

## Message from the Proprietor



Greetings to all of our wine club members, new and returning. Building Intersection has been a long journey, starting in 2005 with countless hours of labour converting an orchard into a world-class vineyard. The process has been infinitely rewarding, and I have been joined in my efforts by many talented friends. I find that it is time now, however, for me to step back from the winery a little. Not to retire, not really, but simply to redirect my attentions into slower pursuits. As such, Intersection as a winery is going to change in a few ways in 2020. With the current global crisis keeping people at home, we've been operating in recent weeks from a more "virtual" standpoint - this is a model we are going to be exploring in the year to come. Melissa and Moss have their own ideas and their own ambitions for what is to come in 2020 as well, but they'll speak of those things in their own time. But rest assured that whatever changes may come, and whatever shape it may take, Intersection will always be a place where good wine and good friends meet.

Thank you all for everything,  
*Bruce Schmidt*

## 2017 White Retrospective



By *Melissa Smits*  
Lead Winemaker and  
Vineyard Manager

Hello Club members!  
We've got a great  
selection of wines lined  
up for this spring pack!

We're very happy to have a supportive fanbase and family, who love our wines as much as we do! We'd especially love to share food pairings with these versatile whites and reds as we all do more home cooking and host smaller, safely-distanced gatherings. In times of uncertainty, the comfort of food, wine and care for our loved ones is essential to keeping our interior balance. I personally like to pair wines with reading and gardening, so I'll share those

matches on our social media too! I wanted to talk about the 2017 white wine you're getting in this pack, since they show off what we can achieve in more difficult seasonal conditions. 2017 was wet with a lot of spring runoff and an intense forest fire season. The fruit that we brought in was clean, but lighter in flavour/texture and higher in acidity. So here's what I did: I applied some knowledge that I picked up while working with sparkling wine, and pressed all the Viognier and Marsanne whole bunch, dividing the juice into "fractions" that could be isolated. This is important because as the press cycle runs, different stages in the press have different levels of acid. Isolating allows us to blend components to capture the softer elements and eliminate the harder, similar to how spirits are made. Once the

ferment was complete, I refrained from "racking" the yeast solids away from the liquid. Yeast is a key component in barrel aged wines, lending more texture the longer it's in contact with the wine: think of the toasty, brioche-like qualities of Champagne. The blending decisions I made after 10 months of barrel aging should probably remain a trade secret, but I'll say that varying blends of our harder and softer wines has been key to the stylistic differences between our single-varietal Viognier and the Viognier-Marsanne.

All of our wines receive an exhausting amount of attention, and pair with far more than just food. Staying at home, I recommend having most of ours with podcasts and boardgames :)

*Melissa*

**Note from Moss:** *Life has been frantic at the winery lately, rushing our club pack to get it into our members' hands sooner, and working with diminished staff. So for my segment I've decided to re-run my first article from December of 2017. Enjoy!*

## Today's Lesson: Oak Shield

By *Moss Scheurkogel*  
Director of Marketing and Education



Tobacco smoke, toffee and crème brûlée, fresh-cut cedar. We can usually recognize the smell and taste of oak barrels in our wine.

But what many of our visitors don't realize is that barrels provide much more than just an "oaky" taste, and in many wines can barely be detected at all. Our 2013 Silica Merlot, for example, exudes dark berry and fruit spice to the point where you may not realize that it has been thoroughly oaked for 12 months.

Oak can enrich a wine in several different ways, but here I want to discuss the way that oak can prolong the ageing potential of a wine by introducing wood tannin. Tannin itself is an organic substance found in leaves, twigs, nuts, berries, and

more (in fact, the word "tannin" comes from the old German word for "oak." Think "tannenbaum.") We encounter it when steeping tea, when brewing coffee, and when macerating grape juice with its skins and seeds to create red wine.

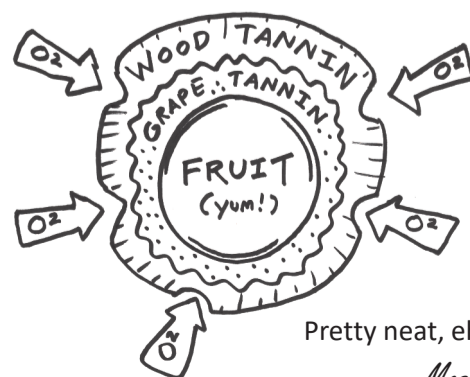
Tannins lend mouth-drying astringency and density to a wine, but we don't just use them for texture and taste (after all, many people don't care for the fuzzy grip of high-tannin wines.) Rather, one of our prime uses for tannin is actually to "insulate" a wine from oxidation.

Imagine your wine as a juicy sphere of fruit flavour, fresh with the taste of ripe grapes and elevated through fermentation. Sounds good, right? Unfortunately, as a bottle ages, trace amounts of oxygen penetrate the seal of the cork or even the screw cap and begin to erode that bright fruit flavour. What starts as fresh and racy fades or turns.

Tannin provides a shield against the air, though. And wood tannin from oak tends to move right to the front lines. Well

balanced levels of wood and grape tannin will bear the brunt of the air's assault, breaking down over time to integrate into the wine. Through this process, the dry astringency of young tannin melts away and softens the overall taste of the wine while protecting the fruit within. Those fruit flavours will still change over time, but tannin can keep them from breaking down too quickly.

In simple terms, oak-aged wines can taste better with time because the perception of tannin fades while the perception of fruit persists.



Pretty neat, eh?

*Moss*

**Moss "That Chicken Looks Old" Harissa Chickpea Fry-up**  
Pair with Silica Merlot

- ✗ 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ✗ 8 skin-on, bone-in chicken thighs
- ✗ 1 small onion, minced
- ✗ 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ✗ 2 tbsp tomato paste
- ✗ 2 15-oz. cans chickpeas, rinsed
- ✗ 2 tbsp harissa paste
- ✗ ½ cup low-sodium chicken broth
- ✗ ¼ cup chopped parsley
- ✗ Lemon wedges

*Growing up, my best friend's dad worked in Algeria and would always bring harissa paste home. I love having it in the house, but it doesn't get used often. A great excuse to raid your spice drawer or the "paste" section of your fridge is when you haven't been to the store (say, because of a global quarantine) and need to drag some old meat out of the freezer or grab some nearly-expired cans of chick peas from the pantry. Because this meal is about adapting to what you have (and need to use up), make liberal substitutions for just about everything (see notes at the end.)*

- 1) Preheat oven to 425°. Heat oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Season chicken with salt and pepper. Working in 2 batches, fry chicken until browned, about 5 mins per side; transfer to a plate.
- 2) Pour off all but 1 tbsp drippings from pan. Add onion and garlic; cook, stirring often, until softened, about 3 mins. Add tomato paste and cook, stirring, until it begins to darken, about 1 min. Add chickpeas, harissa, and broth; bring to a simmer.
- 3) Nestle chicken, skin side up, in chickpeas; transfer skillet to oven. Roast until

chicken is cooked through, 20–25 minutes. Top with parsley and serve with lemon.

**SUBSTITUTIONS:**  
*No harissa? Try any chili paste, sriracha, or chili flakes.*

*No tomato paste? Reduce 4-6 tbsp of tomato sauce*

*No broth? Use white wine. We know you have some now.*

**PAIRING NOTE:**  
*Spicy food and wine tannins can inflame each other, so I've reduced the level of heat in this recipe to match the Silica. It works nicely for our tastes, but feel free to adjust for your own.*



**2017 Viognier-Marsanne** *Drink now through 2022 (optimal 2019-2021) - 169 cases made*

Our perennial blend of Viognier and Marsanne, designed to enhance the delicate tones of the Marsanne by using the Viognier's natural structure. A complex and delightful pairing wine, well-suited to drink alongside earthy white meats, from roast turkey to oysters to pork terrine with Melissa's apricot BBQ sauce (see website for past newsletter recipes.)



**2016 Marsanne** *Drink now through 2021 (optimal 2020) - 94 cases made*

A rare grape with a unique fragrance and texture, Marsanne is also quite fragile in the vineyard, requiring extreme care. The resulting wine has beautiful nuance and gorgeous tones of subtle citrus fruit and dried herbs. Drinks perfectly on its own, but with food pairs beautifully with roasted garlic bulbs and smoked salmon.



**2015 Silica Merlot** *Drink now through 2029 (optimal 2022-2025) - 332 cases made*

Coming from the hottest growing season on record, the Silica has responded with dense, jammy fruit concentration and bold, velvety tannins that will age magnificently over the next 6-8 years. When appreciated now, try decanting the wine for an hour before enjoying, and pairing with foods that contain protein or fat, like rack of lamb or with pancetta and baked olives



**2015 Alluvia Merlot** *Drink now through 2028 (optimal 2021-2024) - 410 cases made*

From the heat of the 2015 season the Alluvia has been ripened to perfection, showing intense tones of dark fruit and earthy tobacco smoke. The tannins are finely balanced to ensure long aging potential while still allowing the wine to be enjoyed immediately. Best paired with grilled ribs and caramelized onions.



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

The 2015 Cab Franc brims with rich, dark fruit, coupled with a complex, intoxicating nose of roasted red pepper and dried cranberry. Notes of date, fig, and liquorice round out a well-textured wine with finely balanced acid and tannin. An excellent choice for cellaring but tasting excellent straight from the bottle right now (although we recommend using a glass when you have guests over).

For more tasting notes, visit [www.xwine.ca/wine-list](http://www.xwine.ca/wine-list)

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