



AWOnews



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A forum for the exchange of news and opinions on home

winemaking in Ontario

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The Winter Edition

"[Dreams and predictions] ought to serve but for winter talk by the fireside"

Francis Bacon (1561-1621) "Essays: Of Prophecies"

IN THIS ISSUE:

by Paul Dunseath



News on AWO 2001 and wise words from President Glen

Keown, sound advice on removing H₂S stink from your wines (generously contributed from Winetalk), a repeat by popular demand of some timely (and quite delicious) recipes for Christmas entertaining, and a dissertation on making liqueurs, just in time for Christmas.

With the harvest over our thoughts turn to the new winemaking season. Our new President presents his thoughts; a number of items gleaned from the news are repeated; Gord Barnes reports on the results at the Canada finals; the

Eastern Ontario Amateur Wine Competition moves this year to Peterborough; Tom Ostler shares his secrets of success; and some thoughts on sulphur to tickle your nose. Here we go; Merry Christmas and Happy Hannukah to all as this special season approaches.

On with the show!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Glenn Keown

y the time this letter reaches everyone all the hard work of the 2000 harvest will be finished and everyone will be sitting back dreaming of the medals they are going to win.

It seems like only yesterday that a new century started, and here it's almost one year old.

Now our attention turns to the Festive Season, which means, plenty of good company, food and refreshments. Please remember when you are out during this

time of the year, use common sense and don't over indulge. If you do, make sure you use the better way to get around, or have someone else do the driving.

In my first letter I mentioned the Educational Survey that was sent out to the Club Reps. The response to this survey has been slow, If you have not seen the survey ask your Club Rep, to get it out and fill it in and forward it onto the Education Chairman, Elia Gallo. Without your input we cannot put together an Education format.

Arrangements are well under way for the 2001 Festival. We will be hearing more about this in the near future. Updates will also be posted on the Web site.

From my family to you and your families, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Glenn Keown

[AWO 2001](#)

The Niagara-area clubs invite AWO members to join us for the AWO Festival

2001: A Wine Odyssey to be held as follows:

June 8-10, 2001

Niagara College. Glendale Campus, Niagara-on-the-Lake NB Change of venue.

A full seminar and event program is in the final stages of development The core program will involve local winemakers, wine educators, and viticulturalists, and now includes:

Ann Sperling (Malivoire Wine Co.) on Pinot Gris; Marcus Ansems (Creekside Estate Wmery) on Sauvignon Blanc; Joseph Pohorly (Joseph's Estate Wines) on fruit wines; Thomas Lazlo (Royal Tokay) on the revival of Tokay wines in Hungary;

Linda Bramble (Wine writer) on a new system of food-and-wine matching;

Maria Moessner (Inniskillin Sommelier) on wine-and-glassware matching.

The program will also have:

The Art of the Bordeaux Blend -discussion given by professional Niagara winemakers,

A tour of Taylor & Bate micro brewery, and Vineyard-focused presentations.

The new Niagara College Glendale residence will provide the accommodations, offering suites of two bedrooms (each with a double bed) and shared bathroom between. Cost per suite \$75.00 per night. Rooms will be booked through Festival Committee on your Registration Form.

For those who prefer an alternative to the dormitory-style accommodations, the White Oaks Conference Resort and Spa is just across the road from the college. Room rates begin at \$169 per night.

Registration Forms, final program details, and Festival updates will be posted to the AWO website and Wmetalk. For more information, contact:

AWO Festival 2001: A Wine Odyssey Alan Johnson, Registrar NOTL Amateur Vintners, 339 Mary Street, Box 1103.Niagara-on-the-Lake ON LOS 1J0 Email: Niagara College website:

<http://www.niagarac.on.ca/> White Oakes Conference Resort and Spa website:

[H2S IN WINE](#)

by Dan Sullivan

Editor's Note: This is reprinted (by permission) from a WINETALK session in which Dan was counseling a winemaker who had a "rotten eggs" stench in her wine and had tried passing it through a copper pipe to reduce the H₂S smell. It has been edited only to make it more generic. If there are any faults in transcription, they are those of the editor. P.S.D.

First, let me say that I am not a trained chemist or enologist, but here goes:

In many cases of the classic H₂S smell what is happening is that sulphur in the must is being reduced. This occurs when sulphur in a non-elemental form has oxygen removed (scavenged) by yeast during the fermentation process from the compound that it was contained in. In a sense it is set free'. Subsequently, the sulphur combines with hydrogen which is available in abundance in an acidic solution such as grape must. This forms a product called hydrogen sulphide (H₂S). Hydrogen sulphide is the mother of all stink!

The application of copper pipe as a part of the tubing system is a crude but effective way of removing the sulphur from your must. The copper which dissolves into the must combines with the H₂S and binds together as an insoluble

compound called copper sulphide (CuS). The danger in this method of treatment is that it is possible to permit too much copper to dissolve into your wine.

Current regulations for commercial production of wine in Canada permit 1ppm of copper, I believe.

While it's unlikely that consumption of the wine will result in poisoning, excess copper can bring on it's own set of problems. One which was common in days of yore, was the incidence of Cupric or Ferric Casse. This is a condition in which wines become permanently cloudy or hazy, due to metallic contamination. Back in pre-stainless and plastic days this was common. If after this treatment the smell has returned this means any copper in the wine is now CuS, hence will settle out.

The generation of H₂S is not necessarily a problem which can be laid solely on the doorstep of the grower. In fact, most good growers are acutely aware of the dangers of spraying late with Bordeaux mix or other sulphurous compounds and usually refrain from doing so for at least a month to six weeks prior to harvest, I think. That being said, yes, elemental sulphur from spraying can be a source.

Perhaps an experienced grower can comment further.

More commonly, H₂S is generated during the fermentation process due to a lack of utilizable nitrogen in the must or juice. I don't know what specific mechanism in the fermentation process causes this, but I can definitely state that specific grape varieties and yeasts seem to require higher levels of nutrient and attention, in my experience. The addition of proprietary and generic fermentation nutrients such as Fermaid and Diammonium Phosphate (DAP), can provide supplementary sources of nitrogen. These additives work on SOME stinky ferment problems.

In my experience, grape varieties with tendencies to H₂S are: Gamay, Pinot Noir, most red hybrids and Merlot. In whites, Riesling, Gewurz. and Chardonnay (for a different reason- autolysis) seem more prone. Yeast which I have had H₂S episodes with are: VLI and less so VL3 (aromatic whites), BM45 (big reds), Wadenswill (WSK 27)-(slow fermentor, fruity wines) and 71B (malic acid reduction). A look at Scottlabs website will give you a fermentation chart listing nutrient demands among other "all things yeast".

There is a growing belief that the addition of utilizable nitrogen may NOT correct some stinky ferments and may in some cases, exacerbate the problem.

A study by some researchers suggest that certain yeast species may be the main source of H₂S generation during fermentations. In any case the solution (in my opinion) is as follows: rack the wine off the lees quickly and with a lot of aeration into an open bucket. This will help remove a source of growth for the H₂S, which is the yeast (alive and dead) and change the sulphur from a reduced to oxidized state where it can be volatilized off. Further, quick action helps reduce the likelihood of disulphides or mercaptans (harder to treat products of H₂S) from being produced. Splash it until the smell starts to dissipate. Be warned that you are introducing a lot of oxygen to your wine.

Rack it back in to a carboy or demi-john with minimal headspace. Put it through malolactic fermentation quickly with a culture and add your sulphite for protection. Check for oxidation and H₂S recurrence frequently.

P.S.- Checking red wine with the sulphite titrettes is a waste of time and money. The pigment and phenols in the wine interfere with the end point and give false high readings. Further, that kit is designed for measuring free sulphite (the stuff that protects your wine from oxidation) not total or elemental.

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"Christmas is a' coming and the goose is getting fat;

Please to put a penny in the old man's hat;

If you haven't got a penny, then a ha'penny will do..

If you haven't got a ha'penny, may God Bless You!'

Making your own liqueurs, using one of the many essences available at your local wine supplies dealer, can provide an inexpensive way to serve your Christmas guests with an elegant after-dinner cordial or liqueur at a fraction of the commercial cost. Liqueurs made at home can duplicate the commonly-available ones, and simulate (if not duplicate) the fine proprietary ones, at a fraction of their cost. Enjoy! At the end of the year as the Canadian landscape reflects so perfectly the emotions we all feel as Christmas approaches (come on, now; be romantic; I'm not talking about shoveling the driveway!), the time comes to think about the most meaningful season of the year, and, with it, the likelihood of entertaining friends and families. What nicer demonstration of hospitality

than home-made wine?

Oh, I see; there isn't time to make any more... Oh, well, there's always next year.

But wait... what about liqueurs? Sure, you can make them for Christmas, if you start a few weeks ahead! Is it worth it? Well, have we ever lied to you before?

The basic process for making liqueurs is fairly simple; one simply dissolves sugar in water, adds alcohol (either alcohol or wine) and a flavour extract, and bottles in an appropriate bottle. Ageing helps, but even a couple of weeks will make a marked improvement. Many of the extracts also come with pre-printed labels, but if you wish to re-use commercial bottles with their proprietary labels and spring one on your fiends - let your conscience be your guide---

A MODEST HISTORY OF LIQUEURS

Lets look at some historical factors. liqueurs originated in all probability - at least, in something approximating their present form - in the Middle Ages, - when practitioners of the Medical Arts realized that certain potions, believed to be good for various bodily ills, dissolve poorly or not at all in water, but in fact dissolved freely in alcohol. Extracts of various kinds. perhaps sweetened with honey and dissolved in brandy. became the stock-in-trade of various distillers

and several monasteries, with the various formulations being then - and now - a closely-guarded secret. In time, people came to realize that you didn't have to be sick to enjoy the taste of these products, and they came to be enjoyed for their own sake. Today, of course, liqueurs are made from a variety of fruits, herbs, whiskies, rums, and even eggs! And all, or virtually all, are enjoyed for their taste, rather than their alleged health-giving properties.

MAKING IT AT HOME

For the home winemaker or brewer, a variety of flavourings are also available at local winemaker supply stores, which flavourings, mixed with sugar, alcohol, and - sometimes - home-made wine - can provide a close approximation of commercial liqueurs. How close? Well, as they say, it depends. An anecdote, however, may be instructive. A friend of ours once made some "Cerne de Menthe" liqueur, and, having nothing better to store it in, used a bottle bearing a world-renowned commercial brand of the same liqueur. He served it on one occasion after supper to a business colleague who fancied himself a connoisseur. Having noticed the distinctively-shaped bottle, his colleague sipped the liqueur, raised it to the light, and commented, "You know, Dave, I don't often buy

M.....B..... because it's so expensive., but it's sure worth it, isn't it?

Can you do the same? Of course you can. First, a little theory then we'll see how to do it... and remember, there's still time before Christmas!

PROOF Oh Spirit!

The basis of alcoholic strength (of which we need to be aware, since making liqueurs involves blending ingredients of various alcoholic strengths) is the concept of proof.

Pure alcohol, of course, burns quickly if a match is put to it, while pure water puts a match out. Today, one may measure very accurately exactly where along this continuum a mixture of alcohol and water may lie, but in olden days it wasn't so easy. However some brave soul discovered that if a mixture of water and alcohol was combined with gunpowder (!), then the rate of burning reflected the percent of alcohol in the mixture. If the mixture fizzled and went out, it was "unproved"; if it burned evenly, it was "proof spirit"; if it flared up, it was "overproof". Modern analysis indicates that "proof spirit" is 57.05% alcohol; and that pure alcohol is 1.750 proof (in the U.S., the equivalent figures are 100 and 200 respectively; more rational, perhaps, but less replicable).

What this means is that, in Canadian practice, multiplying alcohol content by 1.75 gives degrees proof (in the U.S. system, the multiplier is 2).

Commercial liqueurs range from .300 to an incredible .960, but a figure of .400 is a good average; those who choose to make them more or less strong will be able to do so with the recipes which follow.

INGREDIENTS

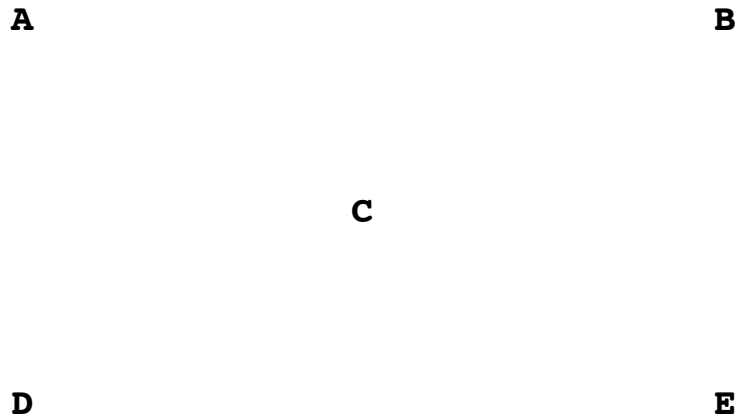
The basic ingredients required are sugar, water, alcohol (either underproof or RAQ Alcohol or equivalent), liqueur essence, and - if desired -white wine to reduce the quantity of alcohol required.

DETERMINING QUANTITIES

The many commercial liqueur concentrates on the market will indicate how much spirit, sugar, water, and flavouring are required to make a given quantity of liqueur. If you want to use the simple method, i.e. following the recipe and using commercially- available alcohol, ignore the steps that follow and simply follow the recipe. If you wish to cut your cost by using your own homemade wine, read on.

The technique to be used is known as a "Pearson Square" (pay attention, there'll be a short quiz at the end of' the class!)

A Pearson Square looks like this



The Square can be used with either proof ratings or percent alcohol, but not both at the same time. In what follows, we will use proof spirit.

In the Square, A is the proof rating of the spirit you have on hand to fortify the remainder; B is the present proof of the liquid to be fortified; C is the desired proof rating; D is C minus B; E is A minus C. The ratio of D to E is that of alcohol addition to wine volume.

Let's say that we have a bottle of .800 proof (almost pure) alcohol and a bottle of white wine at 12% alcohol; this wine, as we have seen, is $.12 \times 1.75 = .210$ proof.

We want to end up with a proof rating of .400 (40 proof)

To 10 oz (300 cl) of this wine, we will add 10 oz (300 gm) of sugar, warm it (slightly!) to dissolve the sugar, and we will find that we now have 16 1/2 oz (500 cl) of sweetened wine. However, since the volume has increased, the strength has correspondingly dropped, to $300/500 \times .21$ or about .120 proof

We want to add our Alcohol at .800 proof to this, and end up with .400 proof spirit. Plugging these values into our Pearson Square gives the following:

A .800

B .120

C .400

D .280

E .400

This tells us that we need 28 parts of alcohol (D) to 40 of wine (E), or, since we only have about 16 oz of sweetened wine, $16/40 \times 28$, or about 11 oz of alcohol, which will then give us .400 proof spirit.

TWO RECIPES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Back by popular demand are these two recipes were initially published in issue no. 3 and reprinted in no. 15. They are again reprinted here in time for Christmas and the New Year and make excellent festive dishes for entertaining over the holiday period. Terrine with Pistachio and Cranberry is the creation of Don West of Bytown Vintners, while the Brie with Sun-Dried Tomatoes is from Marie Droste of Capital Amateur Winemakers.

TERRINE WITH PISTACHIO AND CRANBERRY

by Don West

Ingredients:

2 lbs ground raw turkey

2 lbs sausage meat

2 chopped onions (1 cup)

1 cup dried or fresh cranberries, coarsely chopped

1 cup pistachios, coarsely chopped

½ tsp salt

½ tsp allspice

2 eggs, beaten

2/3 cup chopped shallots/ chives / green onions

cup dry vermouth

4 slices bacon

6 bay leaves

Combine all ingredients except bacon and bay leaves. Avoid mushing it together or the texture will be heavier.

Place 2 strips bacon and 3 bay leaves on the bottom of a terrine or baking dish.

Fill with meat mixture, top with bacon and bay leaves. Bake in 350° oven until

meat reaches 170°. (A shallow baking dish will take ~ 30 minutes, a deep loaf

dish up to 1 hour). Pour off any fat. Chill overnight. Remove from pan, remove

bay leaves, garnish with orange segments or zest.

BRIE WITH SUN-DRIED TOMATOES

by Marie Droste

1 round or large triangle of Brie cheese

4 oz chopped sun-dried tomatoes

olive oil

3-4 cloves of garlic, chopped

chopped parsley

Soak the tomatoes in olive oil to cover, overnight in the refrigerator.

Add chopped garlic several hours before serving. Pile the mixture on top of the Brie and sprinkle with parsley.

Heat in oven at 350° F for a few minutes until the cheese begins to melt. This can also be done in the microwave but be careful not to overheat and make the cheese tough.

Serve with crackers, bread, or Triscuits.