

# Club Cork Newsletter

## March 2007

### Ugh – My Wine is Bad!

#### *A Two Part Series in Understanding What Causes Wine to Go Bad*

**Part 2:** Last month we wrote about wine being spoiled, the causes, and how you can prevent it. This month, our two part series will cover the second reason a wine can smell or taste off, which is “corked”. Corked wine is a wine that has been contaminated by TCA. TCA, or (2,4,6-Trichloroanisole), is a chemical compound that can contaminate wood. While TCA can be found in barrels or other cooperage, it is mostly found in the cork used to seal wine bottles. When the TCA from the cork contacts the wine, it affects the dynamic chemistry of the wine and as a result, produces a musty, wet cardboard or dirty socks smell. At the quantity levels found in wine, TCA does not pose a health risk to you, and in fact, most consumers have a hard time noticing corked wine. But, you can begin to train your nose to detect a corked wine by smelling wet cardboard or wet dirty socks (I know, it’s not the most exciting), and consciously train your brain to pick out those smells if it’s noticeable in your wine.

Most likely, however, you won’t have too many bottles “corked”. While historically, TCA has affected anywhere from 3-7% of all corks used for wine – technology has improved, and contamination has been reduced to less than 1%. But if your wine happens to fall within that rare 1%, you can always return the corked wine to the store, they *should* replace it (we replace all corked bottles).

**DELIVERY/PICK UP DATE FOR NEXT MONTH!**

**Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Bunnell “Vif” ~ \$25**

**Columbia Valley, Washington**

**The winemaker:** Ron Bunnell is the former winemaker at Chateau Saint Michelle where he produced their reserve level wines. Prior to his stint at St. Michelle he was the winemaker at Simi Winery in Sonoma Valley. He holds a viticulture degree from University Cal-Davis, a Master degree of food science from Cornell University, and a MBA from the University of WA.

**About the wine:** “Vif” is French for lively, vivid or brisk, which is how winemaker Ron Bunnell sees this blend of Rhone varieties Grenache and Syrah. It is big, bold and nearly over the top -- just the way many wine drinkers love their reds.

Its strong toast, mushroom and cocoa aromas lead to ripe, juicy boysenberry and black cherry flavors and a soft mouth feel.

**CELLARING:** This wine is great to drink now, or hold for 1-3 years.

**Serving Suggestions:** A suggestion from the “Rhone Rangers” – a non-profit group in CA promoting the Rhone varietals suggests pairing a Rhone blend with **Polenta with Stilton and Fresh Herbs**. **Ingredients:** 1 cup polenta (not cornmeal), 3 1/2 cups beef stock (have another 1/2 cup on hand for later), 1 tsp. fresh rosemary leaves – chopped, 1/2 tsp. sea salt, 1/2 - 1 cup aged Stilton. **Sauce:** 1/4 cup unsalted butter, 12 - 16 small whole sage leaves, 2 cloves garlic - coarsely chopped. **Directions:** Bring stock to a boil - slowly stir in polenta and return to boil - quickly reduce heat and leave uncovered, stirring frequently. Add 1 tsp. chopped fresh rosemary. Cook for about 30 min., stirring every few minutes. When the polenta is almost done, add a bit more stock or water if needed for a creamy consistency, then gently fold in 1/2 - 1 cup aged, crumbled Stilton. Cook just until the cheese is slightly melted. In the meantime, melt butter over low heat in sauté pan. When butter is melted add whole sage leaves and chopped garlic and cook on low until butter, sage and garlic are a nice golden brown. Plate polenta and pour a tablespoon or so of butter sauce over each serving.

# 2005 Marques de Casa Concha Chardonnay - \$20 Santiago, Chile (Maipo Valley)

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FOR UPCOMING SUMMER  
EVENTS!



You often don't think of good white wine coming from the Chile – but I tell you, this will change your mind! Enjoy!

**Upcoming Issue of Wine Spectator:**  
**91Pts: Smart Buy**  
"Shows a nice mix of dried pineapple, papaya, pear and fig flavors, with a long, mineral finish. Has a nice layer of toast, but stays fresh."  
4/30/2007 issue

**Tasting Notes:** *Color:* Light, golden yellow. *Bouquet:* White peach, papaya, mango and hazelnut, with surprising elegance. *Taste:* Medium, full-bodied. Creamy on the palate. A core of peach-papaya accented flavors supported by refined oak. A long finish.

**Serving Suggestion:** A perfect accompaniment to white meat, shellfish, and fresh cheeses.

Looking for a particular wine? Call and order from Cork Cellars and have it delivered with your wine club selections! Great prices, great service – always fun!

## Tasting Notes

**Bunnell "Vif" NV**  
Columbia Valley, Washington

**Marques de Casa Concha Chardonnay 2005**  
Maipo Valley, Chile

Nose:

Nose:

Taste:

Taste:

When/Where Served:

When/Where Served:

Food with wine:

Food with wine:

Comments:

Comments:

### Previous Wine Club Selections

**January 2007**

**Alto Red**  
*Sold out*

**Navarro Chardonnay**  
\$25/bottle  
6 or more: \$22.50/bottle  
12 or more: \$20/bottle

**February 2007**

**La Spinetta Ca' di Pian Barbera**  
\$24/bottle  
*limited*

**Charles Krug Sauv Blanc**  
\$18/bottle  
6 or more: \$16.20/bottle  
12 or more: \$13/bottle

CORK CELLARS DISCOUNT POLICY

#### 10% TUESDAYS

Receive 10% OFF 3 or more bottles of wine every Tuesday (in store only)

#### 10% OFF

Always receive 10% OFF 6 bottles or more bottles of wine (mixed okay)

#### 10% OVER COST

Receive 10% over cost on full case orders (no mixed)