

Message from the Proprietor



Greetings to all of our club members. In this month's pack we present to you a special wine: the first vintage of our single-varietal Viognier from 2015. We've always had a love affair with Viognier, mostly with its flexibility in creating so many different styles of wine. This particular Viognier, though, is an infrequent production that is essentially "untouched" - the rare *unblended* Viognier for us with no oak; just pure grape. We made this limited-availability wine because of the fantastic conditions in 2015. From our location in the South Okanagan, we get a massive stonefruit burst on the fruit, but because of our east-facing slope and cooler overall vineyard conditions, the wine also shows a crisp, clean vitality. Through all of this, the wine also shows a round mouthfeel that we don't see in a lot of whites. I think that if you're into Viognier, you have to try this, and my favourite use for the wine is to pair it with clams or mussels in a nice cream sauce. Just magical.

I hope that you'll enjoy it, and all of the wines in this month's pack.

Sincerely,
Bruce Schmidt

2018 Spring Winery Report

By *Melissa Smits*

Lead Winemaker and Vineyard Manager



Hello Wine Club members!

Good news—we're getting some wines ready for bottling! We are currently preparing our 2017 Riesling and 2017 Rosé as well as

some 2016 barrel-fermented white wines (including an excellent single-varietal Marsanne!) Our 2016 Milepost Merlot will also go to bottle so that it has a little time to rest before release.

Appassimento 2015 was blended into tank from barrel back in January, so it will also go to bottle at the end of the month; then we just need to age it to perfection. It's already had about 18-20 months in the barrel but still has a very

long life ahead.

The cellar work this year has been very even-paced. Weekly white barrel stirring, topping our red barrels every 6-8 weeks, as they tend to evaporate a little from the oak while in storage, and letting our new wines settle to clarity—these are the main cellar operations. The aging process in the cellar takes at least 12 months on the reds and around 6-8 months for the whites, so there's no need to rush just yet. We're planning to sit down and taste 2016 red barrels for assemblage in May.

In the vineyard, we've pruned our grapevines back to about 20 buds each, and have started training and tying the canes as well. This is all setting up for the 2018 vintage. Most of the vineyard work in these months is weather-dependent, and with March temperatures climbing I thought we'd have an early start to spring, but things have cooled in the past



few weeks and we even saw a touch more snow. We expect budbreak, where the vines emerge from dormancy and start producing shoots and leaves, to occur sometime near the end of April. That's when it gets really busy! The winter happens to be a great time to taste and get some palate exercise, so I've made a point to attend a handful of our Vinstitute Wine School winter sessions, which have been an excellent way to try new wines with a great group! But Spring is around the corner now, and I'm looking forward to this season.

Cheers!
Melissa

Today's Lesson: Screw Caps and Corks - SHOWDOWN!

By *Moss Scheurkogel*

Director of Marketing and Education



The Intersection lineup features around half screw cap (commonly called "Stelvin" after the most popular brand) and half cork, but people often ask if

we have a preference. My answer is usually that we have sealed each bottle with the closure that suits it best. Cork, of course, is regarded as the peak of classiness in wine. There's a beautiful tradition to removing a cork (even if it involves banging a shoe on a wall), so it's obvious why so many prefer natural wood closures over the crass artificiality of the screw cap. But there's more to a closure than just presentation, and for decades now it has been shown that even high-quality wines can be kept in Stelvin.

One trait of cork is its ability to let the

wine "breathe." Since cork is spongy and flexible, air can trickle into the wine and back out again, beginning a slow oxidization that will break down the tannin in the wine (see last newsletter's article) and make the wine taste velvety and softly textured. This is the main premise of aging wines - to take rough early products and smooth them into something far superior.

Screw caps, however, provide a tighter seal that can completely stop the flow of air to a wine. While this may inhibit growth, it does also slow the degradation process. Ultimately you get a safely stored wine that won't change as quickly, and for some light wines that's ideal. At Intersection, we use cork to seal the wines that have good aging potential and should be kept in the bottle for a few years, and we use caps to seal the bottles that taste great right away and could be appreciated at any time.

However!

There are also some downfalls to cork. Cork can dry out and break. It has natural variations that can let too much air in. It can degrade in the bottle and crumble.

The biggest concern, though, is the risk of "Cork Taint." This fault occurs when trace amounts of the chemical TCA are carried to a wine through the cork, and result in a funky odour that smells like wet dog, mothballs, or damp cardboard. When you are presented with the cork at a fancy restaurant, this is what you're smelling for. TCA is most rampant when producers bleach their corks to make them look clean, but can be found in even the most natural products. Some studies have shown TCA to be present in anywhere from 1.2% to a whopping 7% of cork-sealed wines.

Intersection uses composite corks that are more uniform than natural cork, provide a firm seal, and have been guaranteed by the manufacturer to be TCA-free. But in the end, Stelvin is always safe, which can mean huge savings for a winery and less disappointment for their fans. Add in the fact that Stelvins can now be engineered to allow "breathing" in the same way that a cork does, and you may be seeing more and more screw caps in the future.

Pretty neat, eh?
Moss

Donna's Wine-Braised Short Ribs

Pair with Cabernet Franc

- ✗ ~3 lbs short ribs
- ✗ cooking oil
(I use ghee or grape seed)
- ✗ 1 cup flour, seasoned with salt, pepper, and herbs
- ✗ 1 large onion, chopped
- ✗ 3/4 cup celery, finely chopped
- ✗ 2 cloves garlic, chopped or pressed
- ✗ red wine (Milepost Merlot is perfect)
- ✗ 1 cup organic beef stock
- ✗ bay leaves, basil, oregano

First off, bone-in ribs do yield a much tastier and more tender result. If they are really fatty you can trim some off, but bear in mind that the fat carries the flavour; better to just skim it off after cooking.

1) Preheat the oven to 325° F. If you want to slow cook, you can adjust the temperature to 275° and increase cook time to around four hours.

2) Dredge the ribs in the flour. I use whole spelt flour with mineral salt and freshly ground black pepper, plus about a teaspoon of dried basil, thyme, or oregano.

3) Heat some high-smoke

point cooking oil in a Dutch oven or other heavy oven-proof skillet. Add the ribs in batches, careful not to crowd the pot, and flip to brown on all sides.

4) When all ribs are browned, remove and add the chopped onions and celery to the pot. Let them sweat a bit and then add the garlic. Cook for 10 minutes, then deglaze the pot with a splash or two of good red wine. Scrape all the browned goodness from the bottom of the pot and stir.

5) Add stock and a splash or two more of red wine and bring to a gentle boil. (The

wine's acid tenderizes the ribs and adds great flavour.)

Return the ribs to the pot and add a bay leaf or two.

6) Cover the pot and bake 2-3 hours. The ribs are done when the meat pulls off the bones easily. (If they seem tough, don't worry - just cook a little while longer, maybe with a bit more wine!)

Remove the ribs and keep warm while you skim fat from the remaining liquid and let it reduce over high heat.

7) Serve the ribs with the reduced sauce, peas, mashed potatoes, and a big glass of Cab Franc!



2015 Viognier *Drink now through 2020 (optimal 2018-2019) - 140 cases made*

Aromas of ripe peaches and cream, intensified by a slight sparkling effervescence. Palate shows ginger and shaved fennel bulb with peach and pear balanced on mild acidity and a soft, rounded mouthfeel.

This refreshing little number is paradoxically clean and crisp while also boasting a rounded palate with some of the oily viscosity that makes the best Viogniers unique. As Bruce says, try it with seafood in cream sauce, or with a mango chicken curry.



2015 Marsanne *Drink now through 2022 (optimal 2019-2021) - 20 cases made*

A delicate and rare grape, Marsanne only truly flourishes in select years. 2015 was one such year, allowing us our first ever barrel-fermented, single-varietal expression of this entrancing and elusive grape. Six months in neutral French oak, with full lees contact and twice-weekly barrel stirring, results in a wine that is complex and round. Leading with candied ginger on the nose and progressing to elegant hints of almond and citrus peel on the palate, the Marsanne is exceptional with seafood, turkey, or just a good book.



2013 Silica *Drink now through 2028 (optimal 2023-2025) - 387 cases made*

As stock dwindles, this pack marks the last time one of our 2013 reds will be publically released, appropriately ending with our winery favourite: the Silica Merlot. Grown in pure sand, the Silica is bottle-aged for two years before release to subdue its high natural tannin. The result is a wine that is now entering its "golden age," showing subtlety and nuance to match its now-velvety tannin, but still with enough body to age another 5 years. Herbal red fruit tones enwreath the wine and make it an excellent accompaniment to rack of lamb or pancetta with baked olives.



2015 Milepost Merlot *Drink now through 2025 (optimal 2023-2025) - 475 cases made*

A pure representation of Merlot from our vineyard's hottest year, the 2015 MPM is jammy and fruit-forward, bursting with stewed blackberry jam on the nose and balanced with a hint of clove and cocoa. This folds easily into a rich, dark fruit palate showing spice and smoke from 12 months in primarily neutral French oak, opening up into tones of brown sugar.

Pair with heavy, protein-rich foods like beef tartare or BBQ pulled pork.



2015 Cabernet Franc *Drink now through 2028 (optimal 2025-2027) - 650 cases made*

The 2015 Cab Franc shows all of the rich, dark fruit of our award-winning 2013, coupled with a complex, intoxicating nose of roasted red pepper and dried cranberry. Notes of date, fig, and licorice round out a well-textured wine with finely balanced acid and tannin. While young, this wine is showing great straight out of the bottle. Pair with butter-poached pork loin or black lentil and goat cheese ravioli, always using fresh herbs to enhance the flavour.

For more tasting notes, visit www.xwine.ca/wine-list