup." To which sophistry another guest responded, "But isn't it true that we French like ourwomen with too much makeup?"

Peterson of **Ravenswood** originated the "No wimpy **wines**" slogan, a motif demonstrated in whatever he makes. It showed even in his dessert **wine**, a 1992 barrel sample late harvest Gewurztraminer. Ravenswooddoes not usually make dessert **wines**, but this limited bottling developed after Peterson was told of an isolated hilltop vineyard patrolled by man-hating goats. They'd already broken one visitor's leg, but Peterson, never a wimp, toured the vineyard in a four-wheel-drive, escaped the goats and ordered the grapes harvested.

Peterson says the **wine** solves a problem he often faces at winemaker dinners. His hosts, anxious for a **wine** to go with dessert, will often throw in an older Cabernet, which he describes as "a hopeless match." With his goat-vineyard Gewurtz, Peterson says he can now ask meal makers to put the older Cab to better use.

Zinfandel, whose origins are a matter of conjecture, is California's own native grape although there are some historians who relate it to the Italian Primitivo. However, there was zin in California before any record of Primitivo in Italy. With proper aging, a mature zin can easily be mistaken for a Cabernet.

At the turn of the century, several California wineries promoted zin under the name "claret," which was the term British **wine** fanciers have long applied to Bordeaux reds. Zin or claret was, Draper--the godfather of modern zin -- told his fellow diners, very popular until the seventies, when the public tired of the portlike style favored by winemakers of the period.

When Draper, followed by such wineries as Sutter Home and Mayacamas and, later, Cary Gott at Montevina, began making **wines** that were muscular rather than simple and pleasant, Zinfandel developed a new following. It is a versatile **wine**, as Johnnes demonstrated with his three-winemaker lineup, and it makes a great alternative to the more costly Cabernet Sauvignon.

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TWO DOZEN MOST MEMORABLE OF '92;REDS AND WHITES RANGE FROM BARGAINS TO YIKES! The Commercial Appeal (Memphis) January 6, 1993, Wednesday,

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January 6, 1993, Wednesday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FUN FOOD & FACES, Pg. E6, **Wine**

LENGTH: 884 words

HEADLINE: TWO DOZEN MOST MEMORABLE OF '92;
REDS AND WHITES RANGE FROM BARGAINS TO YIKES!

BYLINE: Fredric Koeppel

BODY:
I didn't taste every **wine** in the world last year, nor even every **wine** made in America or even California.

But I did write about more than 600 **wines** in this weekly column, and now comes the time to perform one of my favorite tasks, choosing which of those **wines** made the greatest impression or imparted the greatest pleasure.

Now it would be easy just to take a group of **wines** from several of the old **wine** tastings I attended last year and say, "These are the ones." Easy, and unfair. The point of this exercise is to choose products released last year and still, if possible, available on retail shelves.

First, a list of 12 white **wines:**

-- Murphy-Goode Reserve Fume 1991, Alexander Valley. About $ 15. More than a bargain at the price.

-- Clos du Bois Flintwood Chardonnay 1990, Dry Creek Valley. $ 18.50. As the name promises, this lush chardonnay rests of a bed of stones and chalk, providing pleasing complexity.

-- Ridge Chardonnay 1990, Santa Cruz Mountains. $ 20. For its drama, resonance, impeccable balance and sheer deliciousness, the price seems ludicrously low.

-- Babcock 11 Oaks Sauvignon Blanc 1990, Santa Ynez Valley. About $ 22. Almost better than the grape deserves, with the body of a chardonnay and the litheness and smoky subtle blackberry fruit of a great Loire Valley white.

-- Robert Mondavi Reserve Chardonnay 1990, Napa Valley. About $ 26. Perhaps not up to the 1988 version, this Mondavi chardonnay nonetheless combines richness and spiciness with overwhelming exotic fruit in a package of great style and substance.

-- Joseph Phelps Viognier 1991, Napa Valley. About $ 26. Honey and ashes, flowers and minerals, incredibly rich pear-fig and melon fruit. A great achievement.

-- Grgich Hills Chardonnay 1988, Napa Valley. About $ 30. Great polish and sophistication, great "bottom" in the sense of complex depth of fruit, oak and acid; impeccable balance.

-- Chalone Chardonnay 1990, Monterey County. About $ 30. The best Chalone chardonnay since 1986, and a perfect example of its style that blends concentration with generosity.

-- Mas de Daumas Blanc de Blancs 1991. About $ 37. Highly unusual, a delightful and intriguing combination of overwhelming floral qualities with leaves and stony elements below.

-- Meursault La Narvaux 1989, Michelot-Buisson. About $ 60, big price jump here; rich, roasted, nutty, buttery and chewy, spicy; a big chardonnay that manages to be exquisite.

-- Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru 1990, Louis Jadot. About $ 75. For sheer size and substance, this truly grand white burgundy humbles the drinker.

-- Zind Humbrecht Rotenberg Wintzenheim 1986, Tokay Pinot Gris. About $ 110 a half-bottle (gasp! choke!). If everyone's ship came in, we could indulge in thimbles of this startling nectar whenever we wanted.

The list of 12 red **wines** was more difficult; I had to cut a preliminary heat of 24 in half.

-- Conn Creek Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 1987, Napa Valley. About $ 21. An exceptionally powerful and weighty cabernet, exhibiting authority and substance yet delicious with spice and intense fruit and plush in texture.

-- **Ravenswood** Old Hill Zinfandel 1990, Sonoma Valley. About $ 24. Defines what large-framed, black-hearted, mountain-rooted, old-fashioned zinfandels are all about.

-- Robert Mondavi Reserve Pinot Noir 1990, Napa Valley. About $ 28. The best Mondavi Reserve Pinot since 1986; smooth, suave, satiny, earthy, seductive, pinpoint balance, beautiful clarity of fruit; California can make great pinot noir.

-- **Ravenswood** Sangiacomo Merlot 1990, Carneros. About $ 28. Many California and Northwest merlots impressed me in 1992, but this many-layered thing outclassed them all.

-- Brindisi Rosso Riserva Speciale 1986, Santachiara. About $ 32. A tremendously ripe, earthy fleshy red **wine** with elements of hazelnuts and vivid raspberry-plum fruit and undeniable substance.

-- Shafer Hillside Select Cabernet Sauvignon 1987, Stag's Leap District. About $ 35. A classic product, both combining everything of lusciousness with everything of stoutness.

-- Hermitage "Monier de la Sizeranne" 1990, Chapoutier. About $ 38. A tribute to the best of the Rhone Valley, made from vines 45 to 90 years old; inky, massive, concentrated, assertive; defines profundity.

-- Ridge Monte Bello Cabernet Sauvignon 1990, Santa Cruz Mountains. Barrel sample. Estimated price, $ 45-$ 50. This may be the best Monte Bello since 1985; even this young, it displays a rich seductive nose, with oak, vanilla and blue plumes; it's intense and luscious in the mouth, minerals, forest, bell-ringing acid and tannin. Another great achievement from this great winery.

-- Blagny "La Piece sous la Bois" 1988, Domaine Joseph Matrot. Lovely to look at, delightful to hold and maybe even heaven to kiss. About $ 53.

-- Chateau Lynch-Bages 1989, Pauillac. About $ 54. Defines what this superb vintage in Bordeaux is all about.

-- Cote Rotie Lalandonne 1989, Rene Rostaing. About $ 58. Another great Rhone **wine;** dense, chewy, meaty, smoked bacon, oak and tannin in spades, wild fruit but a texture like rose petals. Rates several "wows!"

-- Bonnes-Mares Grand Cru 1990, Louis Jadot. About $ 85. Intensely velvety, fathomless, dark, incredible potential; old-fashioned winemaking from Burgundy.

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THE BEST AND WORST OF THE YEAR IN WINE The Seattle Times January 6, 1993, Wednesday, Final Edition

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January 6, 1993, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: FOOD; TOM STOCKLEY; Pg. F4

LENGTH: 693 words

HEADLINE: THE BEST AND WORST OF THE YEAR IN **WINE**

BYLINE: BY TOM STOCKLEY

BODY:

In looking back, 1992 wasn't a bad year for **wine.** In fact, despite that nasty phylloxera nibbling on vine roots and rainy vintages in Europe, we continued to have great values in **wine** and the Northwest soared in quality like never before. And we had fun observing it all.

Here's my look back at the best (and sometimes worst) of the past year:

Source for the best buys in **wine** today: It continues to be Chile, with other countries such as Argentina and Australia close on its heels. But Chilean producers such as Santa Rita, Santa Monica, Walnut Crest and Cousino-Macul keep right on shipping those good values north.

Best **wine** book of the year: There were many epic volumes as well as elaborate coffee-table tomes, but none is more useful than the revised "The New Connoisseurs' Handbook of California **Wines.**"

Classiest bottling: It has to be to R.H. Phillips for its tall, slender, Italian-inspired bottlings in the 500 milliliter size.

Most improved Washington **wine:** Tagaris. Admittedly it had a long way to go, but check out the winery's 1990 Chardonnay and the sparkling 1988 Blanc de Noirs Brut at about $ 10.

Most welcome newcomer in our midst: William Hill, who abandoned Napa Valley for Oregon's **wine** country and is already playing a major role here in the Northwest. Pay attention to his Van Duzer brand from Oregon, particularly the chardonnay.

How-not-to-handle-**wine** award: Goes to the airline freight handler in New York who dropped the first case of Nouveau Beaujolais, sending the much-anticipated **wine** dribbling down the drain.

Most exciting moment for me: Being part of the judging panel that awarded Hogue Cellar's Semillon the sweepstakes for best white in the San Francisco Fair **Wine** Competition. It was not only a great moment for Hogue, but validated what a lot of us have felt for a long time: that semillon could be the next "hot" white.

Most fun corks in the business: Saddleback Cellars, which has printed "Giddyup" on their corks.

Most exciting "new" **wine** grape: I'd have to give the award to syrah, a very old grape in other parts of the world, but really coming into its own in California and Washington. Examples: Columbia Winery's here in Washington and those made in California by Preston, McDowell Valley and the new Sobon Estate from the Shenandoah Valley.

Most ambitious **wine** tasting with the most helpful results: The Northwest Oyster **Wine** Competition which gave us the best **wines** for oysters. From Washington: The 1990 Snoqualmie Fume Blanc, 1991 Washington Hills Semillon-Chardonnay, 1991 French Creek Cellars Dry Gewurztraminer and three from Chateau Ste. Michelle, the 1990 Fume Blanc, 1991 Cold Creek Vineyard Chardonnay and 1991 Chenin Blanc.

Most fun **wine** tourist attraction: The new Spirit of Washington train, the dinner/**wine** choo-choo that leaves Renton and chugs its way to Chateau Ste. Michelle. The food is great and scenery fine, but I still think they could toss in a free glass of **wine** along the way (you have to purchase your own in addition to the cost of the trip).

Greatest Washington red released this year: For me it was the 1989 Leonetti Cabernet Sauvignon, a spectacular **wine** of complexity and elegance.

Best comeback for a grape: Zinfandel. It's red again and doing better than ever under the labels of **Ravenswood,** Villa Mt. Eden, Ridge, Rafanelli and, for a good value, Seghesio.

Biggest ripoff: Some of the "super Tuscan reds" (blends of sangiovese and cabernet) that go for more than $ 20 when you can still buy a good chianti from the same region for under $ 10.

Most generous **wine** collector: Dr. Belding Scribner, who emptied out his fabled cellar of great **wines** and donated it to Poncho's annual **wine** auction.

Correction: In last Wednesday's tip of the week, the price for Domaine des Astruc was inadvertently omitted. It should have read "about $ 5."

Now offered on Infoline, Tom Stockley gives weekly tips and advice for choosing **wines.** To hear the recorded messages, call 464-2000 on a touch-tone phone and punch in category **WINE** (9463). Calls to Infoline, a telephone information service of The Seattle Times, are free in the greater Seattle area.

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A la Carte;A New Life Looms for Wings Point Restaurant The New York Times December 6, 1992, Sunday, Late Edition - Final

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December 6, 1992, Sunday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section 13LI; Page 21; Column 1; Long Island Weekly Desk

LENGTH: 1202 words

HEADLINE: A la Carte;
A New Life Looms for Wings Point Restaurant

BYLINE: By RICHARD JAY SCHOLEM

BODY:
WINGS POINT on Three Mile Harbor in East Hampton has a magnificent setting. In the late 1980's, when the waterfront restaurant was at its peak, diners watched sailboats skimming over the blue water, nautical flags gusting in the wind, sea birds gliding by and spectacular golden sunsets.

But in recent years Wings Point came upon bad times. As its financial problems accelerated, the quality of food declined, and the restaurant fell into disrepair.

Next spring a revitalized restaurant at will emerge. The East Hampton Point eating place, along with 12 adjacent cottages and its 45-boat marina, have been purchased by Jerry Della Femina and his wife, Judy Licht; Ben and Bonnie Krupinski, and Larry and Diane Dunst.

Another partner is Drew Nieporent of the TriBeCa Grill and Montrachet in Manhattan, who teamed with Mr. Della Femina last summer to create the enormously successful Della Femina's in East Hampton. Mr. Nieporent will act in a similar capacity at the yet-to-be-named new restaurant. Commenting on Mr. Nieporent's role, Mr. Della Femina said:

"Drew is the best young restaurateur in America today. We will rely on his palate and his ability to recruit, hire and train people, set up the menu, design the kitchen and attract great chefs."

The site, which was purchased in April and vacated by its former owner on Oct. 31, is undergoing extensive renovations. A new kitchen is being constructed, and the dining room is being remodeled to eliminate all obstructions, enabling diners at every table to have water views.

Mr. Della Femina and his partners indicated that they wanted to make the former Wings Point one of the Hamptons' showplaces, but added, "We also aim to make the food as good as the view."

Among the other changes contemplated at the 200-seat restaurant, which will feature imaginative seafood dishes, is an increased emphasis on outdoor dining and a longer season than the present Memorial Day-to- Labor Day schedule. Up to 75 diners will be seated outdoors, and the restaurant will stay open most of the year.

The entire complex at East Hampton Point is also being upgraded. The cottages are being redecorated, a swimming pool will be constructed, and tennis courts are planned.

The restaurant is scheduled to open in April or May.

In the high-flying 80's, when fancy French **wines** and cutting-edge California varietals from tiny boutique wineries were popular, zinfandel, America's own red, fell out of favor. So-called white zinfandel, a sweet pink **wine** made by barely crushing the skins of the grapes from which zinfandel gets its ruby-red color, also caused widespread confusion. Some **wine** drinkers thought zinfandel was a white or pink **wine.**

California growers tore out many acres of old zinfandel vines and planted more trendy varieties like cabernet sauvignon, pinot noir and merlot. The consumption and price of zinfandel sagged.

Now the fine fruity California red, which is so full of flavor and bouquet, is making a comeback. Its revival is being

acknowledged by Conrad's, at 326 West Jericho Turnpike in Huntington (427-9751), where a two-month celebration of the outstanding 1990 vintage is being held this month and next.

Two entree specials, one with a red zinfandel sauce and the other made from white, will be featured daily. Typical dishes are braised lamb shanks Milanese over saffron risotto with a Napa Valley zinfandel sauce and pan-roasted breast of pheasant salad with pecan butter ravioli and a light Buehler white zinfandel sauce.

A wide choice of 1987, 1988, 1989 and 1990 late-harvest light, medium and full-bodied-style red zinfandels, priced from $18 to $32 a bottle, as well as white zinfandels in the $18 and $19 category, are being offered at Conrad's this month and next.

Most zinfandels are still modestly priced in comparison to cabernets, Merlots and pinot noirs. Among the choices at Conrad's are Caymus ($24), Round Hill ($18), Kent Rosenblum ($26) and Summit Lake "Howell Mountain" ($24).

BEER TASTINGS: Canterbury Ales, Oyster Bar and Grill, 46 Audrey Avenue, Oyster Bay (922-3614), will hold a "spirit of the season" tasting from 6 to 10 P.M. on Dec. 15. Bill Newman of Newman's Albany Ales and Mike Vlatale of the Brooklyn Brewery will speak on styles and types of Christmas and holiday beers.

The informal event costs $15 in advance and $20 at the door. Among the 11 beers to be sampled is Samiclaus, a Swiss Christmas brew known as the strongest beer in the world.

Catamount Christmas beer from Vermont, Sierra Nevada "celebration" Christmas beer and Anchor Brewing Christmas beer, both from California, are among the selections. All the snacks to be served are made with beer, including ale-battered onion rings and stout-and-pepper-cured beef.

The five-week-old Adam's Grill in Roslyn Heights is another restaurant riding the California cuisine bandwagon, but with a twist. The new 155-seat restaurant, at 388 Willis Avenue (621-3636), is a California-Southwestern hybrid. A large wood-burning grill and rotisserie add the California touch to chicken, fish and meat. The chicken is cooked on the rotisserie, and suckling pig, lamb, steak, swordfish, salmon and tuna are grilled, but all garnishes and sauces are Southwestern.

Corn-centered accompaniments abound, and cilantro and other herbs and spices common in Southwestern-style cooking are featured.

Entrees range from $12.50 to $19.50. The restaurant is owned by Carlo Lanza, who is also its chef and owns Sotto Luna across the street.

OPENINGS: Cold Spring Harbor Cafe, 134 Main Street, Cold Spring Harbor (367-6060), is a casual American cafe with some Italian nuances. The restaurant offers a $10.75 early bird dinner, an $8.75 Sunday brunch and complete daily lunches for $6.99. It is open daily, except on Tuesdays, for lunch and dinner. Live classical music is featured on Wednesdays from 1 to 3 P.M.

The owners are David and Paula Mucci, who were at Due Torri in Hauppauge before purchasing the Cold Spring Harbor Inn and opening the Cold Spring Harbor Cafe there.

CLOSINGS: Aurelio's Pasta Cafe, 600 Portion Road, Lake Ronkonkoma.

WINE TASTINGS: La Mascotte, 3 Crooked Hill Road, Commack (499-6446), is holding a **wine**-tasting meal at 5 P.M. today. A selection of St. Julien Bordeaux **wines** will be offered. The meal costs $50 a person, plus tax and tip.

In Huntington, Conrad's plans two **wine**-tasting meals this month. The first, to be held on Tuesday, will feature the **wines of Ravenswood,** and the second, on Dec. 15, will offer Sterling **wines.**

A Meritage seminar and dinner are scheduled for next year, as are tasting meals that will offer the **wines** of Caymus, Calera, Chalk Hill, Montelena, Beringer, Kalin and Chateau St. Jean.

A schedule of all tastings will be available by the middle of the month. Most **wine** meals at Conrad's cost $65, including tip and tax.

A free holiday concert at Palmer Vineyards on Saturday and next Sunday will feature vocal and instrumental music of the season. The students and faculty from the Eastern School of Music will perform from 1 to 3 P.M. A portion of all **wine** sales on both days will be donated to the school. Palmer Vineyards is on Sound Avenue in Aquebogue.

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WINE; Color your holiday table red, white, and rose The Boston Herald November 15, 1992 Sunday

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November 15, 1992 Sunday

SECTION: MAGAZINE; Pg. 19

LENGTH: 861 words

HEADLINE: WINE;
Color your holiday table red, white, and rose

BODY:

The bird is back. The Thanksgiving bird, that is, and **wine** drinkers are facing their annual quandary: white, red, or rose?

The answer is: Any or all of them. Roast turkey, especially when stuffed, gravied and garnished, is one of those unusual dishes that lends itself to a glass of almost any shade.

In fact, the best solution - and a good way to please all those thirsty diners around the holiday table - is to provide a few bottles of each for the feast.

This is a good year to go American. The current releases - '90 Chardonnays and Zinfandels, and '91 roses and Rieslings - make fine drinking this fall.

And these two very exciting vintages back-to-back will really give you something to be thankful for.

While no one plans their holiday feast around the **wines** to be served - and no one should - do consider the accompaniments as you choose the bottles. A sausage stuffing cries out for heavier **wines** - perhaps a Zinfandel or an oak-filled Chardonnay - than would the fruitier, berry-filled dressing, which might go well with a light Riesling.

And think of the guests: A party packed with all sorts of aunts and uncles and kids and grandkids and brothers and sisters and assorted unrelated guests isn't the time to show off an expensive bottle. Check the under-$10 values below for the crowd.

On the other hand, an intimate, elegant Thanksgiving dinner could be just the time to open a special Chardonnay that will get a bit of attention and its own special thanks. There are a few of those on the list as well.

WHITES

Columbia Crest Semillon/Chardonnay, 1990 ($4.99). A blend of two very popular varietals, this has semillon's roundness and fatness, with Chardonnay's apple-vanilla notes. Soft and clean.

Raymond Chardonnay, 1990 ($8.99). Cinnamon and cloves, with mouth-filling texture. An old favorite that's dropped to an affordable price.

Sakonnet, Vidal Blanc, 1990 ($7.99). A staple of New England winemaking for years. This has a flavorful herbal quality, good acidity, and good fruit. A fine alternative to Sauvignon Blanc, lacking that varietal's vegetativeness.

Murphy-Goode Pinot Blanc, 1991 ($12.50). Chardonnay-like flavors in a leaner style, with more crispness. Tropical fruits, plus a citric hit in an interesting **wine** that will hold its own with a lot of food flavors.

ZD Chardonnay, 1990 ($24). A very exciting **wine,** with all sorts of exotic fruits packed into it. Persimmon, mango, star fruit - a crisp acidity mixed with seductive lush flavors.

Caymus, Sauvignon Blanc, 1991 ($9.99). Barrel-fermented with a unique style that's akin to Chardonnay. Hint of gravel, plus orange-rind spiciness. Creamy, with long flavors.

Hogue Cellars, Dry Riesling, 1990 ($6.99). Apple/pear fruit with hints of apricot. A little touch of sweetness.

J. Lohr, Bay Mist, 1990 ($5.99). The opposite style, with 2 percent residual sugar, making it heavier, sweeter, with luscious honey/apricot flavors.

Alexander Valley Vineyards, Riesling, 1991 ($8.99). Zesty, lively style, with a touch of sweetness and spice.

ROSE

J. Lohr, Wildflower, Monterey Gamay, 1990 ($6). Fresh, floral berry character. Very little tannin, lots of jammy fruit. Quaffable. A good bridge between whites and reds. It will even take a chill.

Dry Creek, Bug Creek, Rose of Cabernet, 1991 ($8.99). Yes, the label really does have a picture of an awful-looking bug (the awful bug, phylloxera, that's eating up California vineyards) - but this is good **wine.** Bell-pepper aroma, full-bodied from its cabernet base, relatively dry but fruity.

McDowell, Les Vieux Cepages Grenache Rose, 1991 ($6.99). Bright berry flavors, reminiscent of Tavel. A hearty-style rose.

Deloach, White Zinfandel, 1991 ($7.99). For white Zin lovers at your table, this is the one to choose. Strawberry fruit, slightly sweet.

Westport Rivers, Evensong, N.V. ($7.99). For this very New England festival, a local **wine.** Made in Rhode Island, in a small, family-run vineyard, this copper-colored **wine** has a hint of cranberry mixed with cherry fruit, and a touch of tartness in an off-dry flavor.

REDS

Nalle, Dry Creek, Zinfandel, 1990 ($15.99). Very concentrated fruit, spicy, with some oak. The elegant, smooth style of Zin, rather than the bright, bursting-with-fruit bottle.

Ravenswood, Vintners Blend, Zinfandel, 1990 ($7.99). A little softer, more brambly. A rustic style, with price to match. A great value from one of California's best Zin makers.

Franciscan, Napa, Zinfandel, 1990 ($9.99). Plummy, with sweet American oak notes. Straightforward, traditional style.

Byron, Pinot Noir, 1990 ($13.99). A spicy, brambly robust bottle, packed with jammy fruit. Not as elegant as some, but it easily compensates with strong, exciting flavors and fruit.

Saintsbury Garnet, Pinot Noir, Carneros, 1991 ($11). This shows up every year on the Thanksgiving recommendations, and for a very good reason: Its high-toned, stylish flavors, with good Pinot Noir fruit, are perfect with turkey and trimmings. A step above rose, but not as demanding as cabernet, this is a crowd-pleaser.

Seghesio, Pinot Noir, 1989 ($9.99). Lighter color, not quite as cherry-flavored, more light blackberry tones. It's aged in American oak, so there's some sweetness. A comfortable **wine.**

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Chicago Tribune November 12, 1992, Thursday, NORTH SPORTS FINAL EDITION

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November 12, 1992, Thursday, NORTH SPORTS FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FOOD GUIDE; Pg. 5B; ZONE: C; **Wine** notes

LENGTH: 417 words

BYLINE: William Rice.

BODY:

- The dining room of the Four Farthings Tavern, 2060 N. Cleveland Ave., will become a **wine**-tasting parlor from 3 to 5 p.m. on Saturday. Among **wines** from California available for sampling, and for purchase for pre-holiday delivery, are Roederer Estate sparking, Bonny Doon Cigare Volant, Sterling Three Palms merlot and Kenwood Jack London cabernet sauvignon.

The admission fee, $10 per person, includes hors d'oeuvres. Call the restaurant, 312-935-2060, for further information.

- The schedule for Montana Street Cafe's weekly Great Winemakers of America dinners in November are Nov. 16, Simi Winery, Sonoma County, and Nov. 23, Benzinger of Glen Ellen, Sonoma County. The dinners at the cafe, 2464 Lincoln Ave., include a winemaker's reception at 5:30 p.m. and a three-course meal with appropriate **wines.** The price is $40 a person. For reservations call 312-281-2407.

- Johanna's **Wine** Bar, 10 E. Delaware Place, has scheduled these events for November: Nov. 17, winemaker Paul Chevalier of Veuve Clicquot Champagne will pour his **wines,** including three vintages of the tete-de-cuvee La Grande Dame. The cost is $50 a person. Nov. 18, Joel Peterson of **Ravenswood** Winery will present several of the winery's highly praised single-vineyard zinfandels and other **wines.** The price of the evening, which includes **wine** and hors d'oeuvres, is $35 a person. All the events will begin at 7 p.m. Call 312-642-1170 for reservations.

- **Wines** by Design, a custom **wine**-labeling program, is offering personalized holiday gift bottles. Company logos, black-and-white photographs and written messages will be reproduced on labels that then will be affixed to bottles of California **wines.** The choice includes five still **wines** and a sparkler. Minimum order is one case (12 bottles). Prices range from $90 to $144. Delivery is promised in less than two weeks. The **wines** are on display at several **wine** shops, including Marshall Field & Co. **wine** departments, Sam's **Wine** Warehouse and Gold Standard/Chalet. For information call 312-276-9463.

- Two local breweries returned from this year's annual Great American Beer Festival in Denver with awards. The Chicago Brewing Co. won a gold medal in the European Pilsner category with its Legacy Lager, then picked up a bronze in the German Wheat competition with its Heartland Weiss. Goose Island Brewing Co. collected a gold in the American Brown Ale category for its PMD Mild Ale, then took a bronze for its Oatmeal Stout in the Sweet Stout competition.

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Wine; Taming the wild Zinfandel The Boston Herald September 20, 1992 Sunday

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September 20, 1992 Sunday

SECTION: MAGAZINE; Pg. 15

LENGTH: 936 words

HEADLINE: Wine;
Taming the wild Zinfandel

BYLINE: Sonia Turek

BODY:

They're back. But they're no longer monsters.

Zinfandel has been tamed. Once a wild Port-like powerhouse - jammy, alcoholic, and unpredictable - the new Zins are vibrant, stylish, and dependable.

The heady varietals of 15 years ago lost their customers as white **wine** became the drink of choice. But the grapes didn't go unharvested: They were turned into white Zinfandel, a slightly sweet, slightly pink beverage bearing little resemblance to its source.

Now red is on the rise again. **Wine** drinkers are reading about the so-called French paradox, which says red **wine** is actually good for them - better than white, at least - and they're looking to buy some.

And the best value these days is not the better-known Cabernet Sauvignon or Pinot Noir, but Zin.

"It's so solid - a red-claret-style table **wine,**" says Joel Peterson, winemaker at **Ravenswood,** one of California's most esteemed Zinfandel properties. "It's rich, intense, and full. And it's being made using some of the best production techniques - longer fermentation, oak aging, all the things that we know make a very good, high-class **wine.**

"So one of the reasons it's experiencing a resurgence in popularity is that the quality of the **wines** improved. People are more focused now, and you're much more likely to get a good **wine** than a bad **wine.**"

And, Peterson adds, "The price range is more reasonable than Cabernet. At that level {of winemaking}, you can get a really exceptional **wine** for $9 to $20."

Wine drinkers, both new and old, are getting the message.

"It's an ongoing phenomenon," Peterson says. "You look at the numbers that are post-French paradox, and Zinfandel is only after Merlot in increased figures.

"Those are the two varieties that people who are entry-level tend to get into. They're easy to drink when young, and they're **wines** people have heard about. For instance, people who are white Zinfandel drinkers say, `Well, let's try the red."'

Zinfandel's lower price is not a reflection of quality, Peterson emphasizes, but of its easier viticulture.

"It's not as well-known," he explains, "and the grapes are less expensive. There's more of them grown. In fact, it's the most widely grown variety in California.

"It's also one of the best grapes in California."

Now is a good time to take the plunge. The 1990s are some of the best Zins in years.

If you can find the **Ravenswood** Zinfandels, by all means try them. You'll have to hunt - especially for the '90s, which just got much-more-than-rave reviews from **wine** expert Robert Parker. All under $20, the three single-vineyard **wines** (Old Hill Ranch,

Dickerson Vineyard, and Cooke Vineyard) show just how noble this too-often-overlooked varietal can be.

Dickerson in particular is a gem of a **wine,** with a stunning cassis nose and packed with intense extract and rich fruit flavors. The texture is velvet, the style opulent, the overall experience just wonderful.

And if you really get bitten by the Zinfandel bug, you can even join a fan club. ZAP, Zinfandel Advocates and Producers, is a group in California (of course) of consumers (the advocates) and winemakers (the producers), open to all. For $25, you'll get a newsletter, invitations to special tastings, a T-shirt, and other goodies - especially helpful if you plan on a visit to the vineyards sometime. Write ZAP, c/o Margaret Smith, 118 Hillside Drive, Woodside CA 94062 for more information.

Here are some recently tasted bottles, ranging from the new, lighter style to some old-fashioned rough-and-tumbles.

Franciscan, Oakville estate, 1990 ($9.99). A new-style, medium-weight **wine,** with bright raspberry fruit and a hint of French and American.

Nalle, 1989 ($16.99). Big, old-style, packed with extract. Chocolate and roast-coffee flavors.

Seghesio, 1989 ($6). Old-fashioned Italian winemaking, with robust, rough-and-tumble flavors. Don't look for finesse, just enjoy the country-cousin kind of flavors.

Ridge, 1990 ($17-$19). Not yet available even for tasting as of this writing, but they're rumored to be top-notch. With **Ravenswood,** this is some of the best Zin available for this vintage.

Rafanelli, 1990 ($15). No filtering, little manipulation, just pure, ripe Zinfandel fruit. High extract, with layer upon layer of black, brambly fruit.

Grgich Hills, 1988 ($15). A high-end Cabernet-like **wine,** with French oak aging, and lots of staying power.

Bel Arbors, 1990 ($5.99). Black cherry, licorice flavors. Very simple fruit. Quaffable.

Conn Creek, Barrel Select, 1988 ($13.99). Medium weight, high-toned fruit, with some cherry and licorice notes.

Caymus Vineyards, 1990 ($11). Great nose: smoked sausage, cloves, and spice. Finally, the spicy side of zin shows up. Mouthfilling, lots of intense fruit extract, rich texture. Distinct style, unmistakably Zinfandel.

Fetzer, Barrel Select, 1989 ($10). Wintergreen notes, sweet and ripe in the nose. Like much of Fetzer's production, it's not too complex, but has straightforward, pleasing varietal flavors. Good structure and light tannin; a crowd-pleaser.

De Loach, Russian River Valley, 1990 ($11.99). Some oak, milk-chocolate notes. Plump, juicy, friendly, like a zin should be. Big and plummy. Delicious.

Sutter Home, Reserve, Amador County, 1988 ($8). Lots of tannin, with port-like characteristics. Black cherries, licorice, pepper, cloves, plums - all the right notes. And it will keep for a while. Not for the timid or for white Zinfandel fans - this has guts.

Dry Creek, 1989 ($12.50). Grapes from old vines, made by Massachusetts native David Stare into a medium-weight, peppery varietal. Stare stresses ripe, purple fruit, with cassis notes. A concentrated **wine,** helped by 17 percent Syrah grapes.

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TOP PRICE DOESN'T ALWAYS INDICATE HIGH-QUALITY WINE The Commercial Appeal (Memphis) August 26, 1992, Wednesday,

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The Commercial Appeal (Memphis)

August 26, 1992, Wednesday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FUN FOOD & FACES, Pg. E6, **Wine**

LENGTH: 869 words

HEADLINE: TOP PRICE DOESN'T ALWAYS INDICATE HIGH-QUALITY **WINE**

BYLINE: Fredric Koeppel

BODY:
So I got back from a vacation during which I tasted scads of **wines,** and what did I do?

Threw myself into frenzied rounds of tasting with nary a pause. And I tasted some pretty darned good stuff, too, news of which I will pass along.

Some of these **wines** are expensive, which as you should know by now is no guarantee of high quality. Some are inexpensive - heck, cheap - which is no guarantee a **wine** will rate as plonk, as the English say.

It's all relative, and the only sure way of knowing if a **wine** is good or if you like it is to taste it.

So here it is, a variety of **wines** ranging from a couple of Australians to a trio of splendid zinfandels and a merlot from **Ravenswood** to several superb white and red burgundies.

-- Orlando Jacobs Creek Chardonnay 1991, South Eastern Australia. A pleasant chardonnay, greeny-gold color with a slightly floral bouquet, citrus fruit, touch of flint. About $ 7.

-- Oxford Landing Cabernet Sauvignon Shiraz 1989, Yalumba. Another Australian product, displaying a ripe oaky nose, enough tannin and acid for backbone and huge quantities of plum-raspberry fruit; just gets better in the glass. A winner at about $ 7.50 and a Pick of the Week.

-- Cotes du Rhone 1991, Jean Austier. Vapid and vacuous and not worth half the price. About $ 11.

-- Laurel Glen Terra Rose 1989, Sonoma County. Simple style but quite attractive, rich blackberry and black currant fruit, solid structure. Good for the price, about $ 11.

-- Flora Springs Floreal Chardonnay 1990, Napa Valey. True to its name with hints of rose petals and orange blossom in nose and mouth, fat and fleshy, lots of tasty spicy citrus fruit, though it finishes a bit short. Still it's fairly priced at about $ 14.

-- Les Vieux Cepages Syrah 1987, McDowell Valley. A tongue-grabber with a chunky structure, big, dusty and oaky, rich, concentrated dark berries; a California product but true to its Rhone Valley origins. $ 15-$ 16.

-- **Ravenswood** Dickerson Vineyard Zinfandel 1990, Napa Valley. What you're looking for in an old-fashioned zinfandel, a solid density of flavor, texture and structure, a big, almost chewy **wine** bursting with intense cherry-plum- black currant fruit, bolstered with immense dusty oak, tantalizing with hints of mint and eucalyptus. Excellent. About $ 24.

-- **Ravenswood** Cooke Vineyard Zinfandel 1990, Sonoma Valley. Maybe reticent isn't the word here; truculent is more like it. A dark fathomless zinfandel colored with touches of pine and raisins, prunes and leather. Excellent. About $ 24.

-- **Ravenswood** Old Hill Zinfandel 1990, Sonoma Valley. Put on Great Balls of Fire or Breathless, 'cause, honey, this is a killer of a **wine.** Made from vines averaging 99 years, the intensity, darkness and depth are amazing; it projects awe-inspiring qualities of deep mineral and oaken intensity with almost primitive black fruit essence. Set it aside until the mountains may tumble and Gibralter may crumble. Exceptional. About $ 24.

-- **Ravenswood** Sangiacomo Merlot 1990, Carneros. Embodies the old iron hand in a velvet glove principle: almost sweet with the ripeness of fruit and suave oak, voluptuous, cushiony texture, plummy-jammy fruit; all cloaked about a solid impenetrable core of tannin and acid. A tremendous effort. About $ 28.

-- Forman Cabernet Sauvignon 1989, Napa Valley. Forget the quibble that '89 is a stickier-than-a-wicket year; this is an

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Chardonnays up from '89 quality St. Petersburg Times (Florida) January 16, 1992, Thursday, City Edition

Times Publishing Company
St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

January 16, 1992, Thursday, City Edition

SECTION: FOOD; **WINE;** Pg. 10D

LENGTH: 358 words

HEADLINE: Chardonnays up from '89 quality

SOURCE: Scripps Howard News Service

BYLINE: FREDRIC KOEPPEL

BODY:
The 1990 chardonnay **wines** from the West Coast are in many cases marked improvements over their 1989 cousins.

To sample the luscious possibilities of these **wines,** one couldn't do better than try the three chardonnays from Kistler, a Sonoma County winery that specializes in Burgundian style **wines.** The 12-year-old firm produces about 7,000 cases a year, including a little cabernet sauvignon and pinot noir.

The attractive and enticing Kistler Chardonnay 1990, Sonoma County, is exquisite, mild-mannered but not tame. About $ 20.

The Kistler Dutton Ranch Chardonnay 1990, Russian River Valley, is more Chablis-like than the preceding **wine** and is completely satisfying. About $ 28.

Best of these three terrific **wines** is the Kistler Vine Hill Road Chardonnay 1990, Russian River Valley, of which only 760 cases were produced. This is a powerfully rich and full-bodied chardonnay. About $ 28. I was not so impressed with the Kistler McCrea Vineyard Pinot Noir 1989, Sonoma Mountain, which certainly possessed the correct characteristics but lacked substance. About $ 18.

Less expensive than the Kistler chardonnays but extremely well-made is the Beringer Proprietor Grown Chardonnay 1990, Napa Valley. About $ 13.

Coming on with lots of surface glamor but little depth is the Meridian Chardonnay 1990, Santa Barbara County. About $ 11.

With no transition whatever, I recommend that you immediately sample these wonderful red **wines from Ravenswood** in Sonoma County:

Ravenswood Vinters Blend Zinfandel 1989, North Coast. This is not a blockbuster, but it is quite well-made and delicious. About $ 9.

Ravenswood Cooke Vineyard Zinfandel 1989, Sonoma Valley. Give it six to eight years. About $ 20.

Ravenswood Old Hill Ranch Zinfandel 1989, Sonoma Valley. "This **wine** makes me want to kill animals with my bare hands," said a taster, and all the dogs and cats left the room. About $ 21.50.

Ravenswood Sangiacomo Merlot 1989, Carneros. If you buy one merlot this year, make it this one. About $ 31.

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WINE;An American Original The New York Times November 17, 1991, Sunday, Late Edition - Final

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November 17, 1991, Sunday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section 6; Page 70; Column 1; Magazine Desk

LENGTH: 887 words

HEADLINE: WINE;
An American Original

BYLINE: By Frank J. Prial

BODY:
YOU WOULDN'T DRINK Chianti on Bastille Day, would you? Or Scotch on March 17? So how could you think of drinking some kind of foreign **wine** on that totally American, Norman Rockwellian festival we call Thanksgiving?

What do you mean, there's no decent all-American **wine?** If you've got the turkey, I've got a **wine** for you: it's called zinfandel.

No, it doesn't sound American, and, to be completely honest, somewhere, way back, it probably came from someplace else. But it's been here longer than the rest of us, so -- come on -- what could be more American than that?

All our best **wine** grapes -- cabernet sauvignon, pinot noir, merlot, chardonnay, riesling -- come from Europe. There are native American varieties, and there are crosses between the European and the native varieties, but it's generally conceded that the European types -- technically the *Vitis vinifera* varieties -- make the best **wines.**

Students of this sort of thing can trace the paths of almost all these grapes from the vineyards of Europe to America during the last century. The big mystery is zinfandel. One theory holds that it was imported by Agoston Haraszthy, a mid-19th-century promoter who grew grapes and made **wine** in Northern California and who is sometimes called the father of modern American viticulture. His Hungarian background and the vaguely Hungarian sound of the grape's name lent that idea some credence.

Other theories hold that zinfandel had been grown as a table grape in nurseries and hothouses in New York and Boston since at least the early 19th century or had been a French import known as the Black St. Peter's or had been carried around the Horn by a ship captain who was an amateur horticulturist. There is yet another theory that the grape is actually an Austrian import called the schwarzer zierfandler and the names got mixed up at sea. Or the grapes got mixed up. Or something.

Many years later, the identical grape was found in Italy, where it is known as the primitivo. For a time, viticulturists were convinced that they had found the source of the mysterious grape. But it turns out that the grape was thriving in California before the Italians had ever heard of it. It may actually have come to Italy from California.

One way or another, zinfandel appeared in Northern California in the 1850's and within a few decades had become one of the important **wine** grapes. And since no one could trace it to France or anyplace else, it became a uniquely American phenomenon.

For much of its existence, zinfandel was a blending grape. It gave body and color to jug **wines** and to many of the anonymous "clarets" that were the mainstay of the California industry before varietal names -- cabernet sauvignon, chardonnay -- became fashionable.

When the most recent **wine** boom began in the 1960's, zinfandel was part of it. A few of the wineries that were making it as a varietal in those days still have some of these early **wines** in their collections. It was eclipsed in the late 1970's and the 1980's by the public's infatuation with cabernet sauvignon and chardonnay.

More and more, zinfandel, which is a red grape, began to turn up in the newest craze, white zinfandel. Since the color pigment is in the grape skins, the skins are removed early, leaving the white or slightly pink juice to be fermented into **wine.**

While traditional zinfandel's star may have fallen, a number of wineries plugged along, making the best zinfandel they could. And, in fact, they didn't suffer. Wineries like Ridge Vineyards had no trouble selling their best **wines** to customers who came back year after year regardless of popular fads.

Gradually zinfandel moved out of the shadows and into the spotlight vacated by cabernet and chardonnay, whose prices were climbing like unchecked vines. Besides being more reasonably priced, zinfandel is marvelously adaptable. It can be made in a smooth, elegant style, as Bernard Portet is doing at Clos Du Val and Mike Grgich at Grgich Hills. Or it can be made big and powerful and rough-edged, as some of the **wines** from hot Amador County have proved to be.

It can combine richness and elegance, as **wines from Ravenswood** and Ridge Vineyards so often do. Or it can combine richness with softness and approachability, in the style of Fetzer Vineyards' zinfandels.

As a general rule, zinfandel is more intense, more alcoholic and less complex than cabernet sauvignon and pinot noir. But there is something very American in its straightforward, no-nonsense style. **Wines** like Portet's can grace the most sophisticated meal. But a true, family-style turkey dinner cries out for a rough-and-tumble **wine.** When you buy zinfandel, that's mostly what you look for, and that's mostly what you get.

Any list of worthy producers would include **Ravenswood,** for its Old Hill Ranch **wines** and its North Coast Vintners Blend; Sausal, Alexander Valley; Storybook Mountain, for its Napa Valley Estate Reserve; Sutter Home, for its Amador County Reserve; Baldinelli, Shenandoah Valley; Cline, Contra Costa County; A. Rafanelli, Dry Creek Valley; Fetzer, for its Mendocino County Special Reserve; Rodney Strong, Old Vines River West Vineyard, and Ridge Vineyards, for its various zinfandels, including Geyserville, Lytton Springs and Howell Mountain.

And don't forget the creamed onions.

GRAPHIC: Photo of a glass of zinfandel. (Photograph by Tom Eckerle for The New York Times)

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FALL IS TIME TO BRING ON RED ZINS Orlando Sentinel (Florida) October 10, 1991 Thursday, 3 STAR

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Orlando Sentinel (Florida)

October 10, 1991 Thursday, 3 STAR

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. H14

LENGTH: 355 words

HEADLINE: FALL IS TIME TO BRING ON RED ZINS

BYLINE: By Bob Hosmon, Fort Lauderdale Sun-sentinel

BODY:
With the arrival of fall, interest in red **wines** prevails. Enough of those light whites. Now is the time for richer reds. Now is the time to discover the pleasure of red zinfandel.

White zinfandel is a better known commodity, but the grape from which that **wine** is made is red and the red **wine** it produces is full of flavor, the ideal complement for meat, wild game and richly sauced Italian food.

It's also a uniquely American **wine,** only found in the vineyards of the western United States, where it has flourished since the early part of the 20th century. Red zins had a fine reputation in the 1970s, but too many vintners made too many styles and the results confused consumers. They didn't know if they were buying a light, Beaujolais-style **wine** or a **wine** that would have the color and taste of dark ink. So they stopped buying red zinfandels.

Today, red zin is back. Vintners have curbed their impulse to make experimental **wines** from the grape. And the **wine** again is receiving accolades.

Florida restaurateur Leonce Picot offers a half-dozen red zinfandels on his **wine** lists at The Down Under and Casa Vecchia. "I choose the **wines** that I know well and that will go with our foods," he says, favoring **Ravenswood** (suggested retail $12); Hop Kiln (suggested retail $10); Meeker (suggested retail $8); Chateau Montelena (suggested retail, $12) and Storybrook Mountain (suggested retail $14). Even so, Picot says "It takes some selling to get someone to try a red zin; even sophisticated customers know little about the **wine.**"

Other good red zinfandels include Lyttonsprings ($8 to $10); Kendall-Jackson (their DuPratt-DePatie Vineyard selection, priced at $14, is highly acclaimed); and Ridge ($8 to $14). One of the most accessible and affordable red zins is by Kenwood (about $10). A. Rafanelli Winery also makes a reasonably priced (generally $7), full-bodied red zin.

Some of the best red zinfandels, notably Rosenblum Reserve ($10) and Joseph Swan ($10), are difficult, if not impossible, to find in some shops and restaurants. But with time, that may change as consumers who want the best will ask for it.

COLUMN: GOOD SPIRITS

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ABOUT WINE: ZINFANDEL: RIDING HIGH ON THE COMEBACK TRAIL Los Angeles Times September 19, 1991, Thursday, Home Edition

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September 19, 1991, Thursday, Home Edition

SECTION: Food; Part H; Page 11; Column 1

LENGTH: 1202 words

HEADLINE: ABOUT **WINE:** ZINFANDEL: RIDING HIGH ON THE COMEBACK TRAIL

BYLINE: By DAN BERGER, TIMES **WINE** WRITER

BODY:
If Cabernet Sauvignon is the aristocrat in cashmere and Chardonnay the lady in silk, then surely Zinfandel is the guy in the Guess jeans and rugby shirt.

Zinfandel, the red **wine** for pasta rather than *foie gras*, has been making a huge comeback from a decade ago, when consumers were confused over its varying styles. The latest wave of excitement in Zinfandel is for elegant **wines** with modest alcohol levels, **wines** that go with lighter foods.

Joel Peterson is not amused. Or, rather, he is quite amused. Or perhaps he doesn't care. He makes Zin the way it was made a decade ago, bold and brassy, and there's a following for this style. **Ravenswood**, his Sonoma Valley winery, recently had to move to larger quarters.

Peterson, who grew up sipping 50-year-old Bordeaux from his father's cellar, is today producing some of California's brawniest Zinfandels. He makes these gutsy **wines** with a sense of style so distinct it prompted one journalist to take a job at the facility, then devote the better part of a book to it: "Angels' Visits," by David Darlington (Henry Holt & Co.: $19.65).

The subtitle of the book is "An Inquiry Into the Mystery of Zinfandel," but it's more than an academic analysis of a grape's origin or a dissection of **wine** styles. It's a personal look at one man's infatuation with a very American grape and a look at the people who have committed themselves to this variety, even in the face of potentially higher profits from Chardonnay and Cabernet.

The origins of Zinfandel have long been a mystery. We know that Cabernet Sauvignon comes from Bordeaux and that Chenin Blanc seems native to Anjou and Pinot Noir to Burgundy, but the birthplace of Zinfandel has been hard to pin down. Darlington does a thorough job of analyzing Zinfandel and comes to a conclusion I reached just a year ago while in Yugoslavia -- before Darlington's book was published, I should add.

"The arrows point to Eastern Europe," said Darlington in a telephone interview. He said the Yugoslav grape Plavac Mali, which may also have grown in what is now Northern Italy, may be the real ancestor of California's unique variety.

Darlington, whose prose is most engaging and whose love of **wine** quite obvious, has a sense of joy and wonder about Zinfandel that is exceeded only by his research. He said his book is more about people than **wine.**

"There are so many interesting people in this business, and I was fascinated by the ambience of the trade," he said. He signed on at **Ravenswood** and hauled hoses around for one grueling year to sense the wonder of turning a humble grape into an elixir that offers so much joy.

Among the people he details are the best Zinfandel specialists in the state, men such as Doug Nalle and Dave Rafanelli; Bob Trinchero of Sutter Home; Paul Draper and the late Dave Bennion of Ridge; the late Joe Swan; Amador County's energetic Scott Harvey (Santino) and Charlie Myers (Harbor). He credits Sacramento merchant Darrell Corti with being a prime mover in the growth of the varietal.

The book focuses, more than anything, on a comparison between what Ridge and **Ravenswood** do with Zinfandel. Both identify their various **wines** with vineyard designations, feeling that the characteristics of a vineyard are important and that blending could destroy that uniqueness of spirit.

Ravenswood is now a 40,000-case operation, pretty substantial for a so-called "boutique" winery. It is located at what once was the Haywood Winery in Sonoma Valley.

Peterson's **wine** lineup (which also includes Cabernets and Merlots and a few hundred cases of Chardonnay) features a covey of Zinfandels so packed with flavor they seem to be throwbacks to the wild-and-woolly late 1970s, when the principle "more is better" ruled.

Yet tasting these **wines,** one sees they are far more sophisticated than those we knew a decade ago. They have concentration -- Peterson's hallmark -- but with layers of flavor that could not be detected a decade ago when the tannin was so beefy. In those days, some producers even gave up on Zinfandel, blaming the variety -- not their own inability to make the **wine** with grace -- for their woes.

Oh, I'll admit, it's hard to use the word *grace* when talking about **Ravenswood's wines,** but there is a lush and complete finish in all the **wines,** which means that they go with more subtle foods as well as finger-staining barbecue (which the **wines'** dense flavors also suit).

Of all Peterson's Zinfandels, the **wine** that gets the highest praise is Old Hill Ranch, from a 90-year-old vineyard on sloped, gravelly soil in Sonoma County. The 1989 Old Hill (just released, $15) is a monster in aroma -- blackberry and black pepper scents (I thought I smelled a trace of Petite Sirah, but Peterson said not) along with a roasted component. A fascinating **wine.**

Peterson seemed to like the **wine** from the Dickerson vineyard, a 75-year-old vineyard south of St. Helena in the Napa Valley. In the 1989 ($14) there is a huge raspberry/black currant aroma and what Peterson called a "eucalyptus-y" note.

Darlington professed more love for the Old Hill **wine,** which he called "a wondrous thing," and acknowledged that he didn't share Peterson's enthusiasm for that Dickersonion eucalyptus component.

I also liked the 1989 Cook Zinfandel from **Ravenswood** ($14) with its red currant/pomegranate aroma and wonderful fruit in the taste. Even the more modest 1989 **Ravenswood** Sonoma County Old Vine Zinfandel ($11), from older vines in Alexander, Dry Creek and Sonoma valleys, offers depth and a blackberry jam and pepper complexity.

Peterson pushes the envelope of Zinfandel production by fermenting the juice without the prepared yeast strains other wineries use. He prefers the natural yeasts that occur on the grape skins. Winemakers know this can create problems for the fermentation, but Peterson says it adds complexity, and he's careful enough to make sure the **wine** is sound when it's released.

When Peterson speaks of his **wines,** he compares them with others and notes that those who are as committed as he is to Zinfandel must stick together. "I sell anyone else's **wine** as easily as I sell my own," he says. "I like to think of all the Zinfandel specialists as working together in a collaborative effort."

For those interested in seeing the **Ravenswood** style of Zinfandel without excessive cost, there is the 1989 Vintner's Blend ($7.50), which has the same sort of spice and fruit as the other **wines,** but without the distinctiveness of the vineyard-designated **wines,** and without the aging potential.

In the latest swing back to softer, more approachable Zinfandels, **Ravenswood** continues to make full-flavored **wine,** but with a sense of style that may best be explained in a book.

Wine of the Week

1990 Fetzer Gamay Beaujolais ($7) -- When Cabernet Sauvignon is too tannic to serve with lighter foods that require red **wine,** many people choose Pinot Noir. That's usually a good substitute. This **wine,** however, goes in another direction, and whether chilled or not, it's a wonderful experience. It is as spicy as any **wine** I have ever smelled and has gobs of raspberry-fruity flavors. This is also a perfect **wine** for those who swore they'd never drink a red **wine.**

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KITCHEN BOOKSHELF;Improving Minds and Diets: Cookbooks That Can Be Read The New York Times July 24, 1991, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

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July 24, 1991, Wednesday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section C; Page 6; Column 1; Living Desk

LENGTH: 1875 words

HEADLINE: KITCHEN BOOKSHELF;
Improving Minds and Diets: Cookbooks That Can Be Read

BYLINE: By NANCY HARMON JENKINS

BODY:
WHEN the mere thought of lighting the oven threatens to raise the kitchen temperature another five degrees, cooking decidedly lacks charm. It's time then to emulate dedicated food-lovers who read cookbooks like novels and hardly bother to cook at all.

Fortunately, the new crop on the kitchen bookshelf offers several books that are what more literary reviewers call a good read. And if a cool breeze comes along to lift the kitchen window curtains, there are still enough good new recipe books to entice one back to the pots and pans.

THE MODERN COUNTRY COOK (Viking, $25), by Leslie Land, is a fine example of a book to be enjoyed as much for the writing as for the good food it extols. This is even one to take into the garden, there perhaps to read the chapter headed "Gardener's Delight" between bouts of weeding.

In this collection of essays with recipes, Ms. Land argues cogently and persuasively that only home gardeners know the taste of good food. She exalts gathering wild mushrooms from the forest, wild mussels from the seashore and fresh, rich, high butterfat cream from a Jersey or Guernsey cow.

High butterfat? Yes, indeed, for Ms. Land, who cultivates her garden in Maine where this is still possible. She is a firm believer in the virtues of whole milk, cream and eggs -- "comfort foods supreme." Her recipes, for country-style soups, stews and preserves, as well as more sophisticated fare (a braised marinated rabbit, flavored with vanilla oil, or chicken baked with coriander seeds and topped with fresh green coriander), will delight country gardeners as much as they will city slickers with only a supermarket to graze in.

Two books by Californians come without recipes but with exuberant descriptions of meals; they may send readers into the kitchen anyway.

David Darlington's ANGELS' VISITS (Henry Holt, $19.95) is a delightfully personal account of the author's investigation into what makes zinfandel such an appealing **wine.** It sent me out on the Fourth of July to find a bottle. Mr. Darlington's search for the truth about zinfandel leads him back and forth between **Ravenswood** and Ridge Vineyards, two eminent producers, as he details the methods and the personalities behind the **wine.** This is the best kind of **wine** writing, focusing on how and why a **wine** is what it is. His brief but hilarious description of Nouveau Zinfandel Night at Chez Panisse in Berkeley is probably worth the price of the book.

Jeannette Ferrary's BETWEEN FRIENDS: M. F. K. FISHER AND ME (Atlantic Monthly Press , $19.95) is an odd but appealing little book, ostensibly something of a biography, or at least a book *about* this country's most distinguished food writer, now in her 80's and living in the **wine** country north of San Francisco. What may have started out as biography seems to develop into an account of an evolving friendship with the older woman. It is nonetheless thoroughly charming. Ms. Ferrary describes trips to France for "color" and to the Schlesinger Library in Cambridge, Mass., where Ms. Fisher's papers are stored, for facts.

Ms. Ferrary frankly describes her own awkwardness, misinterpretations and occasional misguided attempts to get around Ms. Fisher's shield of privacy. But she writes with love and respect of the writer she esteems and cherishes. Admirers of M. F. K. Fisher's work will be grateful for this warm appreciation.

Chefs have been busy at word processors, too. Johanne Killeen and George Germon, who put Providence, R.I., on the culinary map with their twin restaurants, Lucky's and Al Forno, produced CUCINA SIMPATICA (HarperCollins, $25), a fresh and lively compilation of the Italian-style food that Al Forno is famous for: pastas with fragrant spicy and herbal sauces; grilled pizzas; roasted vegetables and hearty grilled and braised main courses like a pork shoulder in **wine** garnished with roasted tomatoes and prunes.

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In search of original Zin; Drunk on the delicious fatigue of San Francisco, Matthew Hoffman sought refuge in Zinfandel wine The Independent (London) June 29, 1991, Saturday

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The Independent (London)

June 29, 1991, Saturday

SECTION: WEEKEND TRAVEL PAGE; Page 44

LENGTH: 1110 words

HEADLINE: In search of original Zin; Drunk on the delicious fatigue of San Francisco, Matthew Hoffman sought refuge in Zinfandel **wine**

BYLINE: By MATTHEW HOFFMAN

BODY:
When you're tired of San Francisco, you're not tired of life; you're just tired of chocolate-box sights. Even the famous views - of the Golden Gate Bridge, the Transamerica building, the cable cars, and the miles of gingerbread, wooden houses called Victorians - are, if truth be told, a bit too sweet for constant consumption.

A few weeks ago, after enjoying the delicious fatigue of too much San Francisco, I discovered an alternative delight. My brother lives in Solano County in the north Bay. The two counties to the west are Napa and Sonoma, famous for their small - "boutique" - wineries and terraced slopes of vines.

My brother lent me a car and I set out to visit a friend, Charles Cooke, who grows a few acres of grapes high above the little, Spanish-square town of Sonoma. He appears in the recently published volume of Washington memoirs, Counsel to the President, by Clark Clifford, where he is described as one of three young officers at the Pentagon in the Sixties who risked their careers to get the truth about the Vietnam War to the White House. The day I arrived at Charlie's rambling, hilltop home, he was sitting on his terrace with his leg in an aluminium brace. He had had a knee operation only a couple of days before. High above him, I could just see the edge of the small vineyard he had dug out of the mountain slopes 10 years ago.

"When you were last here," Charlie said, "my **wine** was being made by Coturri; but now I'm having it done by **Ravenswood.** They're the best winery for Zinfandel and I'm very pleased with the job they're doing. In fact, The New York Times ran an article called 'Original Zin' a few months ago, and they singled out mine and two other vineyard-designated Zinfandels, Old Hill and Dickerson, that **Ravenswood** produces as among the best."

I have never taken much interest in **wine,** except to drink it, but I remembered the flavour of Charlie's **wine.** Five years ago, when I first tasted it, I felt as though I were putting something the size of the whole glass in my mouth: that was a "big" **wine.**

"I don't know what I was producing in those days. It had a big flavour but it wasn't exactly **wine,**" Charlie told me. "The thing about Zinfandel is that you can make anything of it. It's the most common grape grown in California, and most of the jug **wine** is made from it. There's even a white Zinfandel, which is very popular, although I wouldn't drink it. However, if Zinfandel grapes are grown in mountain conditions, on chalky soil like mine, it can make a great red **wine.**"

"But what is Zinfandel?"

"It's a native California grape, at least it isn't grown elsewhere. It was probably brought to California by Haraszthy, a Hungarian who emigrated to California in the nineteenth century and is credited with founding the California grape industry.

"Why," I asked, "does growing Zinfandel on a mountain side make any difference to the quality of the **wine?**"

"Most California **wine** grapes are grown in the Central Valley where the soils are so deep, 10 feet or more, and the Zinfandel so vigorous, that the bunches ripen unevenly. The outside will be ripe red while the inner grapes are still green. My grapes grow in rocky, limited soil, which produces loose bunches that ripen evenly. Even ripening gives the grapes a high brix sugar content. Also, we get a cool breeze here in the late afternoon that keeps mildew from forming, so they don't need sulphur treatment."

This conversation put me in the mood to taste Charlie's new **wine,** only Charlie had none himself as the most recent year on the market was the '88 crop - it has to age two years in oak barrels before it can be bottled - and '88 had been a poor year, both for quantity and quality.

"First the worms got among my vines, and after we cleared those out, the deer got in. We ended up harvesting about four tons, instead of 10. I think I almost lost **Ravenswood** that year, but he Joel Peterson, the proprietor stuck with me. The '89 **wine,**

which is just about to be bottled, is very good; and the '90 looks as though it is going to be even better."

I stayed a little longer to talk about Charlie's current project - to broker the sale of $ 16m worth of petrochemical equipment to the Chinese. Charlie's father had been the commander of the US Seventh Fleet in China at the end of the Second World War and he grew up there. One of his sidelines, after a career in Washington, has been to act as a commercial intermediary with the Chinese - he's dealt in auto parts, bicycle parts, shrimp farms, and fertilizer with them; but, to hear him tell it, none of the deals ever comes off.

I was to learn that many of the key players in the emergence of Zinfandel have had colourful, not to say eccentric, pasts.

Following the twists and turns in Charlie's directions, I next set out for **Ravenswood's** tasting room in the valley below. There, in the cool of a bottle-lined room, I was able to taste my first fine Zinfandel, although they too had no Cooke **wine.** They did have Dickerson, however, and I can do no better than to quote a description of the **wine** by its maker, Joel Peterson:

Real nice Dickerson fruit; intense raspberry-citrus nose; pronounced mint-eucalyptus quality. Plus a hint of Rutherford dust - like what it smells like in a old book room.

That description is in a new book about Zinfandel, Angels' Visits, that gets its name from a nineteenth-century California horticulturist who wrote, in 1888,

I have yet to see the red **wine** of any variety that I would prefer to the best samples of Zinfandel produced in this state. Unfortunately, these best samples are like angels' visits, "few and far between".

And Charlie's **wine?** After two weeks of fruitless search in Sonoma County and San Francisco, I stopped with friends in Washington, DC, on my way back to London. And there, at MacArthurs Liquors, a specialist in California **wines,** I finally found a few bottles. That night it formed the centrepiece of a barbecue in Georgetown.

My friends uncorked the **wine,** and let it stand for 30 minutes. We filled our glasses, swirled the **wine** about to let it breathe, examined the colour, took deep sniffs, sipped a small quantity, let it flow back into our mouths, sipped a larger quantity, drew air through our teeth, swallowed, and contemplated. (We were following instructions on page 181 of Angels' Visits.)

The verdict? Sorry, it's indescribable for someone without the vocabulary of a **wine** buff; but I will be back for more.

Ravenswood winery is at 18701 Gehricke Road, Sonoma California, 95476.

Angels' Visits: an Inquiry into the mystery of Zinfandel (Holt, $ 19.95) is by David Darlington.

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THE MYSTIQUE OF ZINFANDEL Los Angeles Times June 27, 1991, Thursday, Home Edition

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June 27, 1991, Thursday, Home Edition

SECTION: Food; Part H; Page 35; Column 1

LENGTH: 91 words

HEADLINE: THE MYSTIQUE OF ZINFANDEL

BYLINE: By DAN BERGER

BODY:
My continuing delight with Zinfandel coincides with the publication of a marvelous new book on the subject. "Angel's Visits" by David Darlington (Henry Holt & Co: $19.95) examines the mystique of Zinfandel, its origins and recent rebirth as a fine **wine.**

Darlington, a Bay Area writer, focused on two of the state's best Zinfandel makers, Joel Peterson of **Ravenswood** and Paul Draper of Ridge. In addition to interviewing dozens of people, Darlington went to work at **Ravenswood** for a time.

The result is a fascinating read. DAN BERGER

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FOOD CALENDAR Los Angeles Times June 6, 1991, Thursday, Home Edition

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June 6, 1991, Thursday, Home Edition

SECTION: Food; Part H; Page 41; Column 1

LENGTH: 218 words

HEADLINE: FOOD CALENDAR

BYLINE: By KATHIE JENKINS

BODY:
* If you like **wine** and the outdoors, you'll want to know that James Henry River Journeys, in conjunction with Joel Peterson, owner of Sonoma's **Ravenswood** Winery, is offering a **wine**-tasting and gourmet-cuisine trip on Idaho's Salmon River beginning July 5. The six-day movable feast will take you through the rugged Idaho Primitive Area, the largest undeveloped land area in the Lower 48 states. Natural hot springs along the river will help soothe sore muscles after an intense day of river rafting. For further information and a brochure, contact James Henry River Journeys, Box 807-PRW, Bolinas, Calif. 94924, or call (800) 786-1830.

* Olive Garden restaurants are promoting their new summer menu by offering free packets of basil seeds. Plant them and have fresh basil to use in cooking all your favorite Italian dishes. To take advantage of the offer, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: The Olive Garden Basil Seeds, P.O. Box 3600, Cerritos, Calif. 90703-3600.

* What is the world's most popular fruit? If you've guessed mangoes, you may want to send for Chiquita's free brochure of mango recipes. Those wanting to know more about mangoes can write to: Chiquita Tropical Products North America, Diversified Marketing, 250 East 5th St., Ste. 1200, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. KATHIE JENKINS

GRAPHIC: Photo, Why popcorn pops is a topic in "The Epicurean Laboratory." LACY ATKINS / Los Angeles Times; Photo, The mango is believed to be the most popular fruit in the world.

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WINE The Atlanta Journal and Constitution May 30, 1991, Thursday

Copyright 1991 The Atlanta Constitution
The Atlanta Journal and Constitution

May 30, 1991, Thursday

SECTION: FOOD; SECTION W; PAGE 05

LENGTH: 564 words

HEADLINE: WINE

BYLINE: By Bruce Galphin; Winemakers are a vintage lot, with tastes running the gamutalcohol; arts; beverages; history

BODY:
Reading over my notes for the five last **wine**-eventful months in Atlanta, I realized again that besides tasting a wide variety of **wines,** writing about it allows me to meet an equally diverse collection of the people who produce it.

Love of **wine** is their only common denominator. Most are men, but an increasing number are women.

With some, only the slightest prompting jump-starts a lecture on complex new techniques of making **wine.** Others emphasize more traditional methods.

Some are intense. Some are full of laughter, practically defining the term "laid back."

Some make fortunes in other businesses and use part of it to build wineries that are veritable palaces (or even art galleries). Some start making **wine** in a garage or leased space.

Recent California **wine** visitors to Atlanta include:

Larry Turley, co-owner and winemaker of Frog's Leap **Wine** Cellars. The name itself is a takeoff on the famous Stag's Leap winery in California, and the joke is carried further with corks branded with "ribbit" instead of the winery name, and occasional use of the slogan "time's fun when you're having flies."

But the rich and beautifully balanced **wines** are no joke. The sauvignon blanc 1990 is one of the best made in the United States. The chardonnay, cabernet and zinfandel also are first class.

The winemaker, so tall he has to duck in some doorways, is a doctor who has worked in emergency medicine for 17 years.

Jan Shrem, owner of Clos Pegase, is as small-scaled as Mr. Turley is oversized. But not his winery, a sprawling Michael Graves-designed complex that could be a set for "Aida."

Mr. Shrem, who made a considerable fortune in publishing (mainly English-language books in Japan), has a fine collection of art, some of which he reproduces on the winery's labels.

The main label's Pegasus - the mythical winged horse - was painted by Redon. (Pegase is French for Pegasus; clos refers to a walled field.)

But sometimes the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms - which must approve all labels - turns art critic.

Mr. Shrem proposed using Jean Dubuffet's multi-hued, highly stylized male nude in his Bordeaux-type "Hommage" series. But before he could obtain bureau approval, an artist had to perform an amputation.

The bureau approved, however, Salvadore Dali's "The Unassuaged Desires" for the same series. Talk about bawdy, surrealistic or no. Hello, Dali.

The **wines** made for Clos Pegase by Bill Pease are excellent and should grow even better as Pegase's Napa vineyards mature.

Ravenswood owner/winemaker Joel Peterson followed the family tradition by studying chemistry, and even operated a small microbiology research lab for a while.

But he also learned **wine** appreciation from his father, who founded perhaps the first **wine**-tasting society in San Francisco.

In his spare time, Mr. Peterson began studying winemaking with Joseph Swan, who was best known for zinfandels.

Mr. Peterson began making his own **wine** in 1976 - for several years in leased space within other wineries, then "a large tin garage," and now the former home of Haywood in Sonoma County, Calif.

Ravenswood's "vintners blend" series is modestly priced and offers fine bargains. But the vineyard-designated series of classically made reds is what confirmed the winery's reputation. Try the "Ravenswine" zinfandel or the George Vineyard cabernet.

GRAPHIC: photo: The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms forced Jan Shrem of Clos Pegase to crop the bottom off Jean Dubuffet's 1943 "Nu Chamarre" (Bedecked Nude). / Special photo: The federal bureau approved Salvadore Dali's "The Unassuaged Desires" for the same series. / Special

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MEET DR. Z'S ALL-WORLD WINE TEAM;The NFL has gourmets who appreciate great grapes as much as great games Sports Illustrated January 28, 1991

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Sports Illustrated

January 28, 1991

SECTION: FOCUS; Pg. 7

LENGTH: 1536 words

HEADLINE: MEET DR. Z'S ALL-WORLD **WINE** TEAM;
The NFL has gourmets who appreciate great grapes as much as great games

BYLINE: BY PAUL ZIMMERMAN

BODY:
Philadelphia Eagle owner Norman Braman converted the swimming pool at his Miami Beach house into a 4,000-bottle **wine** cellar. Former Eagle coach Dick Vermeil keeps records of every **wine** he tastes on four- by six-inch index cards; he has hundreds of them. Miami Dolphin tight end Greg Baty and his wife, Kathleen, spend the off-season touring "little sleeper vineyards" in northern California's **wine** country. Former Pittsburgh Steeler All-Pro wideout Lynn Swann worked last fall's crush at Trefethen Vineyards in the Napa Valley. That's right, he was out there picking grapes. Joe Montana wants to own a vineyard someday.

This is the NFL's **wine** fraternity, a tightly knit band of devotees of the grape. On Sundays they hit people for a living, or tell other people to. On Saturday nights they may toast each other with Latour or Lafite, or maybe a nice fat California Chardonnay.

"The first time I tasted a 1967 Chateau d'Yquem Sauternes . . . glorious, like god's nectar," says Los Angeles Ram linebacker Mel Owens. "I said, 'I will never be the same.' I was on a quest."

Rich boys' toys? Well, maybe, but there were **wine** lovers in pro football's ranks back when nobody made much money. Former Oakland Raider All-Pro defensive tackle Tom Keating, an occasional buyer at Christie's and Sotheby's London **wine** auctions, often toured the California wineries with his buddy Steve Mirassou, former vice-president for sales at San Jose's Mirassou Vineyards. Keating sent an SOS telegram to his girlfriend in Alameda, Calif., after he was traded to Pittsburgh in 1973: JOIN ME HERE QUICK STOP BRING MIXED CASE MIRASSOU WHITE BURGUNDY AND PETITE SIRAH STOP CAN'T BUY HERE STOP HURRY EMERGENCY.

From 1967 to '73, Danny Abramowicz was a sure-handed receiver for the New Orleans Saints, but he says he was never as nervous as the day he tasted a glass of 1961 Chateau Lafite.

"My hands were shaking, sweating," he says. "I had to hold the glass with both hands -- I was afraid I'd drop it."

The names of some of the NFL's oenophiles might surprise you. Pittsburgh coach Chuck Noll, with his finely developed palate for top-of-the-line California cabernets, is the **wine** king of the NFL's coaching fraternity. But how about Chicago Bears coach Mike Ditka, the noted hard guy from Aliquippa, Pa.? He personally selects the **wines** for his two Chicago-area restaurants.

"Just had a **Ravenswood** merlot that was impressive," he says. "It'll have to go on the list. Or in my cellar at home."

And how about the late George Allen, former coach of the L.A. Rams and the Washington Redskins? Milkshakes, right? They were his trademark. But early in his career Allen learned to appreciate a fine bottle, thanks to his wife, Etty, whose father was a **wine** exporter in Tunisia.

"Once, I saw a banner in the stadium that said, THE REDSKINS AGE LIKE FINE **WINE,**" says former Skins guard John Wilbur, who was the leading oenophile on the team. "So I created my own **wine** award. I'd choose my personal MVP for a game and present him with a bottle of **wine.**

"When we beat Dallas for the NFC championship and went to the Super Bowl in '73, I awarded the best bottle I ever gave in my life, a 1928 Pommard Rugiens, to George."

"Finest **wine** I ever tasted," said Allen.

When Noll was a young and underpaid guard for the Cleveland Browns in the 1950s, he used to keep a case of Great Western Sparkling Catawba in the trunk of his car at all times. "In the winter I'd always have a chilled **wine** on hand," he says.

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Wine;ORIGINAL ZIN The New York Times November 25, 1990, Sunday, Late Edition - Final

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November 25, 1990, Sunday, Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section 6; Page 88; Column 2; Magazine Desk

LENGTH: 926 words

HEADLINE: Wine;
ORIGINAL ZIN

BYLINE: BY FRANK J. PRIAL

BODY:
In London some years back, the writer Hugh Johnson and a few of his friends decided to form a club for fans of American **wines.** They called it the Zinfandel Club.

They probably drank more cabernet sauvignon and chardonnay than they did zinfandel, but they did pick the perfect American name. The word "zinfandel" sounds like it might be an instrument in a gypsy orchestra, or a thoroughbred the Aga Khan is running at Auteuil, but in fact it's a grape -- and the only *Vitis vinifera* grape discovered in America.

Discovered is probably not the right word; rediscovered is better. The zinfandel grape turned up in California some time in the last century, but it probably came from Italy, where there is a similar grape called the primitivo. There is actually a winery in California that grows the primitivo -- a bit of reverse snobbism, enologically speaking.

For many years, **wine** drinking was mostly confined to Italian immigrants. Zinfandel, along with alicante, was a grape that old men bought in the railroad yards of New York and Boston and Baltimore. They turned them into **wine** in tenement basements and drank them in sooty backyards, re-creating for a moment the life they'd left behind in the Piedmont and the dusty villages of the Mezzogiorno.

At the jug wineries of California, zinfandel was used to lend color and backbone to **wines** fancifully known as claret, Burgundy and Chianti. Cellar rats (the winery workers who lugged hoses and cleaned tanks) called it "zin." Had they been wordsmiths, they might have taken the next step and called some of the awful **wine** made from it "mortal zin."

No one knows who first recognized that this ugly duckling was really a swan. By the 1950's, however, many of the forward-thinking premium wineries were bottling zinfandel as a varietal -- that is, unblended. It became the canvas on which a generation of artistic **wine** makers expressed themselves, not always with wild success. There were light zinfandels, medium zinfandels and heavy zinfandels. There were soft zinfandels and tannic zinfandels, some of them delightful, some less so. A viscous substance known as late-harvest zinfandel might handily have been eaten with a spoon.

As more and more vintners artfully positioned their cabernets with Bordeaux by vigorously denying the relationship, zinfandel became something of a youthful indiscretion best shrugged off and forgotten. The name survived, of course, in white zinfandel, an extraordinarily popular concoction -- mostly pink, not white -- made by separating the color-laden skins of the grapes from the clear juice early in the fermentation process. It was a clever way to unload thousands of tons of unwanted zinfandel grapes scorned by drinkers of cabernet sauvignon and European **wines.**

White zinfandel is somewhat sweet and slightly carbonated. It is more of a **wine** product than a **wine,** and it sells in the millions of cases, as did the long list of "pop" **wines** that preceded it. Among them were lambrusco, apple **wine,** sangria, cold duck and, back at the dawn of modern **wine** drinking (in the 1950's), the similarly carbonated and similarly colored rose **wines** of Portugal. All these **wines** are still around, by the way, if you're into **wine** nostalgia.

Like the monks of Cluny, a few zinfandel makers kept the faith through the Dark Ages. Ridge Vineyards, which is to zinfandel what Steinway is to pianos, never let down its standards. Seeking out the best grapes in California, Ridge has turned out, year after year, a dazzling variety of zinfandels known by the vineyard or region from which the grapes were picked; they include Lytton Springs, Geyserville, Paso Robles, Howell Mountain and York Creek.

Sutter Home Winery is in the Napa Valley, but it made its name with rich, full zinfandels from Amador County, 100 miles to the east. Known today for its enormous production of white zinfandel, Sutter Home continues to make some of the best Californian zinfandels for the price. Sutter Home has recently bought one of the better-known zinfandel makers in Amador: Montevina **Wines.** Years ago, Montevina made a delightful nouveau-style **wine** each year called Zinfandel Nuevo. Perhaps Sutter Home will think about bringing it back.

Another large-scale producer of good zinfandel is Fetzer Vineyards in Mendocino County. Its special reserve can be a well-concentrated **wine** with plenty of that indefinable taste that is lamely called bramble but that sets zinfandel apart from all other reds.

After Ridge, one of the most serious -- and successful -- zinfandel makers is the **Ravenswood** Winery in Sonoma County. **Ravenswood's** zinfandels are dark and intense, and some are hard to find. They come from separate vineyards in Sonoma and the Napa Valley with names like Old Hill, Dickerson and Cooke. And they are very much worth seeking out and buying. Rodney Strong Vineyards' Old Vines Zinfandel from Sonoma County -- some of the vines are said to be nearly 100 years of age -- is another **wine** of richness and power.

At Clos du Val, in the Stags Leap district of the Napa Valley, Bernard Portet makes a velvety zinfandel with less brawn and more elegance. While it can hold its own with many cabernets, it will never be taken for anything but a zinfandel. Grgich-Hills Cellar, also in Napa, makes a lovely zinfandel in a similar style.

Other top zinfandel producers include Lytton Springs Winery, Joseph Swan Vineyards and the A. Rafanelli Winery in Sonoma County; Storybook Mountain Vineyards in Calistoga, and Shenandoah Vineyards and Baldinelli Vineyards in Amador County.

GRAPHIC: Drawing

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THANKSGIVING POSES TOUGH TASTE CHOICES The Commercial Appeal (Memphis) November 19, 1990, Monday,

Copyright 1990, The Commercial Appeal
The Commercial Appeal (Memphis)

November 19, 1990, Monday, FINAL EDITION

SECTION: FOOD, Pg. C1, **Wine**

LENGTH: 745 words

HEADLINE: THANKSGIVING POSES TOUGH TASTE CHOICES

BYLINE: Fredric Koeppel

BODY:
Do I have to say something about beaujolais nouveau? Do I have to write a few words about matching **wine** with Thankgiving dinner?

Of course I do; those are traditional mid-November **wine** column themes. As easily avoid them as neglect to write about champagne in December or sauvignon blanc in July.

So here goes:

Don't drink beaujolais nouveau with your Thanksgiving turkey.

Well, I feel better getting that out of my system.

Uh oh. Wait a minute. Here's a message from my editor: "Make certain to say something important about what **wine** to have with Thanksgiving dinner. Our readers expect it."

Ah.

As I was saying, dear readers, the traditional Thanksgiving repast, that most American of meals, presents a marvelous yet complicated melange of tastes and sensations, from the hearty gamy turkey itself, the captain of the meal, to the accompanying dressing, often featuring apples or pecans or oysters; from the sour tang of cranberry sauce to the homey cinnamon-touched sauveness of sweet potatoes.

What **wine** could possibly marry with that delectable variety?

My first thought on the subject is to make your **wine** American. Thanksgiving is, after all, an American feast; the ingenious Benjamin Franklin favored the wild turkey (many of us favor Wild Turkey) as the national bird. The origins of many of the celebration's ingredients reflect an American Indian heritage. So choose an American **wine** to match the day.

Of course, one could carry this stance to the extremes of patriotism and choose not merely a **wine** made in America but one made from native American grapes. But the Road of Excess does not always lead to the Palace of Wisdom, and this is a path I would avoid, because **wines** made from these grapes (called vitis labrusca as opposed to the European vitis vinifera) are extremely "foxy" and earthy, don't match food well at all and require large amounts of sugar to be at least palatable.

Arguments can be made for two varietals to serve with Thanksgiving dinner: chardonnay and zinfandel.

If the first, don't pick a crisp young chardonnay still tightly wound around its acid core and shy with its fruit. Choose, instead, a chardonnay mellowed and smoothed by several years' age, when a touch of maturity lends richness and buttery nuance to the fruit and the structure is balanced among fruit, oak and acid.

Recommendations: Chateau St. Jean Robert Young Vineyard 1987, Alexander Valley ($ 22.50); Chateau St. Jean Frank Johnson Vineyard 1984, Dry Creek Valley ($ 18); Clos Pegase Carneros 1987, Napa/Carneros ($ 17); Congress Springs 1986, Santa Cruz Mountains ($ 16); Cuvaison 1988, Napa Valley ($ 16); Grgich Hills 1986 or 1985, Napa Valley ($ 30); Hanzell 1986, Sonoma Valley ($ 35); William Hill Reserve 1987, Napa Valley ($ 19); Kistler Durell Vineyard 1987, Sonoma Valley ($ 20); Kistler Dutton Ranch 1986, Russian River Valley ($ 30); Robert Mondavi Reserve 1987, Napa Valley ($ 25); Rutherford Hill Cellar Reserve 1986, Napa Valley ($ 20); Silverado Reserve 1986, Napa Valley ($ 29); Simi Reserve 1986, Sonoma County ($ 25); Sonoma-Cutrer Cutrer Vineyard 1988, Russian River Valley ($ 18); ZD 1988, California ($ 22).

If you veer toward red (it has to be said) zinfandel on these roads diverging in a Thanksgiving wood, you want a **wine**

emphasizing the grape's natural tendency toward brambley spiciness and berry fruits flavors, and one that's not too tannic. Avoid zinfandels made in a gushy Beaujolais style or the more austere Bordeaux manner.

The problem with finding appropriate zinfandels is that California winemakers aren't making as many of them as they did during the Seventies, the heyday of zinfandel production.

Recommendations: Beringer 1987, North Coast ($ 8); Kenwood Jack London Vineyard 1988, Sonoma Valley ($ 14); La Jota Howell Mountain 1986, Napa Valley ($ 15); **Ravenswood** Vintners Blend 1988, North Coast ($ 9); **Ravenswood** 1988, Sonoma County ($ 14); Storybook Mountain 1987, Napa Valley ($ 13).

For the next day's turkey hash, turkey fajitas, turkey omelets, turkey paella, you're on your own.

PICK OF THE WEEK

Honig Sauvignon Blanc 1988, Napa Valley. This winery makes only one **wine,** and it does a terrific job, a testimony to specialization. The fresh, clean nose holds spice, flint and dried flowers but no grassiness; in the mouth the dry **wine** presents rich spicy pear, melon and gooseberry flavors with a crisp but lush structure. Can't beat it at about $ 10.

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Dining Out Newsday (New York) November 16, 1990, Friday, CITY EDITION

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Newsday

Newsday (New York)

November 16, 1990, Friday, CITY EDITION

SECTION: PART II; Pg. 23

LENGTH: 816 words

HEADLINE: Dining Out

BYLINE: By Jane Freiman. STAFF WRITER

BODY:

PRIX FIXE

18 W. 18th St.

(212) 675-6777

[STAR] [STAR] (two stars)

OPEN: Lunch Monday to Friday, noon to 3 p.m. Dinner Monday to Thursday 5:45 to 11:30 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 5:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.; Sunday 5:30 to 10:30 p.m. Sunday brunch, 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

CREDIT CARDS: All major cards.

COST: Fixed-price menus. Lunch and brunch $ 13.50 and $ 18.50; side dishes $ 3. Dinner $ 21 and $ 36; side dishes $ 4.

RESERVATIONS: Suggested.

WINE: A novel, knowledgeably combined list of California and French **wines** with many gems and five favorable fixed-price levels: $ 18, $ 26, $ 36, $ 38 and $ 58. About 53 bottles cost less than $ 26 while connoisseurs will appreciate the separate high-end reserve list. Best buys: 1987 St. Andrew's Chardonnay (Napa), $ 18; 1988 **Ravenswood** Vintner's Blend Zinfandel (Sonoma), $ 18. Honorable mentions: 1988 Arrowood Chardonnay (Sonoma), $ 26; 1982 Beringer Knight's Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa), $ 26.

THE QUESTION OF GETTING greater value for your dining dollar has been creatively addressed. Borrowing the idea of set-price, three-course menus offered by even the ne plus ultra of Gallic gastronomy, restaurateur Andrew Silverman and chef Terrance Brennan launched Prix Fixe. The name translates as price-fixed and says it all - almost.

Does anyone really expect to find a $ 60 meal for $ 21 or $ 36? It sounds too good to be true. Yet Brennan delivers three courses of highly stylized imaginative American fare at these tidy price levels.

All the contemporary touchstones coexist on his autumn menus. Luscious cold foie gras basks in a coronoa of pomegranate seeds, wild rice, bits of fig and curls of paper-thin duck ham. Tender pasta shells, tossed with peppery Italian bacon, hide over a mound of warm ricotta. Delicately seasoned salmon tartare in a Napoleon layered with lacy potato chips towers over a tangy, cumin-spiked red pepper puree.

Have dinner with six friends and taste everything on the boutique menu. Don't miss the knockout squash soup sparked by blue cheese. An updated Waldorf salad may best the original by pairing warm sea scallops with walnuts, endive and julienned apple. These are just the appetizers.

If one could walk in, eat, and ignore everything else, the food rates three stars. However, it's difficult to overlook hour-long waits between appetizer and main course while the kitchen crew of six pumps out hundreds of artful plates that may be too

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Grape Juice;The Under $ 10 Sure Thing Forbes October 1, 1990

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October 1, 1990

SECTION: FORBES FYI; Pg. 16

LENGTH: 1577 words

HEADLINE: Grape Juice;
The Under $ 10 Sure Thing

BYLINE: BY STEPHEN TANZER; STEPHEN TANZER is editor and publisher of the bimonthly **wine** newsletter, The New York **Wine** Cellar.

HIGHLIGHT:
FYI's innovative oenophile presents ten **wines** that are as pleasing to the palate as they are gentle on the wallet.

BODY:
AT **WINE** TASTINGS, you hear all kinds of excuses for legendary labels that turn out to be costly swill: "It was shaken up in the cab coming downtown." "That aroma of burning rubber will eventually blow off." "Gravitational pull from the full moon . . . rising barometric pressure . . . negative vibes compounded by mass hypnosis." Still, most veteran **wine** drinkers will allow that even the biggest names can be expensive disappointments. And even in the great years, the prestigious bottles may be virtually undrinkable for a decade or more.

Breathes there a **wine** that is both ready to drink upon release and dependably good from vintage to vintage? Among the many thousands of **wines** I've sipped, swallowed, or spat out, only a handful deliver the goods year after year. Oddly enough, except for a few rare $ 30 California cabernets and a couple of esoteric numbers from the south of France, the **wines** that stand out for their consistent quality can be had for under ten bucks.

How can cheaper models be more predictably successful than big-ticket items? To begin with, they typically come from very warm, dry climates. True, the cooler growing areas can produce supremely elegant and complex **wines** when conditions are ideal, but they are also vulnerable to spring frosts, a dearth of sunshine, and harvest rain. Then too, the best-made bargains tend to be blends of grape varieties or fruits from several vineyard sources with distinct microclimates, so their creators have more flexibility than producers working with a single vineyard and only one variety.

The following ten **wines** offer more character and flavor intensity than most bottles at triple the price. Enjoyable from day one, they're even better after a year or so of additional bottle aging. Best of all, they can be purchased and consumed without your having to consult byzantine vintage charts, weather maps and actuarial tables. (Some of these **wines** are limited in availability and may require a special search of the marketplace; don't hesitate to call the importer for assistance in tracking them down.)

REDS

Cousino-Macul Antiguas Reservas -- The finest cabernet sauvignons from Chile's arid central valley zone are some of the world's greatest values in dry red **wine.** Top honors go to the flagship **wine** from the venerable Cousino-Macul winery. The secret here is 70-year-old vines, and five years of barrel and bottle aging before the **wine** is released. The result is a warm, silky, spicy **wine** that resembles a ten-year-old Bordeaux *petit chateau* from a ripe vintage. You can savor this New World offering with beef or lamb while Francophiles chip their teeth on brutally tannic -- and far more expensive -- young clarets. $ 7-$ 9. (Imported by Billington Distributors, Springfield, VA. 703-644-6344.)

Cotes du Rhone (E. Guigal) -- Marcel Guigal is best known for his extravagantly rich single-vineyard Cote Rotie, for which frenzied collectors have been known to pay up to $ 500 a bottle. Happily for us, he lavishes equal care on his simple Cotes du Rhone, a blend made entirely from purchased **wine.** What makes this **wine** so special? Guigal enters a grower's cellar wallet first, so he pretty much gets his pick of the crop. He also uses less of the cherry- and pepper-flavored but essentially blowsy grenache grape, and more syrah and mourvedre, which adds acidity and herbal complexity. The outcome is an uncommonly nuanced **wine** which will stand up to barbecued meats, roast turkey and cassoulet. $ 9-$ 10. (Classic **Wine** Imports, Boston, MA. 617-731-6644.)

Periquita (Jose Maria da Fonseca) -- This proprietary blend, made on Portugal's temperate Arrabida peninsula southeast of

Lisbon, has been around since the 1850s. Its breakthrough occurred in the early 1980s, when a winemaker trained at the University of California at Davis introduced temperature-controlled fermentation to preserve freshness of fruit and minimize volatile acidity (the sharp, nail polish aroma that formerly plagued so many red **wines**). Today's kinder, gentler Periquita still offers an earthy, black cherry tang reminiscent of red Burgundy, but at a fraction of the price. Try it with roasted game birds. Around $ 5. (Cavalier Selections, Boulder, CO. 303-494-7664.)

Corbieres (Domaine de Fontsainte) -- The Corbieres district of France's vast Midi produces a sea of lean, mean *vin ordinaire*. But the Domaine de Fontsainte, with some of the best vineyard sites for the carignan grape that runs through the region, retains its best **wine** to make an engaging, fruity red that's as thirstquenching as Beaujolais -- and cheaper and more consistent to boot. Currently a hit on the West Coast served chilled with mesquite burgers and designer sausages. $ 6-$ 8. (Look for a special bottling called "La Demoiselle," from the property's steepest vineyards in the best vintages; this one, too, can be found for under $ 10.) (Kermit Lynch, Berkeley, CA. 415-524-1524.)

Ravenswood Vintners Blend Zinfandel -- This Sonoma County winery is best known for its intense, limited production single-vineyard zinfandels from some of California's oldest vines. For early drinkability -- and cash flow -- winemaker Joel Peterson created the Vintners Blend, a portion of which is **wine** made from purchased grapes (with 50% new oak used for aging), and the rest from finished **wines** selected to provide whatever qualities the base **wine** may be lacking. He's come up with a flamboyant raspberry-flavored **wine** that boasts unusual complexity for its price. Ideal with spicy Thai food and Tex-Mex. $ 5.50-$ 7.50. (**Ravenswood** Winery, Sonoma, CA. 707-938-1960.)

Gran Sangre de Toro (Torres) -- This renowned, family-owned winery, based in the Penedes region southwest of Barcelona, turns out an array of remarkably good values from traditional Spanish varieties, as well as from international grapes like cabernet sauvignon and chardonnay. The Gran Sangre de Toro is a better version of their regular Sangre de Toro -- made with superior batches of **wine** and more new oak aging. Beginning with the 1986 vintage, a small amount of syrah has been added to the blend of grenache and carignan to give the **wine** more spine and longevity. This deeply concentrated red has a pungent, plummy quality that goes well with winter stews and aged cheeses. $ 7-$ 9. (Seagram Chateau & Estate **Wines,** New York, NY. 212-572-7725.)

WHITES

Macon Ige Domaine des Roches (Carpi-Gobet) -- **Wine** insiders often look to the less chic Maconnais, and away from the top Cote d'Or vineyards, for Burgundy's best chardonnay value. The key to the consistent success of this offering from the Domaine des Roches is hand-picking, which permits the elimination of underripe or rotten berries -- crucial in a region that occasionally suffers a shortfall of sunshine, or a damaging harvest rain. When young, this vibrant, lemony **wine** is the perfect foil for oysters or mussels; with a few years of bottle aging, it develops a buttery richness that holds its own with cold seafood alads. $ 8-$ 10. (Robert Kacher Selections, Washington, DC. 202-832-9083.)

Pinot d'Alsace Les Lutins (Josmeyer) -- Owner Jean Meyer uses the Les Lutins designation for his better casks of the early-maturing pinot auxerrois grape, which ripens beautifully in nearly every vintage. A good portion of Les Lutins comes from Meyer's own holdings, including a patch of the great *grand cru* Hengst vineyard. In very ripe vintages, aromas and flavors run toward peach and tangerine, while in the cooler years the **wine** is dominated by a limey, mineral taste from the chalky Hengst soil. Les Lutins marries beautifully with chicken and freshwater fish; the Alsatians consider the **wine** congenial enough to be coupled with artichoke (the dreaded **wine**-killer), asparagus, and other intransigent vegetables. $ 6-$ 8. (A Christopher Cannan selection. American importers include Pearson's **Wine** Importing Co., Washington, DC. 202-333-6666.)

Joao Pires "White Palmela **Wine**" -- Muscat grapes from Portugal's Arrabida peninsula have traditionally been used to make the fortified dessert **wine** Moscatel de Setubal -- that is, until the innovative Joao Pires firm came up with the idea of bottling a dry, light table **wine** from muscat in the early '80s. This peach- and tangerine-scented beauty has yet to catch on among Portugal's older generation, whose tastes run to oilier whites, but has won partisans on this side of the Atlantic. Its perfumed delicacy makes it the perfect aperitif. Here is the one **wine** on this list that does not profit from bottle aging -- drink it during the year following the vintage. $ 5-$ 7. (World Shippers & Importers, Philadelphia, PA. 215-732-2018.)

Rothbury Estate Brokenback Vineyard -- For most oenophiles, the platonic Australian chardonnary is lush, uncomplicated, and cheap. Alas, steep price hikes in recent years have made the ideal more elusive. This bottling, though, from one of Australia's oldest chardonnay vineyards located in the nearly subtropical Hunter Valley north of Sydney, delivers a smoky, satisfying mouthful year after year. The Brokenback may well be Rothbury's best property for chardonnay: this producer's pricier reserve chardonnay has also come from this site on most recent vintages. Pair with grilled swordfish or creamy chicken dishes, $ 9-$ 10. (Negociants U.S.A., Sonoma, CA. 415-331-3093.)

GRAPHIC: Illustration, no caption, by Kam Mak; Photographs 1 through 10, no caption, by Monica Stevenson

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Hearty wines add to barbecue The San Diego Union-Tribune June 7, 1990 Thursday

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The San Diego Union-Tribune

June 7, 1990 Thursday

SECTION: FOOD; Pg. FOOD-21

LENGTH: 472 words

HEADLINE: Hearty **wines** add to barbecue

BYLINE: Ken Alfrey

BODY:

By now, San Diegans have fired up the barbecue a few times and are looking forward to warm summer evenings in the back yard.

The **wines** that complement these casual summer suppers are as varied as the ingredients for the grill. Sauvignon Blanc offers delightful crisp flavors that match nicely with seasonal garden greens.

Spicy, tangy barbecue sauces help bring out the best in many reds, especially the hearty Zinfandels and Rhone varietal **wines.**

And you can look to lighter Burgundies and Pinot Noirs for the smoky, earthy flavors that go hand-in-hand with grilled preparations. The soft, delicate character of the 1988 Matanzas Creek Sauvignon Blanc won't stand up to a spicy grilled chicken dish, but it accompanies raw vegetables and dips and light hors d'oeuvres extremely well.

It's $11.99 at Big Bear in Del Mar. Callaway Vineyards' Fume Blanc (another name for Sauvignon Blanc) pairs well with grilled fish or chicken in an herbed butter sauce.

It is widely available for under $10 a bottle. Hearty barbecue sauces call for equally hearty **wines.**

Steve Gwynne, of the Spirit Shop at 2160 Avenida de la Playa, La Jolla, suggests the 1988 **Ravenswood** Vintner's Blend Zinfandel at $6.99 to accompany steaks and chops.

Its fresh, appealing fruit is evident even when the **wine** is slightly chilled, Gwynne says.

He also likes a **wine** from Argentina, 1983 Carrascal from Bodegas y Caves Weinert, a Bordeaux-type blend for $6.95. The robust character of the 1985 Petite Sirah from Channing Rudd ($8.99) makes it a good choice for flavorful barbecue dishes, says Bob Bartnett of Vintage **Wines** Ltd., 6904 Miramar Road. The 1989 California Grenache from Bonny Doon Vineyards is also fine barbecue **wine** and a good value at $7, Bartnett adds. Steven Herfi of Del Cerro Liquor, 6380 Del Cerro Blvd., recommends the 1986 Fetzer Barrel Select Cabernet Sauvignon.

This superb bottling is widely available and sells from $7 to $9.50. It's a tremendous value. Jim Bachoua of Del Mar Hills Liquor likes Chianti with tangy barbecued meats and suggests the 1985 Ruffino Chianti Classico at $12. For grilled chicken or pork in light butter sauces, Bachoua likes Beringer Gewurztraminer at $4.99 a bottle. For backyard parties, Dave Clark of the WineSellar in Sorrento Mesa recommends a double magnum of Cotes du Ventoux, La Vieille Ferme.

This 1988 Rhone **wine** matches well with hearty fare.

The double magnum, equivalent to four bottles, sells for $22.99. The 1987 Guenoc Petite Sirah (750-ml size) is an excellent option at $8.90. At the Liquor Land stores in Point Loma and Encinitas, Jeff Slankard often recommends Zinfandels.

His choices include the 1988 Storybook Mountain, Napa Valley, at $9.89 and the 1988 **Ravenswood** Vintner's Blend, $5.99. Questions about **wine** should be mailed to Ken Alfrey, c/o the San Diego Union, P.O. Box 191, San Diego, CA 92112-4106.

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RAISE A GLASS TO GRILLED MEALS The Seattle Times June 6, 1990, Wednesday, Final Edition

Copyright 1990 The Seattle Times Company
The Seattle Times

June 6, 1990, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: FOOD; **WINE;** Pg. D3

LENGTH: 842 words

HEADLINE: RAISE A GLASS TO GRILLED MEALS

BYLINE: BY TOM STOCKLEY

BODY:
Grab those **wine** glasses and gather around the grill. Today's lesson is great **wines** with summer barbecue dishes, just in time for a full season of backyard, outdoor meals.

Picking **wines** for grilled seafoods and meats is not unlike selecting **wines** for any other meal. It's just that this may not be the time to bring out those rare Burgundies or reserve Napa Valley cabernet sauvignons you've been stashing away in the cellar. Grilled foods are simple, but flavorful and hearty. Likewise, **wines** to accompany them should have a straight-forward style, true flavors and be anything but wimpy. The smokiness of the grilled main course demands something that is rich, assertive and refreshing.

Whites, reds and even blush **wines** all have their place around the coals. It just depends upon what you flipped on the grill and how it's been marinated. Here are some easy guidelines along with a few suggestions from recent tastings of new **wines** on the market.

SEAFOOD

Chances are a ton of salmon, halibut, shrimp and other seafood will be coming off Northwest grills this summer. In order to keep the fish moist, most barbecue chefs like to marinate or brush creatures of the deep with some liquid substance containing lemon, herbs or butter. Those ingredients call for chardonnays and sauvignon blancs.

When it comes to chardonnays, you don't want ones that are too oaky or heavy bodied. The fresher more crisp style is perfect. I often reach for Round Hill's economy-priced House Fume Blanc or House Chardonnay. Both sell for about $ 7 a bottle and are great for nearly any type of fish or shellfish.

This is a good time to announce that one of the Northwest's favorite budget chardonnays, Le Sable from Yugoslavia, is back with the 1988 vintage. It may be the best yet with good acidity, clean fruit and a suggestion of melon in the aftertaste. It's the same budget price, $ 5, but now comes in a magnum for $ 7.50, which is a good alternative for entertaining the gang.

Some of the new, dry-styled Johannisberg rieslings from the Northwest are excellent with grilled seafood, as well. I recently wrote a column on the subject, but then discovered one that I had unfortunately overlooked. It was the fruity and very drinkable Facelli Dry Johannisberg Riesling ($ 7.50). Others to consider are made by Hogue, Kiona and Barnard Griffin.

Salmon is quite another story. While chardonnays and sauvignon blancs can be very pleasant, the Northwest drink of choice seems to be pinot noir. Salmon is just rich and oily enough that it pairs up nicely with a medium-bodied red. Fortunately, living here in the Northwest, we have many excellent pinot noirs to pour with our salmon. While Oregon seems to have the corner on pinot noirs, the one that impressed me most recently (at least as a salmon **wine)** came from Washington. It was the 1985 Columbia Woodburne bottling, a soft but flavorful **wine** that hinted of ripe plums and vanilla. It sells for about $ 10.

STEAKS AND OTHER MEATS

Now we graduate into reds that have enough richness and backbone to stand up to those red-meated steaks, lamb chops and even hamburgers. What seems to work best are reds with a little zip and spice to them, such as a zinfandel or cabernet sauvignon. Zinfandels with their raspberry quality and racy style seem to do the trick as well as anything (and they are certainly affordable for a larger crowd).

One of the best values I've seen in a long time is the 1986 Sebastiani Zinfandel which has been selling around here for about $

5. It is a medium style with ripe berry fruit and smooth tannins. Another favorite of mine is **Ravenswood,** from California. The winery's Vintner's Blend, at $ 10, is a real winner with meats that have been basted with **wine** and garlic.

Italian reds, such as chianti, match up nicely with grilled meats, as well. I recently found a very inexpensive one called Linatti that is light, but has clean fruit, is nicely balanced and quite fragrant. The 1988 bottling sells for a mere $ 5.

RIBS AND OTHER
SPICY MEATS

When it comes to something like finger-lickin' good ribs with spicy/hot flavors and smokiness galore, you want a **wine** that has (pardon the expression) guts. Petite sirahs from California and shiraz from Australia are mouth-filling rich with a lingering finish. Right now my favorite petite sirah from California is the Guenoc 1986, a lusty red that took a gold at the Dallas National **Wine** Competition and a "best of class" award at the recent National Orange County Show in California.

Another red that I have found that contains enough earthy spiciness to stand poudly next to those spicy ribs is Washington lemberger. Check out lembergers made by Oakwood Cellars, Snoqualmie, Covey Run and Kiona.

A FINAL BLUSH

Blush **wines,** mostly white zinfandels, can work with grilled foods, as well. Frankly, most of them taste pretty much the same. But I have found more flavor and body in the ones made by Grand Cru, DeLoach, Santino and Beringer. They seem to do best with grilled chicken, pork and sausages.

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Poor player Merlot may get a chance to strut its stuff on the stage Chicago Tribune April 5, 1990, Thursday, NORTH SPORTS FINAL EDITION

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HEADLINE: Poor player Merlot may get a chance to strut its stuff on the stage

BYLINE: By Larry Stone; With this issue, the Food Guide adds a new columnist to augment its coverage of **wine,** spirits and other beverages. In 1988, Larry Stone became the first American to win the International Sommelier Competition, held bi-annually in Paris. A Chicago resident, Stone also is the only person to have earned Master Sommelier degrees in both France and England. Stone will contribute a monthly column of **wine** evaluations and ratings written exclusively for the Tribune. Patrick Fegan, director of the Chicago **Wine** School , will continue to provide two columns a month on **wine**-related subjects. William Rice, the Tribune's food and **wine** columnist, will write a monthly column as well. In addition, "**Wine** Notes" will appear as newsworthy events occur and space allows

BODY:
Every so often fashion thrusts a minor player onto center stage. Sometimes that player performs well and endures. Other times he lasts only a season as a star.

Merlot is one of the entertainers of the **wine** world that long has played merely a supporting role as a varietal. Only in St. Emilion and Pomerol, long considered the off-Broadway equivalent in Bordeaux, did merlot get top billing in fine **wines.**

In California, cabernet sauvignon became the matinee idol, the one variety that would demonstrate to the world that California could produce **wines** equal to the greatest of Bordeaux.

The performance has been long-running, yet the plot has one weakness that has started to wear through. California cabernets on the whole are very tannic and dense **wines,** too ponderous for everyday fare. They can be unpleasantly bitter and astringent in their youth, suitable for drinking with beef, lamb and young cheeses, or enjoyed simply by themselves as a New World equivalent of vintage port.

Merlot, on the other hand, long used as an adjunct to cabernet to soften it and lend it "flesh," can mature very rapidly. The merlot juice is sweet and soft, less tannic by nature than cabernet. The larger berries on the merlot grape mean there is less tannin extracted during fermentation. There are a few exceptions, such as Chateau Petrus and other Pomerol estates, where the growers strive to extract as much of the tannins as possible for longevity and structure in the finished **wine.**

Yet the fruity sweet plum and blackberry flavors of the voluptuous merlot fruit make even these relatively astringent **wines** easier to drink at an earlier state of maturity. Few people can wait for their **wines** to mature for five to ten years at home before they drink them.

Merlot, though not well known or even widely planted, started to become popular as a cabernet alternative when the public discovered that it was similar to cabernet but more accessible, flattering and supple. The legendary sensuality of merlot even inspired one entrepreneur to name and market a "Marilyn Merlot."

At first there were few varietally marketed merlots. Sterling Vineyards' Ric Forman planted a few vines borrowed from his friend Christian Moueix in Pomerol in the early 1970s.

The early Forman merlots were legendary among only a handful of aficionados. The 1974 Sterling Merlot was still delicious, but fully mature, by 1984. Sterling's interest in this variety was followed by the forward-thinking Duckhorn winery that utilized only merlot and cabernet, and bottled them separately. Duckhorn entertained the winemaking world at the time (and still does) with its deeply plummy and dense yet softly tannic merlots, especially the highly prized Three Palms Vineyard merlot.

About the same time, other wineries were beginning to produce less "serious" merlot, among them Clos du Bois. This winery specializes in soft and fruity merlots, made in distinct contrast to its cabernets. They were meant to be enjoyed when they were released. They are light- to medium- bodied, blackberryish, herbaceous and floral, with a dollop of oak-barrel vanilla.

The two styles of merlot, one dense and chewy and the other lighter and fruity, still define what is produced in California today.

Whatever its style, merlot is a versatile companion to a variety of food. Chicken, rabbit, game birds, sausages and even pizza would be proper fare for the lighter merlots, while the heavier styles would go well with the beef and lamb traditionally served with cabernet sauvignon.

With popularity has come a price. Since the plantings of merlot are minuscule in comparison with cabernet, the sudden increase in demand has caused merlot grape prices to soar. A few years ago California merlot **wines** were half the price of comparable cabernets, whereas today they are as expensive or more expensive. This economic circumstance means that the alternative merlots from Washington State or from satellite regions in Bordeaux also should be explored by the thrift-minded consumer.

Tasting notes

(Thirty-nine **wines** were tasted: 1 New York, 7 Washington State, 31 California.)
Recommended:

1986 Sinskey Merlot, Napa. Sweet, leathery blackberries and violets, complex, long tea and clove finish. $20 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/91 points)

1986 Hogue Cellars Merlot, Washington State. Anise, cloves and cherry, blackberry and green tea. This warm, soft, dense and ripe **wine** has only a mineral scented nose to detract from its otherwise copious charms. $10 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/90 points)

1986 Newton Merlot, Napa. Leafy, pomegranates and violets, cinnamon; well balanced, not too extracted in tannins but intensely flavored and focused. Ripe blackberry flavors on palate. Finishes tannic but fruity and could be aged until 1992. $17 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/90 points)

1985 Chateau Ste. Michelle River Ridge Vineyard Merlot, Washington State. This limited bottling is full and tannic, yet balanced, not too sweet or dry, generous but structured. Needs age to resolve hard tannic edges. Black tea and smoke, cassis and blackberry. $15 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/90 points)

1986 Cuvaison Merlot, Napa. One of the denser **wines** with deep berry flavors and background tones of cassis, showing that cabernet sauvignon was added for structure. Though a touch hard at this time, this eventually could be the most balanced and complex in the tasting. $17 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/89 points)

1986 Flora Springs Merlot, Napa. Sweet plums on nose, tastes like plums clean across the palate. Tannic finish, but with relatively soft, ripe tannins. A distinctive and interesting **wine.** $17 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/89 points)

1986 **Ravenswood** Merlot, Sonoma. A muscular **wine** with more than a hint of complexity and of cabernet sauvignon. Nearly Pomerol-like in its aroma and flavor, yet with a Californian ripeness to its palate. $15 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/89 points)

1987 Straus Merlot, Napa. Herbaceous and spicy nose, reminiscent of cardamom and mace, blueberry fruit on palate, soft, moderately sweet finish with a touch of alcohol heat. $20 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/89 points)

1985 Chateau Chevre Merlot, Napa. Sweet and dense **wine,** with soft tea-leaf and blueberry flavors. Definitely sweet finish. $15 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/88 points)

1985 Robert Keenan Merlot, Napa Valley. Slightly too tannic, yet rich with opulent leathery, blackberry and earthy cassis flavors, blueberries and strong black tea. $17 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/88 points)

1986 Clos du Val Merlot, Estate Bottled. Hot blackberries and oak, wooly nose, but balanced on palate, the tannins have resolved and the finish is supple. Clean sweet berry finish. $15 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/87 points)

1986 Belvedere Robert Young Merlot, Alexander Valley. Medium dark, berries and leather, pomegranate. It is a bit on the sweet side and quite soft, ready to drink. $12 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/86 points)

1986 Inglenook Reserve Merlot, Napa. Mineral spirits nose; soft and sweet blueberries and leather on palate, yet clean and intense, even tannic, requiring age. $11 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/86 points)

1988 Vendange Merlot, California. Coffee, blackberry, soft and medium-bodied, tea and black cherry with soft tannins in finish. An outstanding value. $5.25 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/86 points)

1986 Sterling Merlot, Napa. Firm and lean, with some cassis and black tea scents that hint at a portion of cabernet in the **wine.** Slightly tannic impression. $14 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/85 points)

1987 Clos du Bois Merlot, Sonoma County. (23 percent cabernet) Medium bodied and slightly sweet, very slightly herbaceous, with a scent of violets and tea. Easy to drink. $10 ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/83 points)

Also tasted

1985 Buena Vista Private Reserve Merlot, Carneros ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/85 points)

1986 Rutherford Hill Merlot, Napa ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/84 points)

1987 Lakespring Merlot, Napa ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/83 points)

1985 Guenoc Merlot, Lake County ((STAR)(STAR)(STAR)/83 points)