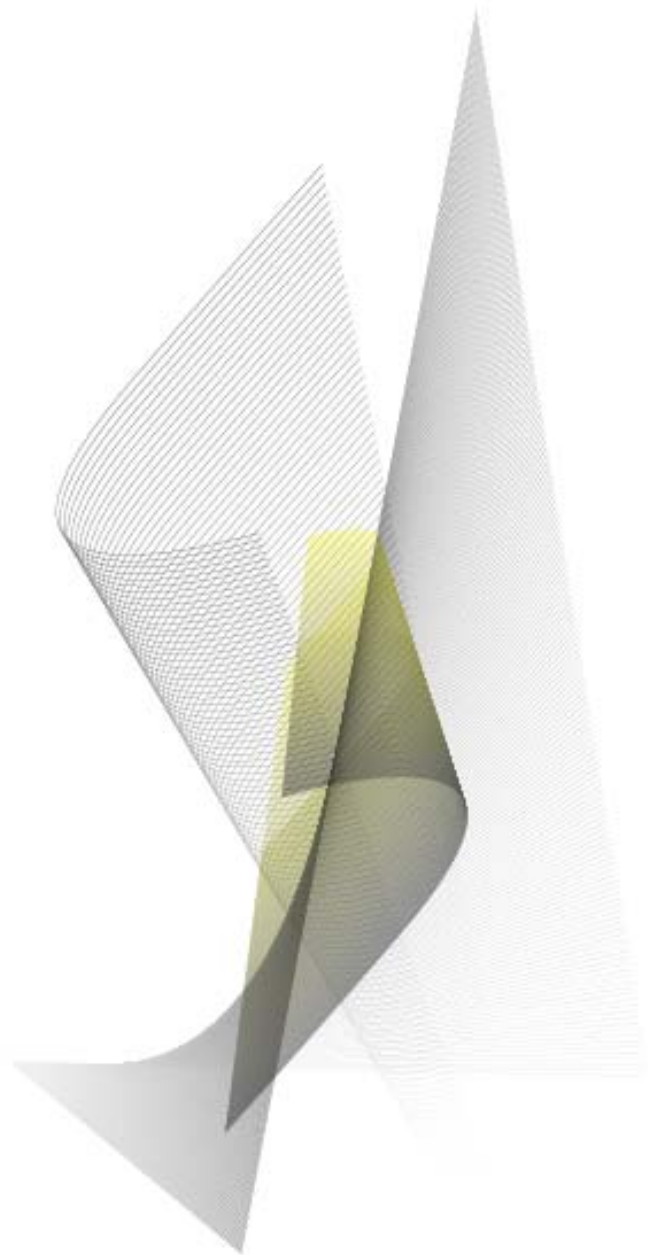


# Global Wine Trends

## Weekly Update

created:

**06.03.2009**



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## Global Market Watch

*The global market watch outlines developments, spotted and emerging trends that define the current situation in the global wine landscape. It includes all major developments in the market including consumer trends relating to wine and marketing campaigns or approaches, as well as concerns on health and sustainability.*

### ProWein 2009 Exhibitors' Supporting Events Program Announced

WINE BUSINESS, USA

27.02.09: At ProWein 2009, International Trade Fair for Wines and Spirits, the comprehensive assortment offered by more than 3,000 exhibitors from around the globe will be complemented by a multi-faceted supporting events program. With the motto "**By experts for experts**", exhibitors will offer more than 150 tastings, moderated round table discussions and workshops. This year's topics will include light wines, 350 years of Silvaner as well as organic wines and wine as a meal accompaniment. ProWein will take place from March 29 -- 31, 2009 in Düsseldorf, Germany.

The German Wine Institute (DWI) will focus on wines with a moderate alcohol content and will offer tastings with the theme "Light wines -- making a big splash" on all three days of the trade fair. In the California Wine Institute's show kitchen, typical U.S. dishes will be prepared and served with matching California wines. Further culinary highlights will include the "Wine and Sushi" theme by Pfalzwein and "Champagne and Chocolate" presentation by the Wine and Spirits Retailer Bulk Buying Association (GEV). In addition, there will be commented tastings of wines from all relevant growing regions in Spain, Austria, **Greece**, Italy, France, Portugal, New Zealand and Argentina as well as from Israel and Algeria. The Association of German Prädikat Wine Estates (VDP) will offer the "WineWordExchange" in cooperation with the German Wine and Sommelier School and the German Sommelier Union. ...

<http://www.winebusiness.com/news/?go=getArticle&dataid=62500>

### The Chronicle is Bleeding but the Wine Must Flow

MSNBC, USA

27.02.09: The San Francisco Chronicle may be having a bad week but at least they get to close the week out with a drink. The largest competition of American Wines in the world returns to San Francisco this Saturday and it is sponsored by no other than our bankrupt newspaper friends. The San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition Public Tasting returns to the city by the Bay, indulging the palates of wine and food lovers alike. They don't have money to pay their unions but the Chronicle sure know what parties to sponsor. **The competition is known as the largest of American wines in the world and the Bay Area's premier tasting experience, according to its organizers.** The SFCWC Public Tasting is held at Fort Mason Center's Festival Pavilion and features award winning wines from across the country. There will also be a panel who judges over 60 professional wines at the Cloverdale Citrus Fairgrounds as they unite for four days in January. ...

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/29407225/>



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## Record number of awards for Argentine wine

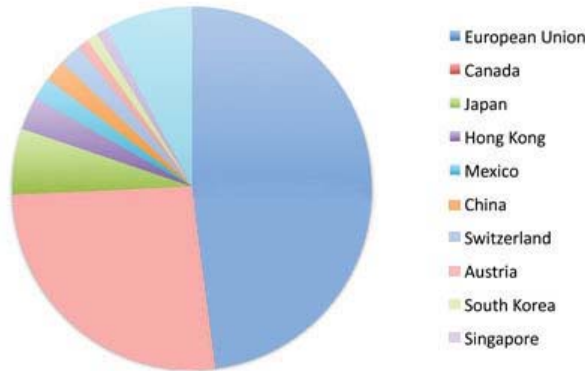
DECANTER, UK

03.03.09: **Judges awarded more trophies and gold medals at this year's Argentine Wine Awards than in previous years.** An international panel awarded 42 gold medals and 14 trophies to the top wines from the 512 entered for the third annual Awards, held last week at the Septima winery in Mendoza. The 'Red Blend between US\$20-50' (£14-35) category was the most hotly contested, with 13 gold medallists vying for the trophy which was awarded to Grand Reserve Pasionado 2004, a Bordeaux-style wine from Andeluna Cellars. 'I have always been certain that Argentina could produce great red blends, and these Awards have proved it,' said James Forbes of Wines of Argentina UK. The trophy for Best Malbec between US\$20-\$50 went to Vina Federico Villafane 2006, a single vineyard wine from Trapiche, while the top prize for Best Malbec over US\$50 went to Dona Silvina Reserva 2006 from Bodegas Krontiras. No Malbec trophy was awarded for the 'under US\$10' category, reflecting a generally poor performance across all varieties in the lowest price category. Argentina's flagship white, Torrontés, also performed well. Highlights included a trophy each for Bodegas Etchart's Ayres de Cafayate Torrontés 2008 and Late Harvest Torrontés 2007, and a gold for Crios de Susana Balbo Torrontés 2008.

<http://www.decanter.com/news/news.php?id=277985>

## Wine Exports Top \$1 Billion

WINES & VINES, USA



26.02.09: **For the first time in history, U.S. wine exports exceeded \$1 billion in 2008. The total was \$1,008,259,000 in winery export revenues, up 6% from the previous year, according to the San Francisco-based Wine Institute.**

Volume shipments in 2008 increased 8% compared to the

previous year, to nearly 130 million gallons or 55 million cases. These numbers indicate that the value of the wine dropped slightly, reflecting in part increasing bulk shipments that are bottled overseas to save on transportation and packaging costs. The finished wines are then shipped to their final destinations, some in neighboring countries. By volume, 90% of the exports are from California. ...

To continue the momentum, Wine Institute, represented by its director of international trade policy Joseph Rollo, is collaborating with the U.S. government and international organizations to help assure implementation of the 2006 EU-U.S. Wine Trade agreement and to reduce high tariffs, production subsidies and other restrictive trade barriers throughout the world. **Nearly half of U.S. wine exports are shipped to the European Union**, accounting for \$486 million. Volume shipments to the European Union increased 9% in 2008 compared to 2007, and sales by value grew at a lower rate of 2% due to the bulk wine exports.



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The next leading markets were: Canada, \$260 million; Japan, \$61 million; Hong Kong, \$26 million; and Mexico, \$23 million. ...

<http://www.winesandvines.com/template.cfm?section=news&content=62520&htitle=Wine%20Exports%20Top%20%241%20Billion>

*Also published:*

**US wine exports break \$1bn - DECANTER, UK**

<http://www.decanter.com/news/news.php?id=277885>

## More California grapes head for international markets

CENTRAL VALLEY BUSINESS TIMES, USA



03.03.09: Exports of fresh California grapes increased in 2008, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture report. More than 26 million 19-pound boxes of grapes valued at \$430 million left California for international markets, not including Canada. The 2008 export volume is an increase of 19 percent over 2007, in which 22.4 million 19-pound boxes were exported, and an increase of 24 percent in value. In the past 10 years, exports of

fresh California grapes increased 52 percent. The total grape crop harvested last year was more than 94 million boxes. **Record high export volumes were seen in a number of the largest export markets during 2008, including Mexico, Panama, Central America, Russia, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Thailand and Australia.**

**The top three export markets for fresh California grapes in 2008 were Canada, Mexico and China, respectively.** Exports to Canada remained relatively stable over 2007, whereas export volume and value to Mexico and China significantly increased in 2008 over the previous season. ...

<http://www.centralvalleybusinesstimes.com/stories/001/?ID=11295>

## Cult wines at mass-market prices

THE LOS ANGELES TIMES, USA



04.03.09: Last month Michael Jordan, master sommelier and general manager of Disneyland's Napa Rose Restaurant in Anaheim, was approached by a local wine distributor with an offer he found difficult to refuse, and just as difficult to comprehend. The distributor was selling one of the most sought-after "cult" Cabernets in the Napa Valley, the sort of wine that routinely sold at auction for more than \$600

a bottle, a wine so scarce that only a tiny group of restaurants in the country could ever hope to get just six bottles. Even among cult Cabernets, this was a crown jewel. Naturally, Jordan was interested, and asked how much he could have. The answer stunned him: "Up to 10 cases," he was told. "Las Vegas didn't take their allocation."



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There, in a nutshell, is the state of the wine business in restaurants. **As kitchens teeter on closure, as layoffs loom and the economic downturn threatens long-standing establishments and their outstanding wine lists, the market is more frenetic and freewheeling than it has ever been.**

Even as sommeliers are feeling obliged to reduce their inventories, they're being offered unheard-of deals on rare wines, now suddenly plentiful. Case prices are plunging: Wines that used to be out of reach can now be had for about a third less than a year ago.

The new sweet spot

For the dining public, that means that even though your dining dollar may have shrunk, you're probably getting more wine value with it than you have in the last three years. All of this leaves many sommeliers, on behalf of their guests, optimistic. "This may be the reshuffling of the deck that will stratify wine into prices that remain," Jordan says. "I think a whole lot of meals are going to taste a whole lot better." ...

Belt-tightening

Of course, there has been some belt-tightening across the board; many sommeliers report trimming their inventory. "I was kind of on a diet for the whole month of January," Farner says. For some, that process has been relatively painless: Barbara Marie of the Water Grill has cut way back on her Bordeaux and Napa Cabernet selections, which aren't particularly compatible with her seafood-driven menu anyway. Others are bringing cellared wines into rotation sooner than they might have. ...

Glasses half full

The most dramatic changes in wine offerings are plain to see in a restaurant's by-the-glass program. That's the high-traffic zone of most wine lists, and it's heavily targeted by wineries, distributors and importers as the best opportunity to move their wine into the fast lane.

...

<http://www.latimes.com/features/food/la-fo-sommelier4-2009mar04,0,481881.story>

## California Chardonnay Grows Up

THE NEW YORK TIMES, USA



04.03.09: IT'S hard to feel neutral about California chardonnay. The wine's almost effortless popularity as a mass-market white also brought it the mark of infamy. **For every dozen people who unthinkingly asked for a chardonnay when they really meant any white wine, there were always a few who cried out that they'd take**

**anything but chardonnay.**

These chardonnay haters made their feelings felt. While most winemakers are loath to admit that they hold a finger up to the wind, many producers have clearly dialed back on the extremes of the California style that dominated 10 years ago. The big buttered-popcorn fruity extravaganzas are, of course, still out there. But **today far more California chardonnays are made in a much wider range of styles, from crisp, lively and lip-smacking to rich, powerful and structured, with variations of all types and sizes.**



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Santa Barbara County offers a sort of microcosm of California as a whole. With around 7,200 acres of chardonnay planted in 2007, according to the Agriculture Department, Santa Barbara is not nearly the region with the most chardonnay. Sonoma, Monterey and San Joaquin in the Central Valley each have around twice as many acres of chardonnay as does Santa Barbara.

Napa County has roughly the same area planted in chardonnay as Santa Barbara, but chardonnay takes a far subordinate role there to cabernet sauvignon. ... Still, the wines offer a palpable sense of experimentation. Sometimes they work well, occasionally they do not, and sometimes, well, the jury is still out. Regardless of the style of the wine, what separated the bottles we liked best from those we rejected can be summed up in one word: balance. ...

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/04/dining/reviews/04wine.html?pagewanted=all>

## MasterGrape, Custom Wine In the South of France

LUXIST, USA



01.03.09: Crushpad plans to head to the Bordeaux region of France soon but a winery in the south of France is also creating a make your own wine network. Young wine entrepreneur Ryan O'Connell runs O'Veineyards in the Cabardes AOC with his parents. The winery was founded in 2004 and produces Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and red wine blends. In the course of getting into the wine business, O'Connell made a lot of friends in the wine business in the area and he's putting that knowledge to

use in a new venture. **MasterGrape is a network of vineyards and wineries in the south of France where you can custom-produce your own wines in the amount, style and price-range you desire.** The MasterGrape website includes a questionnaire to help match aspiring winemakers with wineries and grape growers in the south of France who are looking for partners to finance special crus and reserve cuves.

**The winemakers focus on small production, limited yields and potential partners are encouraged to visit the vineyards and get hands on in the winemaking process if they desire.** The cost of making the wine generally runs between 1,500 an 10,000 euros. Like at Crushpad, most participants will create a single barrel of wine which produces around 25 cases of wine. ...

<http://www.luxist.com/2009/03/01/mastergrape-custom-wine-in-the-south-of-france/>

## Wine in a can? Yes we can!

SOMMELIER INDIA, INDIA



05.03.09: Barokes has achieved a gold medal for wine in a can, something that has never been done in the history of wine judging! Following Barokes' significant win at the European Patent Office in mid February where its European patent for

wine in a can was confirmed, this innovative Australian wine producer has now been awarded a Gold Medal for its Cabernet Shiraz Merlot.



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The gold was achieved in Germany at the 2009 Berlin Wine Trophy - a major international wine competition held under the patronage of the International Organisation of Vine & Wine (OIV). Over 3,400 wine entries were received by the competition this year from almost 40 countries.

**Barokes is the only wine in a can in the history of wine judging to have won a gold medal.** No wine in a can product has ever achieved such distinction in a major international wine competition and this gold medal is more than many bottled wines could ever hope to achieve! ...

[http://www.sommelierindia.com/blog/2009/03/wine\\_in\\_a\\_can\\_yes\\_we\\_can.html](http://www.sommelierindia.com/blog/2009/03/wine_in_a_can_yes_we_can.html)

## UK merchants neglecting California?

DECANTER, UK

04.03.09: **California wines are 'woefully under-represented' by UK independent merchants**, the UK head of the California Wine Institute has said. While California's big brands sell very successfully in supermarkets, its image has been tarnished by its mass market appeal and heavy discounting, said UK California chief John McLaren at the Specialist Independent Trade Tasting (SITT) in London last week. 'The problem is the consumer thinks California is what they see on the supermarket shelf and this perception has been passed on to the independent sector,' he said. **'Buyers are lazy and find it easy to deal with the big brands.** There is very little drive to find something from Lodi.'

Independent merchants agree but argue California has few mid-range wines and does not offer good value for money, particularly with the strength of the US dollar. 'My perception is Washington and Oregon are more interesting and better value,' said Simon Taylor, director of Winchester independent merchant Stone, Vine and Sun, who imports no Californian wines. 'They are more elegant and lower in alcohol than Californian blockbuster wines.' ...

<http://www.decanter.com/news/278025.html>

## Co-Op Wine Beats U.K. Rivals Selfridges, Harrods: Richard Vines

BLOOMBERG, USA



costing less than 15 pounds. ...

02.03.09: An Argentine bottle of malbec that costs 5.99 pounds (\$8.49) at Co-op supermarkets beat pricier wines from Harrods, Selfridges and other U.K. stores in a blind tasting of reds and whites from South America and the U.S. David Moore, the owner of Pied a Terre restaurant in London, and head sommelier Mathieu Germond tried the wines after Bloomberg invited U.K. retailers to submit their best bottles

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601088&sid=alpZLtxu91tg&refer=home>

## Concha y Toro Fourth-Quarter Profit Falls 17% on Currency Loss

BLOOMBERG, USA

27.02.09: **Vina Concha y Toro SA, Chile's biggest wine exporter, reported a 17 percent decline in fourth- quarter profit on non-operating, exchange-rate losses.** Net income



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fell to 7.16 billion pesos (\$12 million) from 8.65 billion pesos a year earlier, the Santiago-based company wrote in a statement distributed by PRNewswire after markets closed yesterday. Earnings per American depositary receipt slid 30 percent to 31.3 cents. Sales rose 15 percent to 90.9 billion pesos on export growth. Non-operating losses increased to 3.87 billion pesos from 514 million pesos. "This was mainly due to a loss in exchange-rate differences generated by price positions taken in anticipation of the fourth quarter," the company wrote.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601086&sid=ahxpnANU2Ccl>

## Global Industry Watch

*This section records developments and trends on both industry and individual corporation levels that form a matrix of the major issues and moves in the industry as a whole or by its critical actors and groupings, such as trade associations and regulatory bodies.*

### French plan to promote wine tourism

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, USA

03.03.09: **The French government began promoting tours of the country's storied vineyards** Tuesday to help counter falling wine sales. "When you put together the three forces that are France's prowess in agriculture, tourism and culture, you have every chance of making advances," French Agriculture Minister Michel Barnier said at a news conference.

France is the world's biggest wine consumer, with the average Frenchman knocking back 53 liters of wine each year, according to the Agriculture Ministry. It's also the world's No. 1 tourist destination, with 82 million foreign visitors to the country in 2007, according to the U.N. World Tourism Organization.

However, French wine consumption has fallen 7 percent so far this year, according to Agriculture Ministry figures, while exports of French wine slid 10 percent in volume terms last year to 15.2 million hectoliters. A newly created Wine Tourism Board is meant to stir new interest in wine. Among the board's first missions will be to promote wine tourism circuits and establish a national wine tourism prize to recognize the best local efforts.

<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2009/03/03/business/EU-France-Wine-Tourism.php>

### Grapes of Wrath for French wine?

BUSINESS WORLD, USA

05.03.09: The French wine trade is taking a beating on the domestic front and it could not have come at a worse time. **In Bordeaux, France's most profitable wine region, the global credit crunch have brought sales skidding to a halt.** Importers are struggling to find affordable credit lines. Retailers are liquidating stock rather than placing new orders. The 2007 vintage is largely unsold and the 2008 vintage will soon flood the floundering market. "The market has been completely blocked since September," said Bertrand Carles, buying manager for classified growers at Gineestet, one of France's largest wine merchants.

**Enter France's Health Minister Roselyn Bachelot and her proposed law that would ban free tastings, open bars and wine ads on the Internet.** Wine writers would be muzzled and hardest of all, replace the current official "drink with moderation" warning with



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"the consumption of alcohol is detrimental to your health." On the one hand, wine is one of the country's most lauded products. On the other, should Bachelot's law pass, wine would find itself tied up by many of the same restrictions as porn and cigarettes. Parliament expects to vote on the law this week but that is not the only domestic battlefield for the wine industry.

Two weeks ago, to the stupefaction of winegrowers, France's National Cancer Institute (INCA) released a study that links wine consumption to an increased risk of cancer. The study says just one glass of wine increases the chance of developing mouth and throat cancer. Critics have mounted a counter attack. Next week they will release the results of a study by the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) and the French National Research Agency (ANR) that claims moderate consumption of one to three glasses of wine per day instead reduces the risk of cancer. ...

<http://www.bworldonline.com/BW030509/content.php?id=163>

## Marketing in economic slump important for tourist-oriented wine industry

THE DAILY SENTINEL, USA

02.03.09: There's only one way out of this economic slump and that's to keep money in circulation. Why not spend some at your local winery? **That's not entirely frivolous. Many Colorado wineries appear to be holding the line on business in spite of a general financial malaise settling like a fog across the economy.**

A bountiful harvest last fall, several notable wins at national wine competitions and a hangover (of the right sort) from a busy summer have kept the momentum going for the state's winemakers. ... The article, referring to a study by A.C. Neilsen Co., said companies that cutback their marketing during the 1980s recession saw a 19 percent increase in business five years later while companies that retained or built their marketing during the recession grew 275 percent. Grand Valley and Delta county wineries will benefit from the growing national trend toward shorter, closer-to-home vacations. People will do just about anything to save money but that doesn't include giving up their vacations, no matter how short or how close to home. ...

[http://www.gjsentinel.com/hp/content/news/opinion/stories/2009/03/02/022509\\_FD\\_Wine\\_Col.html](http://www.gjsentinel.com/hp/content/news/opinion/stories/2009/03/02/022509_FD_Wine_Col.html)

## Sonoma's Tough New Vineyard Rules

WINES & VINES, USA



27.02.09: Though Napa County was the first to require erosion control in new vineyards, Sonoma County has its own version. Last year, it updated the Vineyard Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance, or VESCO, first implemented in 2000. Napa's ordinance is generally regarded as very demanding;

Sonoma's version is somewhat easier to comply with in many respects. At the recent conference, "**Best Practices for Owning and Operating a Winery**," conducted by the Seminar Group, Nick Frey, executive director of the Sonoma County Winegrape Commission (sonomawinegrape.org) described the process and early reaction from growers.

Though grapegrowers didn't ask for the ordinance, they had input in its creation, and seem generally satisfied with it. Frey says, "It's better to have it so people can plan and go about their business." He adds, "While it isn't everything we would want, we can work with it. It's a



good compromise between environmentalists and growers."...

Under the new rules, all vineyards and orchards more than one-half acre in size must meet a number of requirements. These include:

- \* No planting on slopes greater than 50%. (It's 30% in Napa County.)
- \* Setbacks are extended to unnamed streams as well as blueline streams, including 25 feet from the top of bank if it contains native vegetation, with no work allowed on this area. As an option, growers can maintain a 25-foot vegetated filter strip if there's no vegetation already there.
- \* For developing new vineyards, differing plans are required depending on the slope and soil conditions.
- \* Level 1 conditions are slopes less than 15% without highly erodible soils, or slopes less than 10% with highly erodible soils. In this case, the erosion control plan does not have to be prepared by an engineer.
- \* Level 2 situations are slopes more than 15% with no highly erodible soils; or slopes greater than 10% with highly erodible soils. These require an engineered erosion control plan.

...

<http://www.winesandvines.com/template.cfm?section=news&content=62540&htitle=Sonoma%27s%20Tough%20New%20Vineyard%20Rules>

## Vineyard Price Bubble in Michigan?

WINES & VINES, USA

02.03.09: A potential vineyard property price bubble shows that Michigan's otherwise thriving wine industry is not immune to national economic trends, according to a speaker at the Michigan Grape and Wine Industry Council's meeting last week. The eighth annual event, held near Traverse City, the hub of Michigan's northwest wine region, drew about 200 people--the event's largest attendance ever, and an indication of the wine industry's growth here. Despite the current economic climate, Michigan now counts 65 wineries, up from 58 in 2008. Yet national economic woes may be catching up to the industry, Traverse City real estate appraiser Michael Tarnow said in a session titled "Financial Management of the Winery." While acknowledging the wine industry's growth, he said, "We're beginning to see what people consider a bubble," in vineyard land prices. ... Wineries are still hoping to tweak the legislation, however, to allow for tasting of distilled products at so-called "remote" tasting rooms separate from the premises used to manufacture the spirits. Don Coe, managing partner at Black Star Farms and a gubernatorial appointee to the Michigan Agriculture Commission, supports the change. Black Star has three tasting rooms and wants to be able to offer its distilled products alongside its wines at all three, not just the one where the still is located, Coe said. ...

<http://www.winesandvines.com/template.cfm?section=news&content=62575&htitle=Michigan%20Sees%20Vineyard%20Price%20Bubble>

## Wine industry 'needs image overhaul'

WA TODAY, AUSTRALIA

03.03.09: **The Australian wine industry needs to undergo a major overhaul so it can**



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**regain its place as a leading exporter, Foster's group director says.** James Lovell says the industry is doing it tough in the face of increased competition and the global financial crisis. "We've all got some adjustments to make," he told delegates at the Australian Bureau of Agriculture Resource Economics Outlook 2009 conference in Canberra on Tuesday. Mr Lovell said exports had been steadily increasing between 1990 and 2007 on the back of Australia's image as a country of fine wines. But since last year, exports had dropped significantly, he said. "Our competitive advantage has gone and our competitors are catching up." Mr Lovell said a number of other factors had impacted trade, including a fall in quality, while Australia's wines had developed reputation of being a bit "the same", prompting domestic and overseas consumers to look to wines from other countries. To overcome many of the industry's problems, Australia's winegrowers needed to tap into growing overseas markets and rejuvenate the "brand Australia" image. Luxury wines needed to be promoted more, while premium labels needed to develop a point of difference, he said.

<http://www.watoday.com.au/breaking-news-business/wine-industry-needs-image-overhaul-20090303-8n2h.html>

## Competition to limit wine prices

THE AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS, AUSTRALIA

04.03.09: INCREASED competition both at home and overseas is expected to **keep a cap on Australian wine prices for at least the next five years.** In good news for drinkers, the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics has predicted that Australia's lake of excess wine will continue to grow despite the impact of the drought on production levels. **Australia's total wine consumption fell by 1 per cent in 2007-08, with sales of Australianwine down by 5 per cent as a reduced local crop from the previous year and the then-strong Australian dollar made imported tipples more competitive.** ...

Imported wines from France, Italy, Spain and Portugal had all risen because they "satisfied consumer preferences for new varieties and wine styles at prices which were competitive with domestic wines". This shift in preferences was expected to have been maintained in the current financial year despite the depreciation of the Australian dollar since June 2008, with imports forecast to have increased their share of wine sales from 11 per cent to 15per cent, while domestic wine sales are forecast to fall by a further 1 per cent.

Australia's wine grape production for the current financial year is forecast to be about 1.7million tonnes, down 8 per cent from 2007-08 as a result of water shortages and the impact of high temperatures and bushfires on fruit. However, sales are falling even faster, with both the volume and value of wine exports down by more than 10 per cent in 2007-08. **This did not prevent Australian producers from continuing to pump out massive volumes,** finishing June 2008 with 1.9billion litres of wine in storage -- a level that ABARE has forecast to top two billion litres within the next financial year -- forcing wineries to sell off masses of plonk at fire-sale prices. ...

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/business/story/0,28124,25135158-643,00.html>

## Australian vintage could be down 22%

HARPERS, UK

28.02.09: **The 2009 Australian wine grape harvest could be 22% lower than last year,**



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according to some calculations. Although the Australian Wine & Brandy Corporation has a preliminary estimate of an 11% fall, to 1.63 million tonnes, Rabobank is warning that the vintage could weigh in at just 1.42 million tonnes - a 22.4% fall on the 2008 figure. Australia's problems are all down to the drought conditions and the heatwave which has destroyed a great deal of fruit. Bushfires have also taken their toll in the Yarra Valley. But there is also falling demand for wine grapes and the AWBC admits that some fruit will simply be left on the vine.

<http://www.harpers.co.uk/news/news-headlines/7695-australian-vintage-could-be-down-22.html>

*Also published:*

**Australian wine industry – feeling the heat - WINEBIZ, AUSTRALIA**

<http://www.winebiz.com.au/dwn/details.asp?ID=2417>

**Uncork wine in grocery stores: Paterson's right to try to end senseless restrictions**

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, USA

03.03.09: Here's a budget-balancing idea that won't cost average New Yorkers a penny - and goes down really well with a nice, aged cheddar: Start selling wine in grocery stores. There's no good reason that the store where you buy a T-bone steak can't also sell you a Cabernet to go with it. By the same token, it's ridiculous that liquor stores can sell tequila but not the lime juice or the salt for your margarita. But thanks to New York's antiquated, Prohibition-era alcohol control laws, grocery stores can sell beer but not wine. And liquor stores can sell wine and the hard stuff - and pretty much nothing else. ... Overhauling these laws would make life easier for almost everyone, boost the economy and raise a few bucks for our cash-strapped state government in the bargain.

**The only thing standing in the way is the liquor store lobby, which is predictably opposed to giving up even part of its longstanding monopoly.** Gov. Paterson - who proposed permitting wine sales in grocery stores as part of his budget - figures this year alone, he can raise a quick \$100 million in licensing fees from food retailers clamoring to get into the wine business. This would be a great deal for consumers. Unlike Paterson's other money-raising ideas - such as taxing sugary soda or taxing music downloads or taxing movie tickets - this is one levy that promotes pleasure instead of penalizing it. ...

[http://www.nydailynews.com/opinions/2009/03/03/2009-03-03\\_uncork\\_wine\\_in\\_grocery\\_stores\\_patersons\\_.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/opinions/2009/03/03/2009-03-03_uncork_wine_in_grocery_stores_patersons_.html)

**Washington Wine Consumers Could Get More Choices and Lower Prices, Maybe**

WINE SPECTATOR, USA

27.02.09: **Washington state wine lovers could soon have access to a wider range of wines at potentially lower prices, if the state legislature can agree on sweeping reforms to the state's archaic wine and beer laws.** Wineries, retailers, and wholesalers were sharply at odds but appear to have reached agreement on more modest changes. It's anticipated that the players will be back next year for another scrum over broader reforms.

Washington is the second-largest wine-producing state, home to 600 wineries. But it also has strict alcohol control laws left over from Prohibition's repeal. Big-box retailer Costco, based in



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Washington, challenged the rules in a multiyear lawsuit, arguing the state is unfairly hampering competition, but failed to win many changes. The case helped spur a legislative effort to reform the rules, however. ... **While many of Washington's wineries argue that less regulation would boost sales, the Liquor Control Board and distributors contend that it could lead to dangerous increases in alcohol consumption.** The battle is pitting big retailers like Costco, which want more pricing and operating freedom, against the Washington Beer & Wine Wholesalers Association, which is fighting to retain its legally protected distribution and pricing role. ...

<http://www.winespectator.com/Wine/Features/0,1197,4900,00.html>

## Bill to Increase Beer & Wine Tax Creates Controversy

FOX12, USA

25.02.09: Drink up while you can. Downing a cold one or sipping some wine could soon cost more if legislators pass a new bill that would increase alcohol taxes to fund more substance abuse treatment. The issue is so charged it's taking three days of hearings just to get through all the public's comments. **Even among the Common Interest Group, which is driving a bill to more than triple taxes on beer and wine, there doesn't seem to be much common interest.** ... And that back and forth, is exactly how it's gone for two days. More than 60 people have testified before the House Revenue and Taxation Committee. Plenty of them passionate about a tax that would cost drinkers a few extra cents per glass. ... If it passes, the bill will take Idaho from having some of the lowest beer and wine taxes in the country to some of the highest. Overall it would cost moderate drinkers, who indulge only a few times a week, less than \$10 extra a year. Even if the bill passes committee, it will still have to go before the house and senate.

<http://www.fox12news.com/Global/story.asp?S=9899531>

## Too many apple moths for twist-tie strategy to work, officials say

PRESS DEMOCRAT, USA

26.02.09: State and federal agricultural officials said Thursday there are too many apple moths in southern Sonoma County to fight the pest with special twist ties and instead they intend to conduct another grape harvest there under quarantine. The twist ties, which contain a special chemical that can prevent the moths from mating, wouldn't be effective because so many of the insects have been found in a three-county area between Sears Point and Benicia, said Larry Hawkins, spokesman for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "It's just overrun," Hawkins said. "It would be pointless to do it."

Hawkins and a spokesman for the state agricultural department said their agencies this summer and fall will provide additional inspectors, if needed, to help grape growers in the quarantine area get their crops inspected and processed in a timely manner. The latest development prompted disappointment among both growers and local officials. ... The moth, which originated in Australia, was first confirmed in California almost two years ago. State and federal officials have deemed it a significant threat to agriculture and some native plants, and are preparing an eradication campaign. They believe the larvae damages fruit by feeding on the plant surface.

**Critics dismiss the moth as a threat and have urged the federal government to downgrade the danger level of the pest. ...**



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<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/20090226/NEWS/902260874?Title=Too-many-apple-moths-for-twist-tie-strategy-to-work-officials-say>

## APEDA restricts use of three pesticides in grapes

F&B NEWS, INDIA

26.02.09: Agricultural and Processed Foods Product Export Development Authority (APEDA) has restricted use of three pesticides such as Profenophos, Abamectin and Flusilazole in grapes. According to S. Dave, Director, APEDA, it has been brought to our notice that three pesticides namely Profenophos, Abamectin and Flusilazole have got detected in some grape samples. All laboratories, farmers, exporters are advised to be extremely careful while testing pesticides, particularly these three pesticides.

Further, last week, it was reported by an exporter that the samples of grapes produced by their farmers were regularly showing presence Profenophos and its metabolite, 4-bromo-2-chlorophenol beyond the MRL value. The farmers have categorically stated that they have not sprayed Profenophos in the vineyards. However, they were informed that the farmers had used a biopesticide called 'Bio-Prahaar' being commercially produced by M/s Nirmal Seeds Pvt. Ltd. When the samples of Bio-Prahaar bio pesticide were tested, they reported the presence of Profenophos, Dave added. ...

<http://www.fbnnews.com/article/detnews.asp?articleid=24961&sectionid=1>

## All Olympic wines should be VQA

THE SUDBURY STAR, CANADA

27.02.09: Something isn't right in Niagara's grape and wine industry when a major player is saying **there aren't enough grapes to make quality VQA wines at a time when Niagara growers had to dump 4,000 tonnes of grapes on the ground because they had no buyer**. That is a major discrepancy.

That there was a major grape surplus last year is no secret. The province granted \$4 million to the growers to help cushion the blow. But while the growers and the wineries make strides towards a long-term plan for the industry -- a condition placed on them by Premier Dalton McGuinty when he gave them the bailout -- one of the largest wineries in the province is saying it doesn't have enough grapes to make all of its official Olympic wines VQA wines. The Olympic wines are coming from Niagara and British Columbia labels owned by Constellation, which includes Jackson-Triggs and Inniskillin. ...

<http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1455062>

## Diageo Cutting 150 Positions in North America Restructuring

WINE BUSINESS, USA

03.03.09: Following a "global review," Diageo today announced it is making changes to its organizational structure to reduce business costs that will result in 150 employees in North America losing their jobs. The changes are effective in mid-April. In a statement, Diageo said it will further integrate its beer and wine organizations, Diageo-Guinness USA (DGUSA) and Diageo Chateau & Estate Wines (DC&E) into a "total beverage alcohol approach" to cut costs.



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Ray Chadwick, President of Diageo Chateau & Estate Wines will be leaving Diageo but will remain a non-executive board member and beginning in June, is to become the chairman of Wine Institute. Diageo said it would soon announce "next steps" for Jim Young, President of Diageo-Guinness USA. ...

<http://www.winebusiness.com/news/?go=getArticle&dataid=62609>

## Constellation to stop growing Finger Lakes grapes

DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE, USA

26.02.09: For 10 years, the company has grown grapes for several of its wines on 700 acres of vineyards near Seneca and Keuka lakes. In an early lease termination, that practice will end on March 2. The decision could also mean job losses for 15 workers associated with the vineyards. "We are basically getting out of the farming business and being able to focus on our core business ... producing our wines," said Angie Blackwell, director of corporate communications for Constellation. Constellation will still grow grapes in vineyards in California and overseas.

... The news comes on the heels of lower profits announced by the company in January, when its fiscal year 2009 third-quarter results were released. Constellation posted a profit of \$83.5 million, or 38 cents per share, down from \$119.6 million, or 55 cents per share, a year earlier.

<http://www.democratandchronicle.com/article/20090226/BUSINESS/902260332/1001>

## Sonoma Wine Co. expands in Napa

PRESS DEMOCRAT, USA



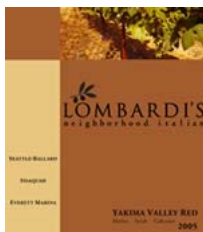
02.03.09: Sonoma Wine Company, Sonoma County's largest custom crush wine operation, is expanding into Napa County with the acquisition of the custom crush arm of Greenfield Wine Co. in American Canyon.

The purchase is its first outside Sonoma County. It places the Graton-based wine company closer to its Napa Valley clients and a major transportation hub. ...

<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/20090302/ARTICLES/903020968/1036/NEWS07?Title=Sonoma-Wine-Co-expands->

## Private Labeling Is a Promising Option

WINES & VINES, USA



04.03.09: Rising inventories and a growing grape supply may create opportunities for Oregon wineries to produce private-label wines, Bill Hatcher of A to Z Wineworks told the Oregon Wine Industry Symposium last week (see Wines & Vines article).

Hatcher estimated that the Oregon industry is sitting on about a million cases of bulk and bottled product, an embarrassment of riches that wineries will have to move if they hope to emerge stronger from the worst economic crisis in a generation. Bottling the wine for specific retailers, organizations or events rather than trying to sell the stock under a winery's own name offers a way to generate cash



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flow, he said. The experience of Northwest Cellars in Kirkland, Wash., shows the private-label option isn't just for jug wines sold at bargain prices. ... The red and white wines bearing the Lombardi's label have sold so well that they're now part of the by-the-glass program, and are also sold under the restaurant's recently acquired retail license. Bought for a wholesale price of \$6.99 a bottle, Symms lists the wines for \$24 in the restaurant and \$17 through its retail wing. Still, private label wines do present risks to wineries. ...

<http://www.winesandvines.com/template.cfm?section=news&content=62645&htitle=Private%20Labeling%20Is%20a%20Promising%20Option>

## Kunde Family Estate Debuts New Packaging to Illustrate Deep Commitment to Sustainably Grown Estate Wines

THE EARTH TIMES, USA

02.03.09: Kunde Family Estate unveiled today new packaging designed to **reflect the family-owned winery's commitment to sustainable winegrowing and winemaking practices in the creation of its super and ultra-premium wines**. The first wines to debut the new packaging are the 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon and 2008 Magnolia Lane Sauvignon Blanc. The 2006 Cabernet is also the first red wine released from Director of Winemaking Operations Tim Bell. "Our commitment to creating superb, environmentally friendly wines is front and center in every part of our business, and now our packaging reflects this," said Fourth Generation Winegrower Marcia Kunde Mickelson. ... All new releases will feature the new label, with the majority of the brand transition to be completed by summer 2009.

<http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/kunde-family-estate-debuts-new,734936.shtml>

## William Foley Buys Majority Stake in Napa's Kuleto Winery

WINE SPECTATOR, USA

26.02.09: William Foley has struck again. The head of Foley Family Wines is buying a controlling interest in Kuleto Estate, the Napa Valley winery owned by restaurateur Pat Kuleto. The deal, which will give Foley a 70 percent share in the brand, winery, inventory and part of the vineyard, is expected to close next week, according to Foley, who heads up his family-owned wine company. Neither side would disclose the terms of the agreement. "It's a lot of money," said Kuleto.

Kuleto Estate, located above Pritchard Hill, east of St. Helena, is in one of Napa's elite winegrowing areas, home to Bryant Family, Colgin, Chappellet, David Arthur and Ovid's vineyards. ... A Los Angeles native, Kuleto founded Kuleto Estate in 1993. He initially planted mostly Sangiovese grapes but eventually turned production over to 11 different varieties, mainly Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel and Syrah.

<http://www.winespectator.com/Wine/Features/0,1197,4898,00.html>

## CCL Industries to Acquire Wine Label Plant in South Africa

MSNBC, USA

03.03.09: CCL Industries Inc, a world leader in label solutions for the consumer packaging and healthcare markets, announced today that it has signed a binding agreement to acquire the shares of Ferroprint Western Cape (Pty) Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of Ferroprint (Pty) Ltd.,



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based in Durban, South Africa. Ferroprint Western Cape (Pty) Ltd. will immediately change its trading name to "CCL Label" while its former parent company will continue to trade as "Ferroprint." The acquired business has a focused factory near Cape Town in the wine growing region of Stellenbosch, South Africa. For the last 12 months estimated revenues were \$3.3 million. The debt-cash free purchase price will be \$2.7 million representing the approximate value of tangible assets of the acquired company. Final closing is expected to be completed before the end of March. ...

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/29490405/>

## Wine Domain Catalysts Watch

*This section records the most important articles written by those widely considered to be thought experts in the wine domain. These opinions are not only a valuable source of information but also provide important indications for current and evolving trends in the wine domain.*

### Australia's 2009 vintage

JANCIS ROBINSON, UK

02.03.09: The Australian wine industry, deeply concerned about plummeting demand for its wines outside Australia, is understandably fixated by the facts and figures surrounding the latest vintage. The Australian Wine and Brandy Corporation has accordingly released preliminary estimates of the 2009 grape crop only halfway through picking and admits that some grapes will be left on the vine, or picked straight on to the ground, because so much stock from earlier vintages is still in the distribution system. It looks as though the 2009 wine grape harvest, shrunk in many areas by the recent record high temperatures, will be about 1.63 million tonnes, 11% less than the 2008 crop - although 2009 will still probably be well above the drought- and frost-affected 2007 harvest of 1.34 million tones that helped to mitigate Australia's grape surplus. Australia's long-running drought was alleviated somewhat by cool, wet weather in many areas towards the end of 2008. This affected flowering but means that water allocations have been increased slightly in many of the inland regions supplying Australia's most basic wine. Maximum water allocations have been made in most of New South Wales wine regions while in Victoria and South Australia there has been lively trading in temporary water entitlements. The AWBC's monthly Winegrape Water Monitor is one of its most keenly monitored services by grape growers. The total area of productive vines continues to increase in Australia with an additional 2% coming on stream in time for the 2009 vintage. The AWBC expects the average yield in tonnes per hectare to be 11% down on 2008 levels and 20% below the long-term average, thereby making grape growing less and less attractive to farmers and investors. Because of the timing of the extremely hot weather in late February, white wine grapes will probably be worse hit than those for reds, which may have a chance to recover before they are picked. **It is still too early to be certain about quantity and quality overall, however, especially for red wines and the more southerly wine regions where the harvest is not yet underway.** ...

<http://www.jancisrobinson.com/articles/a20090302.html>



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## Scientific Developments & Technological Breakthroughs Watch

*This section captures the developments in the scientific research landscape in terms of technological breakthroughs and emerging research covering both R&D from companies but also research from academia and institutional bodies. These are essential elements of future trends or cumulatively combined indicators of future market trends and consumer awareness as well as industry practice development.*

### Eco-Friendly Vineyard Vehicles

#### VINEYARD & WINERY MANAGEMENT, USA



01.03.09: Farming has come to rely perhaps too heavily on equipment that by its very nature takes a toll on the very land it's being used to farm. Fortunately, there are alternatives to the behemoth land-grinding, pollution-spewing agri-saurs that have come to reign supreme. While modified golf carts are by far the most widely used eco-friendly vineyard vehicles, enviro-conscious growers are also using electric scooters, electric ATVs, hybrid trucks, biodiesel-powered vehicles and electric mowers. Bio-Diesel: Green, But Costly ... Sustainable: Less Fuel-ish Than Organic ... Scooting and Crawling ... Electric is on the Way ...

<http://www.vwm-online.com/magazine/story2.asp>

### Wine May Lower the Risk of a Rare Esophageal Cancer

#### THE NEW YORK TIMES, USA

04.03.09: While millions of Americans suffer from heartburn and gastric reflux, only a small number develop more severe ailments that can lead to esophageal cancer. Scientists trying to understand what may protect against these conditions have identified an unlikely agent: wine. Two studies published this month in the journal Gastroenterology suggest that people who drink **wine, white or red, in moderation are less likely to develop conditions that may lead to esophageal adenocarcinoma**, an uncommon cancer that has increased sharply in the United States over the past 30 years. The reports are particularly surprising because alcohol intake is a well-established risk factor for the other main form of esophageal cancer, squamous cell carcinoma. Researchers noted the studies were preliminary. ...

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/05/health/05cancer.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/05/health/05cancer.html?_r=1)

*Also published:*

#### Wine May Protect Against Throat Cancer - WINE SPECTATOR, USA

<http://www.winespectator.com/Wine/Features/0,1197,4907,00.html>



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## Women weigh benefits, risks

PRESS DEMOCRAT, USA



26.02.09: Dr. Ellen Mack knows a lot about cancer, and a lot about wine.

She is a retired neurologist with a speciality in cancer of the nervous system and also a part-owner of Russian Hill Estate Winery near Windsor. So she gave special attention Wednesday to a study out of Great Britain that has received international

coverage for its cautionary finding about women, drinking and cancer, including breast cancer.

Mack emphasized that the association between alcohol and breast cancer exists but remains weak, and that evidence that wine can benefit the heart remains strong. "It's not like smoking and lung cancer," said Mack, who was formerly on the faculty of UC San Francisco.

Moreover, she said, **moderate wine consumption provides "unquestionable" benefits to the heart that for many women far outweigh the risks of cancer.** The latest study is bound to spark discussions between women and their doctors over whether a glass of chardonnay each night might be too much. ...

*Also published:*

**Study Links Light-to-Moderate Drinking to Certain Cancers in Middle-Aged Women - WINE SPECTATOR, USA**

<http://www.winespectator.com/Wine/Features/0,1197,4896,00.html>

<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/20090226/NEWS/902261040/1033?Title=How-risky-is-wine->

## Wines from Greece Publicity Monitor

*This section presents all international publicity relating to wines from Greece.*

## International recognition for Boutari's wine

GR REPORTER, GREECE



04.03.09: Every year the American wine magazine "Wine Enthusiast" gives out the awards "Wine Star" in ten categories, among which are best company in Europe, man of the year, importer of the year, wine producer, best region, etc. The Greek wine-cellar "Boutari" received the 2008 award for best "Europe Winery of the Year." The company "Boutari" – the single Greek candidate, wins the award, to which only five famous companies in Europe were accepted to apply. The award is given for high quality wine, which combines local and foreign types of grapes. "Boutari" competed with his quality with companies from all around the world. Casa Laostolle from Chile, which produces also the liquor Grand Marnier, was chosen for the best world wine producer

company of the year. Mr. Piero Antinori from Marchesi Antinori company was awarded for the achievements of his family, which deals with growing vineyards in Tuscany, produces wine from



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600 years or in other words from 26 generations. Jean-Charles Boisset from Boisset Family, which is headquartered in Burgundy took the award for innovator of the year for aluminum packaging tetra-pack for preserving wines. Man of the year was Robert Sands from Constellation Brands, which is the biggest wine producing company in the world. During 2009 "Boutari" made 130 years since its foundation, and the award "Wine Enthusiast" is recognition during all those years. By receiving this award, the company reasserts its positions on the world wine producers' map. The Boutari family produced its first bottle in Naousa during 1979 and only for the few past years it has won over 270 awards. Some of the recognized and honored Boutari wines by experts are "Skalani," "Four Seasons," "Filiria," "Malagouzia," "Vinsanto," and "Grande Reserve."

<http://www.grreporter.info/statiaen.php?mysid=1739&t=22&SESID=8d52e6ad615oqhvhfj54n61bk3>

## Blogosphere Monitor

*In this section the most important blog entries for wine and Greek wine are recorded.*

### No Joie de Vins

THE POUR - THE NEW YORK TIMES, USA

04.03.09: Are you enjoying that glass of wine you're sipping? Well, hold it right there, buddy. Wine is not at all about pleasure. Not in France, at least.

In a continuing effort to demonize what was once a proud part of its heritage, France is trying to tighten restrictions on the public discussion and promotion of wine, according to the wine writer Steven Spurrier. In his column (sorry, no link available) in the March issue of Decanter, Spurrier recounts an address by Michel Bettane, perhaps the leading French wine critic, who decried the French government's efforts to treat wine as a drug. "In France, the government controls have become so strict that they verge on a state of prohibition," Spurrier writes.

Among the controls is the determination that advertisements for wine may not display people actually taking pleasure in the beverage. Horrors!

France already has ultra-strict rules regarding how wine is portrayed in newspapers and magazines. Le Parisien, a magazine, was fined last year, Spurrier reports, for an article on Champagne that the government contended promoted consumption of alcohol. A French court ruled last year that articles about wine must carry a health warning, just as cigarette packages do. For the record, Bettane's wine Web site, which he runs with Thierry Desseauve, carries this warning: L'abus d'alcool est dangereux pour la santé. A consommer avec modération. (Alcohol abuse is dangerous to the health. Consume with moderation.)

France has been trying to regulate wine Web sites by restricting access, as with pornographic websites. The French minister of health, Roselyn Bachelot, apparently opposes this proposal as undemocratic. On the other hand, she supports a law that that would ban free wine tastings — including, one presumes, tastings during winery visits.

It's astounding to me that France, the center of modern wine culture, with a tourism industry that at least in part depends on wine and the enjoyment of wine and food together, would go so far to turn wine into a vice. It is, as some have called it, the new French paradox.

<http://thepour.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/04/no-joie-de-vins/>



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## Rhone Rangers Tasting: March 22, San Francisco

VINOGRAPHY, USA

05.03.09: I love watching the green buds burst forth on the trees this time of year, hard on the heels of the cherry blossoms. Yes, it's California, and the groundhog doesn't agree with me, but the barest hint of any season gets me excited, but especially Spring. And with Spring in San Francisco comes lots of wine tasting events, and a few really good ones.

The Annual Rhone Rangers Tasting in San Francisco is certainly one of the Spring highlights for wine lovers in the Bay Area. Held at Fort Mason, like all the other big tastings, Rhone Rangers offers the change for wine lovers to taste through a vast field of Syrah, Grenache, Viognier, and many other varietals and blends that fall under the general banner of Rhone-style wines. ...

[http://www.vinography.com/archives/2009/03/rhone\\_rangers\\_tasting\\_march\\_22\\_1.html](http://www.vinography.com/archives/2009/03/rhone_rangers_tasting_march_22_1.html)

## Drink What You've Got: Wine in Troubled Times

VINOGRAPHY, USA



03.03.09: The current recession offers a blessing in disguise for many wine lovers. Even those whose decreased purchasing power means they can't buy wine like they used to.

For many wine lovers, the instinct to collect is strong. Beyond the dopamine rush of finding new wines to own, which may not be that far removed from the buzz of the compulsive gambler, the benefit of aging wines adds an allure to socking away bottles that can be hard to resist, especially if you have the financial means to do so.

One of the great pleasures of being a wine lover comes from the luxury of getting to know wine over time. But it's all too easy, as so many auction houses gleefully appreciate, to not find the time to actually enjoy the fruits of a wine purchasing habit.

Buying wine and not drinking it is a crime nearly as severe as buying a Ferrari and not driving it or owning a great record collection and not listening to it. Yet so many wine lovers, even those who don't consider themselves to be "collectors" can quite easily fall into the trap of finding the acquisition of wine easier to justify than its consumption. But in these troubled times, I'm finding it much easier to avoid buying more bottles, and I'm enjoying the challenge of mining my own cellar, even though my purchasing habit was sparse, and my cellar quite modest.

While serious collectors, especially those who buy for investment purposes, will no doubt be using the current economic crisis as a serious buying opportunity, I hope many others are using it as an excuse to reacquaint themselves with past purchases. Take a pause and pull out a bottle or two, and remind yourself of why you bought them in the first place.

[http://www.vinography.com/archives/2009/03/time\\_to\\_drink\\_your\\_wine\\_cellar.html](http://www.vinography.com/archives/2009/03/time_to_drink_your_wine_cellar.html)

## The Independence of Wine Writers

LES CAVES DE PYRENE, UK

04.03.09: Everyone likes a good marking. "Grade me, grade me" demanded Lisa Simpson. It is a chance for me to rate the wine writers, journalists and opinion formers. The prospect of such



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power make me swoon. Comparisons, as someone doubtless once malaproped, are odorous, but smelly, or not, we like to know where we stand.

There's often a disjunction between the opinions of the person I know and what they write. Were journalists allowed free rein they would be writers and express independent opinions more forcefully as it is the nature of magazines and newspapers to require cut-and-splice. The spirit of compromise prevails – often wine writers end up penning advertorials for certain regions and the average wine writer needs bend in so many directions – the need to be relevant, the need to identify trends, the need to be an agony aunt to the average consumer. The truth is more complex than simply what's hot and what's not, but the anxiety to shape the subject matter to fit the lifestyle pages shows how feeble is the editorial understanding of the subject matter. The by-product of such dumbing down is an invertebrate deference towards brands and supermarkets as if universal availability was a positive virtue, but even this stance is disingenuous. It would be easy for the wine writer to become jaded and institutionalised knowing as they do that the advertisers determine the agenda.

I also miss the style of writing that communicates a deep love for the subject. Perhaps I have a romantic notion the juice of the grape will inspire a measure of intoxication, or, at any rate, liberation. Although many of our journalists have good knowledge and write with technical proficiency there is an absence of soul in their offerings. By steering clear of controversy they are not tackling many of the issues that matter most in wine. Ultimately, their job is to recommend products to consumers. Part of the problem is that the journalists must be seen as much as the wines to stay in the loop. The loop is actually a commercial noose, for all the time they spend at major tastings (sampling the same things they've tried a dozen times) You can't be a professional naysayer in the wine trade or take on vested interests; no-one will invite you to tastings, regional and national wine associations will make you persona non grata. I'm not saying that journalists are obsequious or complaisant, but that they are naturally exposed to pressures, subliminal or otherwise, that contribute to shaping the articles they write.

... I also believe that the agenda in the wine trade is set by the big brands and the supermarkets – money talks as loudly as ever - and whilst once upon a time some journalists were complicit in this (newspaper advertising after all was being paid for by the brands that they were writing about), most now have the independence and the confidence to call it as they see it. The supermarkets and brands will still spend a lot of time and money courting the opinion of the movers and shakers, but they should not expect the trade to swallow what they pump out (wine or press releases). Journalists, however, are still editorially constrained by having to write about what is perceived as relevant wine (i.e. wine that is widely available) although this is a classic bogus assumption – there are whole areas of the UK where there isn't a Tesco, Sainsbury's, Waitrose or an M&S.

Wine writers have been further unshackled by their blogs. The art of blogs is to write little and often, rather than trying to present a fabulous dialectical disquisition on every subject under the sun. The danger of such blog entries is that they read like sound-bites. The advantage is that you can record spontaneous musings and keep it fresh and lively and the only editorial interference you suffer is your own. Wine blogs still largely celebrate wine and make recommendations, but they can also shine a light into the darker recesses of the wine trade and challenge perceived orthodoxies.

[http://www.lescaves.co.uk/grapevine/article/the\\_independence\\_of\\_wine\\_writers/](http://www.lescaves.co.uk/grapevine/article/the_independence_of_wine_writers/)



## Review: Wine Enthusiast Guide for iPhone »

### WINECAST, USA



02.03.09: Back when the iPhone App Store launched last July I did a search for wine applications. At the time there were just a handful of choices, most of them for taking notes which I wrote up as a first look post. A search today turns up about 30 wine apps with an array of choices for wine loving iPhone and iPod Touch users to take on the road.

One of these is the Wine Enthusiast Guide from Mobile Age who provided the app for me to review. It sells in the iTunes App Store for \$4.99, at the high end of the wine apps available there. Like last year, I do not have an iPhone, but since my kids each have an iPod Touch I was able to install and spend about an hour checking out this application. I have some experience using earlier versions of the Wine Enthusiast Guide as developed for Palm OS by LandWare and will do some comparisons between the versions in my review.

Wine Review DetailWhen you first startup the iPhone version you are taken right to the wine guide. The database is licensed from Wine Enthusiast magazine and seems to be fairly up-to-date with over 65,000 total reviews (25,000 of which are less than 5 years old). Users can search on winery name to find producers making this screen handy in a wine store or restaurant. Like the Palm version, I found the "search" function to be the most useful, entering price, rating, style, varietal and appellation to find matching wines from the database. One of the issues with such a large database is that search results often return wines no longer available in the marketplace. So it would be nice to have a date range option here similar to how this problem is dealt with on online wine review databases. Once you have found a wine, you can view the Wine Enthusiast review and add this wine to your personal "wish list" for purchase later. ...

<http://winecast.net/2009/03/02/review-wine-enthusiast-guide-for-iphone/>

## Philip Laffer of Jacob's Creek on Riesling, petrol, and screwcaps

### DR VINO, USA

03.03.09: In January, I tasted one of Australia's most well-regarded wines, the Jacob's Creek, Steingarten Riesling. Unfortunately, the bottle was not showing well that day. But, fortunately, I was with Philip Laffer, the Chief Winemaker of Jacob's Creek so I sat down with him and talked about Riesling. Given John Gilman's previous comments about Australian Riesling on this blog, I had to ask him about screwcaps (Stelvin closures) and reduction (anti-oxidation). He also shared his thoughts how many years he likes on a Riesling, why "petrol" is a bad thing, and why Australia is a good place for Riesling.

In switching to screwcaps have you replaced one problem, TCA taint, with another problem, reduction?



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Yes, in a sense. But in the main, I think we've managed the reduction problem by changing our yeasts and by making sure the wines are scrupulously clean when we bottle. Now, having said that, we can bottle a wine under screwcap—and we're talking here specifically about Riesling—and the wine is perfect and then at two or three years of age, as was the example today with the 2005 Steingarten, which is now four years old, and it's starting to develop a characteristic that we think is reduction, certainly it's sulfur related. And it's coming up now. Why is it coming up now since the wine's been wonderful for three years (and we know that from experience that it will disappear in two or three years)? ...

So the Riesling vineyards that are left in Australia, most of them are reasonably old, and their also in very good areas. Riesling is the simplest wine to make but it is also the most challenging since if you make a mistake, you just can't hide it. Put all that aside, dry Riesling have to be one of the greatest drinking wines in the world!

<http://www.drvin.com/2009/03/03/philip-laffer-of-jacobs-creek-on-riesling-petrol-and-screwcaps/>

## Peripheral Domains Intelligence

*This section covers developments from associated domains such as Greek food, taste and culinary trends, as well as any other significant information that has an impact on or derives from the global wine domain.*

### Wine glasses really do make difference

NEWS LEADER.COM, USA

04.03.09: Wine glasses are an integral part of the wine experience. That is a pretty strong statement but it is absolutely true. We spent many years scoffing at wine snobs with their special glasses, but in truth we were very, very wrong. The error of our ways was dramatically pointed out to us by Maximilian Riedel, the CEO of Riedel Crystal of America, representing the eleventh generation of fine wine- glass makers. He gave us a premier education in wine glassware that so impressed us, we must pass it on. Riedel declares that glassware is the messenger of wine and "every wine deserves the perfect messenger." We began our journey into wine glassware with a simple but dramatic test. We tasted a cabernet sauvignon in a Riedel Bordeaux glass (the proper glass for a cab), a Riedel Chardonnay glass and a simple, everyday, run of the mill generic wine glass. In the Bordeaux glass, all of the subtle nuances of the wine were open and obvious in both taste and aroma. In the Chardonnay glass, the wine was tight and closed in and displaying very few of the attributes that one buys a cab for. The really dramatic effect was the generic glass. All that we could smell and taste was vanilla and oak with absolutely none of the fruit showing up at all. It was truly an eye-opener. Another shocker was the fact that the proper glass directs the wine to the place on the tongue to best taste that particular wine. This is due, in part, to the shape of the bowl, but also to the fact that there is no rim on the glass. The rim, that rolled edge at the top of the glass, creates turbulence as the wine enters the mouth and spreads the wine across the entire tongue rather than directing it to specific taste areas. Run your fingers around the rim of your wine glass, if it is rolled or you can feel or see a rim, it is not a good glass for wine, regardless of what you paid for it. We learned that one should never fill a wine glass to the brim. The proper amount is only two or three ounces, so the wine aroma has plenty of room to expand in the glass and develop its full potential. Then there is color. Any color other than clear is not acceptable for a wine glass, so that lets out Aunt Sophie's purple wine glasses with the grape leaves on the stem that you inherited. The less-expensive wine glasses are made of common glass and have an often



unnoticed, usually green tint to them. Look down at the rim of the glass, in good light, and you will see color on an improper wine glass. There is also the question of the thickness of the glass: the thinner the better. Lead-glass or as it is commonly known, crystal glass, is the best. It is colorless and can be made extremely thin while retaining its strength.

<http://www.news-leader.com/article/20090304/LIFE02/903040457>

## Global Sustaining & Emerging Trends Digest

*This section presents those global, macro and micro trends that affect or potentially affect the wine domain. Comprehensive fusion and distillation of the above publicity parathesis concludes to the most important aspects as those appear in the current setting.*

### Private Labeling Is a Promising Option

#### WINES AND VINES, USA

04.03.09: Rising inventories and a growing grape supply may create opportunities for Oregon wineries to produce private-label wines, Bill Hatcher of A to Z Wineworks told the Oregon Wine Industry Symposium last week Hatcher estimated that the Oregon industry is sitting on about a million cases of bulk and bottled product, an embarrassment of riches that wineries will have to move if they hope to emerge stronger from the worst economic crisis in a generation. Bottling the wine for specific retailers, organizations or events rather than trying to sell the stock under a winery's own name offers a way to generate cash flow, he said.

The experience of Northwest Cellars in Kirkland, Wash., shows the private-label option isn't just for jug wines sold at bargain prices. Bob Delf started Northwest Cellars in 2003 with the goal of marketing high-quality private label wines. All bottles bear the Northwest Cellars name and contact information on the back, but the front label presents the wine as its clients'. Grapes come from vineyards in the Columbia, Yakima and Walla Walla valleys. Northwest Cellars' production last year was 3,000 cases, just 5% of which was bottled under its own name.

Its wines, which have taken honors at the Seattle Wine Awards, sell to clients ranging from the Northwest steak house El Gaucho and Seattle's W Hotel to not-for-profit organizations and private events. All told, Northwest Cellars has produced wines under about 400 labels. Vancouver, British Columbia retail consultant David Gray says private-label products have gone upscale in recent years, so the success of private-label wines isn't surprising. A private-label product can give the retailer a chance to offer a top-quality item at a price that can compete effectively against better-known brands. This is partly what makes Northwest Cellars' wines attractive to Diane Symms of Lombardi's, an Italian restaurant with locations in Seattle, Issaquah and Everett. Unlike many private-label suppliers that require a minimum purchase of a product that may not sell, Northwest Cellars didn't impose a minimum order, and provided a wine that matched her menu. Bob Delf sells most of the premium Washington state wines from Northwest Cellars under private labels. "This is not a risk. I buy 10 cases at a time, and I think we have used over 125 cases since July (2008)," Symms told Wines & Vines. "I can call and place an order, and one week later I get my bottles labeled, and delivered, and if I decide at any time to quit I wouldn't have an inventory of product I would need to get rid of." The red and white wines bearing the Lombardi's label have sold so well that they're now part of the by-the-glass program, and are also sold under the restaurant's recently acquired retail license. Bought for a wholesale price of \$6.99 a bottle, Symms lists the wines for \$24 in the restaurant and \$17 through its retail wing. Still, private label wines do present risks to wineries.



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Mike Conway of Latah Creek Wine Cellars in Spokane, Wash., hasn't done a private-label wine in "eight or nine years" because competition on pricing can be cutthroat. "There's always someone out there who's going to come in and beat you the next year. It just isn't worth the effort to try to get something that's just going to be one vintage long," he said. The mix of clients also has to be right, Conway said, pointing to Spokane's erstwhile Wyvern Cellars as an example of the perils inherent in the private-label business. Wyvern focused on private-label wines, but ran into trouble when the tourism industry slumped after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington in September 2001. Co-owner Ken Barrett told a reporter in 2003 that production stood at about 20,000 cases a year for Wyvern's private-label wines before Sept. 11, 2001, but fell to 10,000 cases in 2002. The business closed in 2003. Delf said that private label wines don't have to be a race to the bottom, however. "I've just learned to stay away from the price buyers and find people that care about the quality of the product," he said. "There's plenty of those."

<http://www.winesandvines.com/template.cfm?section=news&content=62645&htitle=>

