



# Grapevine

January 2010

*Have you Checked our web site?* [Http://www.columbiawillamettewine.org](http://www.columbiawillamettewine.org)

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## President's Message

### Greetings and Welcome!

By all critical accounts, our December program on the wines of Chile was a huge success. Kudos to Norm Banks for introducing us both to the wines and culture of the this South American country, and also to Pisco Sour. The latter was new to most in attendance and was a perfect introduction to the evening. Our January program will feature a winery much closer to home, namely Natalie's Estate Winery, located in our own Willamette valley. The winery's founder and wine maker, Boyd Teegarden, will offer five sumptuous wines from his critically acclaimed and award-winning collection. Please make a point to attend and do bring a friend!!!

*Neal Hammel – President*

## Upcoming Programs!!!

- January Program – 1/13/10  
Topic: Natalie's Estate Winery (Willamette Valley)  
Cost: \$30 Members / \$35 Guests (Payment at the door by cash or check only)  
RSVP: Required by Sunday, December 6th to Ray Maddix  
([maddix@comcast.net](mailto:maddix@comcast.net)) or Phone: 360-944-2051
- February Program – 2/10/10  
Topic: Rodney Strong Winery (Napa Valley)  
*Mark your calendar for these terrific programs!!!*

## Varietal Notes      (from Norman Banks, Wine Maker Confluence Winery)

This is the fourteenth of a series of Varietal Notes taken from my pamphlet on wine varieties. Chilean wines were the topic of the December 2009 meeting of CWES, and Carménère, which is uniquely wed to Chile, is January's topic Vinis Vinifera varietal

**CARMÉNÈRE** (Car-Men-Air)— France—Bordeaux Cariñena,

**Wine Characteristics:** The grape produces a wine with low tannins and big, bright blackberry fruit from vines of low productivity. The low tannin and lush fruit of the Carménère balances the high tannins and less fruity character of Merlot, and blending was the main use of the wine up through the 19th century. Carménère's low yields and late harvest in Europe's cold climate forced it out of favor as a blender when viticulturists replanted after the phylloxera plague of the 1880s, and only recently has Carménère reemerged to re-conquer the hearts of those who prize fine wine and sumptuous dining.

**Grape Profile:** Carménère's reemergence is actually a story of happy accident. After the phylloxera plague, with no vine and/or incentive to graft it back into production on American rootstock, the varietal was thought lost for more than a century. Vinis Vinifera, however, was spared phylloxera in Chile, which still remains phylloxera-free. Then, in the early 1990s, DNA testing of Chile's internationally acclaimed 'Merlots' discovered that on average, they were about 30% Carménère. For more than a century, Carménère, whose vines, leaves and clusters are much like Merlot's, had been an unwittingly 'natural' blend in Chile's fine 'Merlots.' Sharp eyes soon spotted, and DNA confirmed, Carménère, which sports more pinkish leaves and brilliant crimson (carmin) autumn foliage prior to leaf-fall, randomly spread through many Chilean Merlot vineyards, apparently brought in the same bundles of cuttings with Merlot more than a century earlier. Thus, Chile became the source of rebirth of Carménère as a blender and as a varietal.

### **Education Corner** (from Nicholas Meyerhofer)

**Anecdote:** Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914), author of "The Devil's Dictionary," and an infamous wine snob, passed out drunk in a railway station. Some wine was poured on his lips to revive him. "Pauillac, 1873," he murmured, and died.

**Question:** Which are the largest and smallest AVAs in America?

**Answer:** American Viticultural Areas range in size from the [Ohio River Valley AVA](#) at 26,000 square miles across four states, to the [Cole Ranch AVA](#) in Mendocino County California, at only 62 acres.

**Wine Quantities:**

One Grape Cluster = One Glass	One Vine = 10 Bottles	400 Vines = One Acre
75 Grapes = One Cluster	1200 Clusters = One Barrel	One Acre = 5 Tons
Four Clusters = One Bottle	One Barrel = 60 Gallons	5 Tons = 332 Cases
Forty Clusters = One Vine	60 Gallons = 25 Cases	

### **Recipe** (from Nicholas Meyerhofer)

#### **Risotto with Squash, Oyster Mushrooms & Peppered Jack Cheese**

(A dish well suited to Chardonnay) Serves 4-6 as appetizer or 2-3 as an entrée.

**Ingredients:**

1 ½ lbs. seeded, sliced Butternut Squash	¼ C chopped shallots	¼ C white wine
4 T butter or olive oil	2 large garlic cloves, minced	3 C chicken stock
8 oz. Sliced Oyster Mushrooms	1 t dried basil	½ C grated peppered jack cheese
	1 C Arborio rice	¼ C chopped chives

**Preparation:**

Bake or microwave squash until tender, not mushy. Cut squash away from skin and dice. Keep 1-¼ cups for the Risotto. In a large skillet, sauté the mushrooms until slightly brown. Remove from pan and reserve. In the same pan, heat 3 T butter or olive oil. Add shallots, garlic, herbs and rice. Sauté for four minutes. Add the wine and continue to simmer until the wine is gone. Add ½ cup of chicken stock and cook until the liquid is gone. Continue adding stock in small amounts and stirring until the liquid is gone in the rice each time before adding more liquid. In the last five minutes, add the cheese along with the reserve squash and mushrooms. Stir thoroughly. Finally, stir in the chives and season to taste.

*May 2010 be your best year ever!!!*