



# Grapevine

January 2011

**Have you Checked our web site?** <http://www.columbiawillamettewine.org>

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## President's Message

Greetings!

We had a great attendance at last month's program, that featured August Cellars. CEO Tom Schaad did a great job of introducing all of us in attendance to the concept and benefits of a "collective approach" to winemaking. Oh, and by the way, Tom also introduced us to six of his fine varietals, and we were even treated to the rare Marechal Foch.

January's program will feature a winery from the Gorge, Lyle's very own Jacob Williams Winery. Founder and winemaker, Brad Gearhart will be our presenter and will treat us to a fine selection of red and white varietals.

We hope to see you at this exciting program and please do bring some friends!

*Neal Hammel* – President

## Upcoming Programs!!!

- **January 12<sup>th</sup>**, Brad Gearhart of Jacob Williams Winery (Columbia AVA) will be our presenter.
- **February 9<sup>th</sup>**, Library Zinfandel wine, artisanal cheese from Vermont, and gourmet chocolates from Vancouver, WA.
- **Cost: \$30 Members / \$35 Guests** (Payment at the door by cash or check only)  
**RSVP: Required by Sunday, Jan 9<sup>th</sup>** to Ray Maddix ([maddix@comcast.net](mailto:maddix@comcast.net)) or  
Phone: 360-944-2051

***Mark your calendar for this terrific program!!!***

## **Varietal Notes**—by Norman Banks, Wine Maker Confluence Winery

*This is the twenty-fourth of a series of Varietal Notes taken from my pamphlet on wine varieties.*

***Tempranillo** is perhaps the best known Spanish varietal.*

### **TEMPRANILLO (Tem-praw-knee-yeohh)—Spain—Rioja**

**Wine Characteristics:** **Tempranillos** tend to have herby and soft spices, sometimes with tobacco-like or leathery overtones accompanied by ripe strawberry and red cherry fruits. In Spain the wine is usually drunk young, although it can be so tannic that long barreling and even tannin-reducing practices (egg whites, gum Arabic, treatment with polymerizing additional tannins, early pressing and judicious blending) are advisable. However, **Tempranillo** really comes into its own when oak-aged, either in French and American wood, which produces a richer more powerful and concentrated wine that, with its tannic character, can be extraordinarily long-lived. Rarely bottled in Spain as a stand-alone varietal, it is frequently blended with Grenache, and also, more recently, with Cabernet Sauvignon. In Portugal **Tempranillo** is a key blending ingredient for some ports.

**Grape Profile:** **Tempranillo**, the grape of Rioja, is the primary red wine grape of Spain. It needs only a short growing season and its ripening tendency is the source of its name, tempranillo, the "little early one." Depending on the growing area in Spain, **Tempranillo** has many different regional names. **Tempranillo** vines prefer a cool climate and have low resistance to many vine diseases and pests. The vines can tolerate heat well, but the fruit develops indistinct flavors and undesirable characteristics in warm climates. Cooler climates make wine that is moderate in alcohol, but still long-lived. **Tempranillo** grapes tend to be low both in overall acidity and sugar, but produce wines of relatively high tannin from their thick skins.

## **Education Corner** by Nicholas Meyerhofer

### **Let's debunk some Italian wine myths....**

1. **Italian wines should only be enjoyed with Italian food.**  
Italy's wines are so incredibly food-friendly that their pairing talents extend beyond *la cucina italiana*. The crisp acidity of Italy's white wines cuts through the richness of classic French dishes, and the tanginess of many reds provides thirst-quenching relief even with Tex-Mex!
2. **Pinot Grigio is one of Italy's best wines.**  
The average quality of Pinot Grigio is, well, average. While dry and refreshing, they lack the character and intensity that the French Pinot Gris grape is capable of, and they are not Italy's answer to great white wine.
3. **Italy's best wines are all red.**  
Italy does make about twice as much red as white wine, and most of Italy's most famous wines – Chianti, Barolo, Brunello di Montalcino, etc. – are indeed red. But certain parts of Italy also make excellent white wines, e.g. Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Alto Adige, and Campania. Even Italy's red wine capitals, Piedmont and Tuscany, make some excellent whites, for example Arneis and Gavi.
4. **Soave and Valpolicella are low-quality wines.**  
The white varietal Soave and the reds Valpolicella and Bardolino have received a bad rap in the United States. But of course, they frequently deserved it due to mass production. But all three of these wines, in the hands of a quality producer, can be delightful. Try a Gini Soave, an Allegrini Valpolicella, or a Guerrieri-Rizzardi Bardolino, and you will be pleasantly surprised.
5. **Chianti is an inexpensive, commercial wine.**  
This can be a true statement, but nowadays it is less so than it used to be. Chianti Classico, the type of Chianti most commonly found outside of Italy, is particularly fine. Inexpensive, \$10 bottles of Chianti still exist – including some in the nostalgic straw packaging – but the category as a whole has definitely become upscale.

**Recipe** by Nicholas Meyerhofer

**Wild Mushroom & Goat Cheese Bruschetta** (Serve with Sauvignon Blanc)

**Ingredients:**

6 oz. Shiitake mushrooms  
5 oz. Portobello mushrooms, inner gills removed  
2 T olive oil  
1 T butter  
2 garlic cloves minced  
1 shallot minced  
¼ C dry sherry  
¼ C chicken stock  
1 t dried thyme  
1 t dried basil  
Kosher salt & red pepper flakes to taste  
4 oz. fresh goat cheese  
16 slices French baguette  
Garnish: minced lemon zest & minced chives mixed together

**Preparation:**

- Trim ends and coarsely chop mushrooms. Sauté over medium heat in olive oil and butter.
  - Add garlic and shallot and sauté two minutes more.
  - Add sherry, chicken stock, thyme and basil and cook until liquid has evaporated.
  - Season to taste.
  - Preheat broiler.
  - Put slices of baguette on broiler pan and spread evenly with goat cheese. Top with mushroom mixture and broil three to four minutes, until mushrooms begin to brown on top.
  - Remove from oven and place on serving dish. Garnish with a sprinkling of lemon zest – chive mixture.
- Serves 6 as an appetizer.

***Happy New Year to All!!!***