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The Bluffs Food & Wine *gazette*



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A publication of the Council Bluffs Branch of the International Wine and Food Society



President's Comments

[Editor's note. This article was inadvertently dropped by yours truly in November.]

Dear Members,

Winter has come earlier than usual. If you are like me, you tend to want to stay in where it is warm and avoid the cold. Riesling is one wine that I look to in winter. Riesling is one of the few grapes that is capable of producing a complete spectrum of wine styles, from bone dry to lusciously sweet.

One of my new favorites is the 2012 Erdener Treppchen Riesling Spätlese WE 94 WS 90 Pts. The Spätlese ("late picked") designation means that the grapes get an extra week or two of hang time, which helps them develop higher ripeness and deeper flavors than Kabinett. It is a fruit-driven Riesling that combines extraordinary concentration and length with bracing minerality.

The Dr. Loosen Estate was the Top 100 Winery of the Year 2013, Wine & Spirit and has been in the same family for over 200 years.

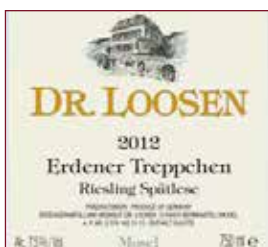
The Erdener Treppchen vineyard
(The Little Staircase of Erden)

The Erdener Treppchen (pronounced AIR-din-er TREP-shen) vineyard is so steep that long ago, stone steps were built into the hillside to enable workers to reach the vines. This vineyard was rated "First Vineyard" ("Erste Lage") in the 1868 Prussian classification of the Mosel, and is rated "Great First-Class" in the Wine Atlas of Germany by Hugh Johnson & Stuart Pigott (1995). The iron-rich, red slate soil produces wines that are muscular and complex, with an intense mineral finish. Dr. Loosen's single-vineyard vines average 70 years old, all on original rootstock (phylloxera can't survive in the Mosel, so ungrafted vines are allowed here). Old vines produce naturally lower yields, resulting in higher concentration and richness.

Hopefully you will like this wine as much as I do.

Enjoy!

Bob Kossow



Wine Spectator

Taut, with some minty and herbal notes to the broad ripe apple, pear and dried citrus flavors. Heady lavender and tangerine hints stretch out on the finish.

Drink now through 2027.



Editor's Corner

Wow, what a great time we had at the Irish Dinnèar event at the Omaha Country Club. It was just plain fun, with great wines, gourmet Irish cuisine (I didn't know gourmet and Irish cuisine could be used in the same sentence, and I'm Irish!), a festive atmosphere, photos with Irish props, and of course, the Irish dancers. These kids were great, and their level of dedication and practice was quite obvious. You must read about how the efforts of Bill Clark and Jill Panzer came off.

If you Google the question, there are around 900 known kinds of cheese in the world. This doesn't count small producers making the same style of cheese but with variations on ingredients. But I thought it would catch your attention better if, for a title, I paraphrased the 50 Shades of Grey phenomenon than to say 900 Shades of Cheese! The reason I bring up cheese is because our April 12th event at V. Mertz featured a cheese tasting, something we have not done since I have been a member of the Council Bluffs Branch. The topic is HUGE, as I found out doing the research for the article. If a definitive cheese article is on the IWFS National web site, I didn't find it. In fact, I couldn't find even one, definitive or not. There is a lot of opinions out there, sometimes contradictory, on what cheese goes with what food, not to mention wine. And no, Virginia, not all cheese goes with wine, contrary to popular (and misinformed) opinion. There's also a lot of pairing charts out there. I tried to come up with something you can use far into the future. Be sure to read it and become more confident and informed with your next wine/cheese pairing.

In another though provoking article, John Fischer asks a simple question: What is Wine? Have you ever really thought about this question? How do the various aspects of the wine interact with your senses? What is a perfect wine? Have you ever had one? Not just something some critic said was perfection, but one that affected you viscerally, leaving you virtually speechless? Read on.

Bon Appétit et bon vin!

Tom Murnan

**An avid cheese lover, Brillat-Savarin
remarked: "A dessert without cheese is like a
beautiful woman with only one eye."**

—Brillat-Savarin





Event Report: An Irish Dinnèar featuring the Craoi na Tìre Irish Dancers

by Tom Murnan

Maybe it's just because I am three-fourths Irish, but I had a great time at our Irish themed event at the Omaha Country Club. A relaxed, fun atmosphere prevailed, starting at the door with the photo props. We had the **Craoi na Tìre Irish Dancers** for entertainment after every course. And we had great food. Now, let's face it: Ireland is not known for their cuisine. We're talking a lot of boiled things on the old sod, and potatoes. Plenty of potatoes. But **Chef Jake Warneke** was up to the challenge. The challenge got bigger when first time event producer **Bill Clark** told the chef that wine, not his first impulse, beer, was to be served. From what I could see and taste, the results were splendid. Fellow producer, **Jill Panzer**, was in charge of arranging the

dancers. **Chef Jeff Owen** actually executed the meal. We had 37 attendees (and 3 no shows), of which 5 were guests.

We started out with some pretty impressive quaffing wines. Many times, the quaffers are not all that memorable, but this time, **Steve Hipple** donated bottles of 1994 Caymus Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and 1997 **Robert Mondavi Winery Cabernet Sauvignon Stags Leap District**. I thought the initial sparkler excellent as well: **Mumm Napa Brut Rosé N.V.** This went quite well with **Oysters on the Half Shell**, which were delicious. But there was also wonderful **charcuterie from the Grey Plume** restaurant in Mid Town Crossing. Imported Irish cheeses and house made bread and mustard topped off the appetizers.

Off to the side of the charcuterie display was something I had never tried before, and I've been to Ireland twice: **Irish Whiskey Poutine**. Jill told me when she worked as a bar maid for six months when she was just out of college, they served this in many pubs. Mushrooms are sautéed in butter and garlic, then whiskey is added. On another pan, heavy cream is simmered until bubbling. Add the cooked mushrooms and reduced whiskey, and top with butter. Where there's fat there's flavor. I could feel my arteries hardening after the second bite! But what a crave inducing bite. This is just the sauce. Then you pour the sauce over freshly deep fried French fries. Just what the Cardiologist ordered, and delicious to boot. You can't eat just one. A little bit of this pub fare goes a long way.

Once at table, the **Spraoi (fish) course** was delivered. Two just cooked **scallops** were given an Irish blessing with the addition of a hash made from brisket, a very upscale corned beef. The accompanying wine, a **Charles Smith Kung Fu Girl Riesling** from Washington State, had a bit of sweetness like a German Kabinett, and married well with the sweetness of the scallops. A Hollandaise sauce finished the dish.

Our **Craoi na Tire dancers** were introduced by **Patrice Weakley**, one of the club owners. They ranged in age from 8 to 22. Each dancer wore a traditional Irish costume and a wig. The costume can be any color, not just green. The girls pick the color and style. They dance hard shoe, soft shoe, and reels all year round. The world



championship is in Montreal at the end of March. One of the dancers qualified for World. The girls ate chicken strips and French fries as they waited between courses.

The **Sailead (salad)** course was next. This was a deconstructed reuben / frisée salad. Unfortunately, my salad was too salty. Squares of the reuben (brisket) and home made croutons also shared the plate. A **2013 Domaine Huet Le Haut-Lieu Sec Vouvray** worked to counteract the salt and bitterness in the frisée.

The dancers this time got as close as the Irish come to ballet: an Irish jig. A high energy dance, the girls performed for about three minutes.

Anraith (soup) was next. **Smoked Haddock Chowder with Irish Brown Bread** was rich, creamy and a bit smoky.

Besides the fish and cream, it also sported potatoes. There was some differences of opinion as to which wine went better with the chowder: a **2012 Tablas Creek Éspirit de Tablas Blanc** or a **2012 Beringer Private Reserve Chardonnay**. The Tablas was composed of Rhône varietals and was dry and minerally, while the Beringer was a woody (oaky), buttery Chardonnay. Slightly more liked the Tablas than the Beringer.

We learned about the difference between hard and soft shoes when the dancers performed. Only boys would use hard shoes (boots) so the cobblers would add up to 50 nails in the girls' shoes to get a hard sound as for tap dancing. The girls danced a more modern reel this time around.



An **Chèad Entree** proved to be a **Braised Short rib** with cabbage, carrot cream and Brussels sprout. This was a very earthy dish, and the **Erath Leland Vineyard Pinot Noir 2012** was an excellent choice. The wine was recommended by Chef Jeff.

Our last dance was all tap after a bit of education. The costumes are embroidered by designs inspired by the **Book of Kells**. It was a tradition that dancing be done after Sunday Mass. Wigs came into style about 15 years ago, saving the girls and their mothers hours in styling their hair. No one really knows why Irish dancers dance with their arms at their side. One theory was they did it to protest a queen they disliked. The other theory is that Pubs were also a popular place to dance, and since they were usually pretty small, arms

at the side was designed to prevent spilling too much Guinness.

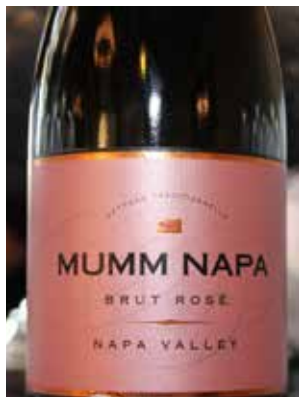
The **An Dara Entrée** was our final meat course. There is a lot of lamb in Ireland, and a lot of mutton, but we had a delicious **rack of lamb with new potato, beet, watercress and Guinness Gastrique**. The potatoes were stained red, and the beets were a nice, refreshing touch providing a bit of moistness. We again had two wines to compare: a **Vinum Cellars The Scrapper Cabernet Franc 2010** and a **2009 Caparzo Brunello di Montalcino**. Cabernet Franc is most often used as a blending wine and not so much on its own. So, it was Italy vs. California. I favored the underdog Scrapper as the Brunello seemed more tannic and ungenerous.

Milseog (dessert) was an **Irish Coffee and Black and Tan Ice Cream**. Black and

Tan referred to the beer tittle which is half dark Guinness and half lighter Harp beer. It did indeed have beer in the ice cream. The Irish coffee came from a mix called Hot Irishmen Irish Coffee Liqueur. It uses Guatemalan coffee and Irish brown sugar pot distilled Irish Whiskey.

Who knew that Irish cuisine could be such high end? It was, in the hands of our two chefs. Many thanks to Bill Clark for selecting the venue and the wines, to Jill Panzer, whose inspiration it was to have an Irish affair replete with Irish dancers, to Patrice Weakley and her company of dancers, and the entire Omaha Country Club staff who raised usual Irish staples into a culinary event.











50 Shades of Cheese: Cheese & Wine Pairings

Edited by Tom Murnan

There's a lot of information about cheese and wine pairings out there, some of it contradictory. One thing they all agree on is that all wine doesn't automatically go with any cheese. One way to think of the subject is: when is the last time you had wine and milk together? Cheese is oil based while wine is water based. Cheese can be made from cow's, goat or sheep's milk. The old French adage is buy on bread, sell on cheese. The misperception is that the cheese automatically makes the wine taste better. Cheese coats the palate and smooths out the tannins, especially from a young, rough wine like Cabernet Sauvignon. But the wrong cheese can also make your wine taste terrible. It is not a one shot, default solution. Goat cheese can annihilate a tannic, young red wine and make it taste tinny, where a Sauvignon Blanc will taste wonderful with that same chèvre.

Cheese can and will hide wine flaws (sell on cheese). But new research at the UC Davis suggests that cheese diminishes the subtle traits of wine, both the desirable (like berry flavors) and the undesirable (astringency or tannin).

On the one hand we don't want to get

too esoteric and pedantic in this article. Let your palate be your guide and experiment. But on the other hand, we don't want you to make major pairing blunders. So, I will divide this article into three sections: Categories of Cheese; Wines that go well with them; and General Tips.

THE CHEESES

Here are some major categories or types of cheeses that you can find in our area. It is by no means a definitive list.



Soft Cheese: These range from being soft enough to spoon out to semi-firm. Their fat content is lower than hard, longer aged cheese, but they seem creamier. Their rinds can be seeded with penicillium (known as **bloomy-rind**), or be **washed-rind** (washed on the outside when ripening with either brine, wine, beer or brandy).

There is also **cream enriched (triple cream)** soft cheeses. They typically **do not go well with red wine**. Cheese in this Soft category includes the following.

Bellwether Farm, Boursin, Brie, Brillat-Savarin, Bucheron, buffalo mozzarella, Camembert, Carmody, Crescenza, Explorateur, Fontina, Gouda (young), Mascarpone, Morbier, Muenster, Neufchatel, Pont-l'Évêcque Pave Affinois, Reblochon, Taleggio, Teleme.



Semi-Soft Cheese: Bel Paese, Baby Swiss, Colby, Fontina, Havarti, Kasserli, Madrigal Baby Swiss, Morbier, Port Salut.

Semi-Hard Cheese: Cheddar, Chesire, Cotija, Double Gloucester, Gouda, Graddost, Jack, Panela, Provolone, Sonoma Jack.



Hard Cheese: These cheeses have aged long enough to be rid of excess moisture, unlike the soft and semi-soft cheeses. They are definitely harder to slice. Their flavors are more complex and nuanced. This is the category that matches best with red wines, especially fine, aged reds. They do not coat the mouth with butter fat as the softer cheeses do. Popular names of hard cheeses are as follows.

Asiago, Boerenkaas (aged Gouda), Derby, Edam, Emmental, Grana Padano, Gruyère, Jarlsberg, Leichesther, Manchego, Montasio, Ossau-Iraty, Parmigiano-Reggiano, Pecorino Romano, Prima Kaese (aged Gouda), Raclette, Reggiano, Roncal Capriole Tomme, Roth Kase Gruyere, Sagpond Emmentaler, Shelburne Farms Cloth-Bound Cheddar, Swiss, Tomme de Savoie, Vermont Farmhouse Cheese, Vermont Shepherd, Washington State University Cougar Gold, Wensleydale, Zamarano

Goat and Sheep Cheese: Goat cheese can be tangy and a bit gamy. Fresh goat cheese is high in acid and can have a chalky quality. As it ages, it hardens and gets crumbly.

Sheep cheese is usually aged and as it does so, it becomes mild and hard enough to fit into the hard cheese category. Sheep's milk has more fat and protein than cow's milk. It is richer and it generally takes less sheep's milk to make a pound of cheese than cow's milk. Cheese made with sheep's milk tends to have a nutty and sweet flavor.



Goat Cheese names include Brin d'Amour, Brunet, Chabichou de Poitou, Capricorn, Caprino, Chaput, Chabichou

chèvre (fresh), Clochette, Crottin (aged), Crottin de Chavignol, Garrotxa, Montrachet, Pico, Valençay.

Sheep Cheese includes: Berkswell, Brocciu, Manchego, Manouri, Ossau-Iraty, the various Pecorinos (Romano, Rustica, Pepperoncino, etc.) Petit Basque, Serra da Estrella. (Roquefort is a sheep cheese, but it is a blue and classified below, under Very Strong.)

Both goat & Sheep cheese: Traditional Feta.

Very Strong Cheeses: These have loud, brassy personalities and are not for everyone. They include the blue cheeses, which have a strain of blue or green penicillium running through them. They are usually creamy and soft and do not go well with red wine. Other extreme cheeses are stinky, musky, peppery, smoky, and slightly ammoniated. These cheeses take fortified or sweet wines to match them.



Blue Cheeses: Berkshire, Bingham, Blue Castello, Cabrales, Danish Blue, Fourme d'Ambert, Gorgonzola, Great Hill, Jersey, Maytag, Perail, Picón, Point Reyes, Rogue River Valley Creamery, Roaring Forties, Roquefort, Shropshire, Stilton, Wensleydale, Westfield Farm.

Strong Cheeses: Bellewether Farms Pepato, Chaput Metis, Cheddar (smoked), Crottin de Chavignol, Epoisses, Leiden, Livarot, Limburger, Monte Enebro, Munster, Pepato, Pont l'Evêque, Robiola Piedmonte, Roomao, Sontheim Tilsit, Stanser Scafchas, Taleggio.

THE WINES

Here are the wines that from experience, and trial and error, complement an array of cheese types. In a wine and cheese tasting, try the wine first, before the palate gets coated with the cheese. Please note that yes, there are some wines that go with more than one type of cheese. This is because of cheese taste variation and complexity, as well as vintage distinction. For example, Beaujolais can stand in with a hard cheese like Emmenthal or a soft crumbly feta. So

take this for what it is: a general guide. The ultimate decision is yours to make.

Soft Cheese: Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc, Gewurztraminer, Champagne (Brie, Camembert Reblochon), White Zinfandel, Vidal, Beaujolais, Bordeaux, Chianti, Riesling (dry), Riesling (sweet, Epoisses), Sancerre, Sparkling wines, Verdelho Madeira, Viognier (Camembert, Tomme).

Hard Cheese: Bardolino, Beaujolais, Beer (dark), Barolo, Barbaresco, Bordeaux (red), Brunello di Montalcino, Burgundy (red, Tomme de Savoie) and white (Comté and Garrotxa), Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Chianti Riserva (Pecorino Toscano), Côtes du Rhône, Cabernet (Jack or aged Cheddar), Gewurztraminer, Madeira, Merlot Jack), Pedro Ximénez (very sweet Sherry), Taleggio, Pinot Noir, Ribera del Duero, Rioja (Garrotxa, Cheddar), Sancerre, Sangria, Sauvignon Blanc, Sherry (sweet, blue and very strong cheeses like Cabrales), Syrah (Pyrenees mountain cheeses) Tawny Port, Verdelho Madeira, Viognier, Zinfandel (dry Jack, aged Gouda).

Semi-Soft Cheese: Chardonnay, Champagne, Riesling, Barolo, Barbaresco, Gattinara, Bordeaux, Rioja, Fleurie, Beaujolais, Chinon, Bourgueil, Verdelho Madeira.

Semi-Hard Cheese: Chardonnay, Champagne, Riesling, Cabernet, Sancerre, Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc, Chianti Riserva, Barolo, Tawny Port, Verdelho Madeira.

Goat and Sheep Cheese: Bordeaux (white), Pouilly Fumé (fresh chèvres), Sauvignon Blanc. Acidic, tangy young Goat cheese needs a young white wine, like Sauvignon Blanc or Chablis. Harder, aged goat and sheep cheeses like Pecorino can be paired with young reds like Zinfandel or Sangiovese based Italian wines.

Very Strong or Blue: Barsac, Late Harvest Semillon, Madeira (Verdelho, Bual and Malmsey) Riesling (dry or off-dry), Sauternes, Sauvignon Blanc (blue, especially Roquefort), Sherry.

GENERAL TIPS

1. **Pair by Flavor Intensity** is the first rule of wine and cheese pairing. Consider intensity's correlation with age.

Young cheeses partner best with wines that are juicy, fruity, fresh and spirited, like sparkling wines, crisp whites, dry rosés, and reds with good acidity, low tannins and sprightly fruit.

Lighter cheeses are better with lighter wines. Richer cheeses, like Camembert, need a more full-bodied wine, such as white Burgundy or a Pinot Gris from Alsace.

Older (harder) cheeses would need wines with more body and complexity (aged reds). The very oldest cheeses, those that are the most savory and rich and nutty, pair best with wines that have ample body and structure, and maybe oxidative notes, too.

You can also compliment or contrast texture and intensity as you play with wine and cheese variations.

2. White wine, in general, works better with cheese than red. Tannins, which are particularly tough on creamy cheeses, are absent in whites. The lively acidity many whites have is an asset. The best possibilities are un-oaked whites, for instance Rieslings, (most) Sauvignon Blancs, or Albariños from Spain.

Dry whites pair well with soft-textured cheeses, especially those with mild flavors, such as Brie. Whites with crisp acidity go particularly well with acidic goat cheeses.

Whites which have been “oaked”, left in oak barrels to absorb the wood’s flavor, should generally be avoided with cheese. Look for those fermented in stainless steel.

Few dispute the ability of dry or off-dry Rieslings to stand up to stinky cheeses, with their honeyed, tropical fruits, and high acidity.

3. Champagne and sparkling wines, with their high acids and lack of tannin, can go with a multitude of cheeses. The bubbles in sparkling wines pose a nice counterpoint to a rich cheese, scrubbing your tongue clean and cutting through the cheese fats. That's why Camembert and Champagne are a classic combination.

4. Watch those tannins. Tannic red wines are terrific with rich, hard, aged cheeses, because their tannins literally bind to protein and fat, cleaning your palate after each bite. But the same process makes tannic wines feel far too astringent with young cheeses; they tie up what little fat's available, leaving you with a chalky

sensation and a metallic aftertaste. If you must serve red wine with young cheeses, reach for one low in tannin, like Rioja, Beaujolais, or Pinot Noir. Aged reds are better than raw, young and powerful reds like Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah. Aged Rioja is a good choice.

5. Semi-Harder cheeses can handle more tannin than soft cheese. In other words, firmer cheeses such as Cheddar and Jack are more likely to stand up to the hardy taste of red wines, as opposed to bloomy, more delicate soft cheeses like Brie and Camembert. The stronger reds can complement firm cheeses without overwhelming them.

6. Hard Cheese with Tannic Wines. If you're dead-set on a big, tannic red, your best bet is one of the harder, saltier cow's milk cheeses—cheddar or dry Jack, for instance - or a similar sheep's cheese, like pecorino. Or pair an Amarone from Italy with some Parmigiano drizzled with honey—Sandro Boscaini, the owner of the renowned Amarone producer Masi, swears by that match.

7. Salt loves sweet. Sweet wines beautifully balance the saltiest cheeses like hard Grana, blue cheese, aged Gouda, or feta. The salt in the cheese heightens the perception of sweetness in the wine, so a wine that's already headed in that direction makes for a breezy pairing.

The media is fond of saying "If there's one cheese-wine marriage that's made in heaven, it's blue cheese and sweet wine." This could be a classic like Roquefort and Sauternes or Stilton **with port** or Malmsey Madeira, or you could head farther afield and try a Moscato with something like Gorgonzola. The saltier the cheese, the sweeter the wine. Sauternes pair best with blue cheese such as Roquefort, as the drink enhances its saltiness. Cheddar is also good with sweet wines.

I know most articles praise blue cheese with Port, but I am not a fan. Most blues are way too strong and severely mute the Port. I guarantee you will lose those expensive nuances of Port that you are paying for.

Much better to my palate is sheep cheese. That's what the Portuguese use sheep cheese at their lodges. Serra da Estrela is a great match that compliments Vintage Port without destroying its subtleties, or try other sheep cheeses like Manchego.

8. Sherry pairs well with many cheeses. **Fino** pairs with Manchego, Parmigiano-Reggiano, Pecorino. **Manzanilla** pairs with Brillat Savarin, Garrotxa, Crottin de Chavignol. **Dry Olorosso** pairs with Fontina, Comte, Epoisses, Queso de la Serena, Serra de Estrela while **Sweet Olorosso** pairs with Meadowcreek Dairy Grayson, Mahon, Appenzeller, Cowgirl Creamery Redhawk. **Pedro Ximinez** goes well with blue and triple cream cheeses.

9. Have some Palate Cleansers served with the cheese. Water crackers are a nice addition. Slices of plain baguette is neutral and a good palate / cheese cleaner. Almond nugget and quince paste make a nice addition to a cheese. **Topping cheese** with various jams, chutneys and honey is a great idea. Bleu cheese and honey are a stellar combination, (or the afore mentioned Parmesan with honey), and goat cheese and fig jams/chutneys are great together! Olives played well with cheese and reverberated with the savory flavors in the wine.

Also consider pairing cheese and wine with **nuts and fruit**, such as marcona almonds, walnuts, cherries, raisins, etc. The juicy, tangy fruits go well with young cheeses like Brie. Sweet **dried fruits** are wonderful with salty cheeses like Stilton. Buttery, bitter nuts are tasty with rich Cheddar. From fruity to sweet to nutty to tannic, these same pairing principles apply to wines, too.

Serve your cheese at room temperature. Take it out of the refrigerator one hour before using.

In conclusion, to really learn about this vast topic of wine and cheese pairings, get out there and experiment with pairings yourself and get to learn which of those 50 shades of cheese you like and which you dislike.

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What is Wine?

by John Fischer

Forgive me for proposing such a profoundly simple question to such a sophisticated readership as the International Wine and Food Society—seems almost insulting, but please bear with me. The dictionary defines wine as the product of fermented grape juice. Surely wine is more esoteric and endearing than that. Most of us would consider the above definition to be grossly understated.

Personally I like Robert Louis Stevenson's sentiment: "Wine is like poetry in a bottle." To me, that sort of sums it all up. Wine is a very intriguing beverage that is alluring, artistic, intellectually stimulating, and sensually satisfying. It is a contemplative beverage that is complex and engaging, yet deeply pleasurable to drink.

Wine stimulates our many senses: you can hear the snap and pop of Champagne's bubbles and feel its soothing, creamy mousse as it caresses the palate; you can feel the aggressiveness of tannins; you can taste the phantasmagoria of shifting flavors dancing on the palate, and you can

luxuriate in the wine's lingering farewell of flavors long after you have swallowed it.

A perfect wine (a rare entity indeed) will have faultless balance, captivating complexity, admirable concentration, a phenomenal aftertaste, plus a certain aesthetic that is difficult to describe but immediately recognizable when you experience it.

There are many variables that go into the production of a high quality wine, but the single most important element is the grape. Such grapes must have the right bits and pieces within the berry to produce wines of consummate quality. It is the DNA in grapes like Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay plus skillful farming that provides the berry with the right stuff to make exemplary wines. What's more, the climate, soil, grape farmer, and the winemaker have to keep in step with the grape varietal as each varietal has its own specific requirements.

In many respects, wine is like an oil painting created by one of the great masters. You can see the overall artistry, yet it is the fine strokes of vibrant color strategically

placed by the artist on canvas that create the profound wonder and pleasure that the work of art elicits. The winemaker is like the artist whose job is to take what Mother Nature has given the grape and with his artistic craftsmanship mold it into "poetry in a bottle."


In wine growing districts, the successful winemaker is a celebrity who is treated like royalty because of his great talents. When a successful winery loses its winemaker, the quality of its wines often takes a significant downturn and its reputation substantially suffers—sometimes never to return to its former glory.

Lets all drink to "poetry in a bottle."




Upcoming Council Bluffs Branch Events

Mark Your Calendars!

 May 3, 2015

Spring Fling at Twisted Cork Bistro, which just received a fabulous review in the World Herald.

Producers: Jill and Joe Goldstein, Stacie and Duke Matz

 June 2015
TBA

Hosting an event?

Let us know when, where and a little bit about what's going on!

We would love to include YOUR event on the calendar!

email details to:

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to let her know if you are interested
in hosting an IWFS event.

*Purpose: To meet communication and service needs, to broaden participation
and understand and to be an information exchange for the membership of
The International Wine & Food Society in the Americas.*

To access past Gazettes and other features about our Branch, go to the international
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