

# **AWOnews**

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**The Winter Edition**

*"Not only does one drink wine, but one inhales it, one looks at it, one tastes it, one swallows it... and one talks about it." King Edward VII (d. 1910)*

## **A NOTE ON YOUR SUBSCRIPTION**

**As you know, subscriptions are due in the Fall, and delay in sending them in may delay (or prevent) your receiving a copy of AWOnews., so please make sure that your club completes the paperwork without delay.**

**PAPER MAIL copies are sent out based on membership records which are maintained by Gord Barnes, so any changes in address for regular mail should be sent to him at 11 Catherine Ave., Aurora, ON L4G 1K4. Amendments to your e-mail address, if you receive AWOnews in this form, should be sent to the e-mail address at left, copy to Gord Barnes, with your full name and club affiliation. Thanks for your cooperation.**

## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

**by Paul Dunseath**



**Preliminary information on AWO 2002, to be held in**

**Hamilton; Don Panagapka scores twice with a timely article on making Port,**

**and a second on Rosé wines; our President presents his always-welcome comments and insights; the Pickering Wine Guild describes a recent club project using Baco Noir; and we include an academic treatise on distillation, along with the many reasons why you should not try this at home, as well as a special Christmas wish.**

## **1999 PICKERING WINE GUILD**

### **CLUB PROJECT**

**by Dan Sullivan © 2001**

**Baco Noir: Can yeast tame the beast? A trial using six selected strains of yeast to ferment Baco Noir.**

**Project Personnel: Dave Gillingham, Mark Henry, Richard Karlo, Dan Ostler, Kaarle Ottonen, Paul Stuart.**

**Cellar Master: Lorne Weyers**

**Project Manager: Dan Sullivan**

**Purpose:**

**To examine the impact of various yeast strains on the fermentative and organoleptic properties of Baco Noir.**

**Methodology:**

**Approximately 650 lbs. of crushed and destemmed Baco Noir was sourced from Viti-Bev Farms in Louth township. The fruit was machine picked on September 4/ 1999. On September 5th it was equally divided into six primary fermentors.**

**Prior to separation the must was bulk chaptalized, treated with Rapidase enzyme and analyzed for sugar, acid and pH. Care was taken to distribute equal amounts of juice and solids to each vat. Fifty grams of toasted French oak chips were added to each lot at this time. The following yeast selections were then added: RC-212, 71B, D254, BM45, EC1118 and Pasteur Red. Each fermentor was inoculated with 10 grams of the selected strain.**

**The fermentation was carried out to near dryness, (until the cap sunk) over a ten day period, with punching down twice daily. Must and cap temperature was measured throughout the fermentation. The paddle in contact with the must was rinsed between contact with each batch to minimize cross contamination.**

**The fermented must was transported to the press site and pressed. The wine was subsequently settled off the gross lees overnight, then run off into glass with fermentation locks and inoculated with Chris Hansen malolactic culture. A blend of all six wines in equal amounts was formulated at this time. The wine completed malolactic fermentation over an six week period at about 18-21 Celsius.**

**Upon completion of malolactic fermentation, as confirmed by Chromatographic testing, the wine was racked and 50 grams of Harmonie oak sticks were added to each lot. The wine was sulphited to approx. 50 p.p.m. The wine was then cold stabilized at approx. 00 Celsius for six weeks. A further 20 p.p.m. sulphite addition was made.**

**Subsequently, the wine was racked and held in bulk until bottling in May 2000.**

**During the fermentation and aging process acid and pH reading were recorded.**

**They are included in the observations section.**

**Observations:**

**Initial must readings: 21.0 Brix at pick-up in Louth 11:00 a.m. Sept 4, 20.7 Brix**

**in Scarborough, Sept. 4, 9:00 p.m. 19.9 Brix Sept. 5, Noon. Chaptalized to 21.4 Brix Sept. 5 1:00 p.m. (adjusted up 1.5 Brix). Theoretical must weight by narrow range thermometer: 22.5 Brix. Acidity and pH Sept 4, 9:00 p.m: 13.2 g/L., 2.98.**

**Readings on Sept 14th, post primary fermentation: (pH followed by Acid):**

**RC212- 3.27 11.25g/l., EC1118-3.21 11.25 g/l., BM45- 3.23 11.25 g/l., 71B-3.26 10.8 g/l., D254-3.24 11.1 g/l., Pasteur Red- 3.22 11.4g/l.**

**Readings on Nov. 18th, post malolactic conversion: RC212- 3.57, 9.2g/l.,**

**EC1118-3.55 9.6 g/l., BM45-3.55 9.6 g/l., 71B- 3.57 9.2 g/l., D254- 3.60 9.2 g/l.,**

**Pasteur Red- 3.54 9.6 g/l., Blend- 3.60 9.1 g/l.**

**Readings Oct. 30th, 2000. Partial results- 71B- 3.58 7.7 g/l., BM-45- 3.58 8.1 g/l.,**

**Blend-3.60 7.9 g/l.**

**Fermentation temperatures during primary ferment were monitored twice daily and peaked at 87 F in the cap at 4 days in to the fermentation. There was little variation from batch to batch. There was an initial add of 8 grams of Fermaid K yeast nutrient, all ferments went to dryness and there was no evidence of H<sub>2</sub>S during primary fermentation.**

## **Conclusions**

**The selected strains did not demonstrate widely different fermentative characteristics at the ambient temperatures in this experiment. The 71B lived up to its reputation as a strain that metabolizes malic acid as evidenced by the lower acid readings immediately post primary fermentation.**

**At our first club tasting of the wines it was found that the RC212 and 71B wines were more fruit driven a less austere than the other wines. The BM45 offered the most structure and fullness. There were distinctly discernable differences in the taste and texture of the wines at this time.**

## **[AWO 2002](#)**

**Bob Gibbon of Hamilton Wine Circle reports that there will be a website up and running shortly with some more details on the 2002 convention. Address to follow. Pat McPhail is the convention chairperson. He can be reached at (patgeo@mountaincable.net) The theme of the convention will be "Grape Expectations". The organizers already have some excellent seminars planned, but**



**still need a few more. Any suggestions and/or volunteers would be greatly appreciated. What would you like to have as seminars? Please send your ideas to [bgibbon@mountaincable.net](mailto:bgibbon@mountaincable.net). The organizers are also looking for a main speaker. Any suggestions?**

**Pat MacPhail adds that the accommodations are at the Royal Connaught Hotel, a first class hotel. The organizers hope to keep costs the same as last year, and are working on the seminars.**

## **WE CAN'T MAKE A VINTAGE PORT.....BUT WE CAN COME CLOSE!**

**By Don Panagapka ©**

**Why is it that when I compare my award-winning ports to a Vintage Port, I always come out second, out of two? Can we make a port like a Vintage Port from the Douro area of Portugal or not? I am quite sure that we can't, but we can come close! Here in Ontario we don't have the climate (hot, arid, slate and granite soil) of the Douro Valley nor do we have the grapes noted for the**

**production of Vintage Ports (there are five or six primary grapes, none of which are available in North America, with minute amounts of twenty or twenty-five other varieties).**

**I started attempting to make port about twelve years ago using a Brehm Zinfandel and bottles and bottles of brandy (very costly as I found out). As many of us know, port is made by arresting the fermentation with brandy when the alcohol is at the 5-7% level. This effectively retains the huge fruit in the wine along with the tannins and alcohol (20%/vol from the brandy addition) that allow vintage ports to last up to half a century. My first attempts produced okay wines but I determined that the 40% alcohol/volume of the brandy diluted the wine too much making a lighter, ruby-style of wine.**

**As is my usual style I bought a 1983 Graham's Vintage Port and instead of drinking all of it I dissected most of it. That is, I measured the residual sugar content (in that case it was S.G.1.045), the acid level, and determined subjectively how much fruit complexity there was and the level of tannin (the alcohol content was printed on the bottle). To my surprise I found the acid level to be in the .45g/l range, low I thought for a wine that aged for so long. After**

**more research I realized that tannins, sugar, and alcohol were all preserving agents that kept the port to maturity. Following this exercise I have made 5 different ports all of which I am very happy with. My philosophy is that proper Port needs years to age, and so why not make the best you can instead of finding out years later that you made a mediocre Port and by that time you are too old to make another.**

**The following are my suggestions to make a port "close" to a vintage quality:**

**1) use top-quality product. Western U.S. (California, Washington, Oregon)**

**grapes have the kind of intense fruit that is required to age the port properly. I use primarily Zinfandel (because of it's complexity of flavours) as well as Syrah, and other western "intense" grapes**

**2) try to get grapes that have a low acid level in the .45 - .5g/l area. If you check on Brehm's website you can often get last year's leftover grape product where you can actually pick and choose stats that you want, that is, low acid/high sugar content. These grapes are not necessarily good for table wines (and thus discounted) but would be ideal for a port**

**3) obtain high alcohol distilled alcohol in the area of 151 to 170 proof. These are**

**not available in Ontario but can be obtained in the United States and elsewhere.**

**A brandy base is best if possible. Grain alcohols tend to leave an "off" taste that will dissipate with time but don't have any flavour that will add to the port**

**4) use a long maceration period to extract as much of the tannin as possible prior to fermentation. The tannin will give the port structure and longevity. (Note that because of the arresting of the fermentation much tannin is still left in the skins and therefore the maceration is important).**

**5) determine what sugar level that you want to have in the finished product (I suggest S.G. 1.030 to S.G. 1.045) depending on the intensity of the fruit. Less intense fruit should have a lower residual sugar content or the wine will seem "syrupy" for the intensity. The Pearson Square will help you determine how much alcohol to add and what your final S.G. will be.**

**6) age the port in a barrel for 2 years just as they do in Oporto. This will give the "oak" required, but will also "smooth" out the wine (aeration through the wood) and help to marry the flavours and alcohol.**

**7) bottle without filtration to preserve tannin structure. (use half-bottles for faster maturing if desired)**

**It will take at least one year past the barrel-aging phase to determine what the port will eventually be like. At that time lots of fruit, complexity and a firm tannin structure will indicate that it has a long life ahead. If you are missing one of these components, drink up and start working on your other ports.**

**Bon chance!**

**p.s. I understand that older retired folks in their twilight years tend to like a wee dram of port or sherry as they sit in their rocking chairs overlooking the sunset.**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**by Glenn Keown**

**It seems like only a short few weeks ago everyone was waiting for the Harvest of 2001, to start. Here we are now in the middle of November, the harvest is over, the grapes have fermented, been pressed etc., and now we can sit back and see what results we'll get from all the hard work.**

**Just to keep everyone up to speed on what's been happening with the Board of**

**Directors, the following changes have taken place.**

**David Burns, is now Treasurer and Ellen Kareckas, will be Secretary. We welcome them both to their new positions.**

**On the other side of the coin, we find ourselves in a position where the A.W.O., is looking for a Chief Steward. This is a very important job and without someone to fill this position there will be no judging of our wines at the Ontario competition. The Chief Steward requires a person of dedication who must be willing to work hard in organizing, setting up and controlling all of the wines entered for competitions.**

**The Board of Directors would also like to see a Steward's Committee set up to assist the Chief Steward. So if you have the time, and are interested in helping out, and advancing your wine knowledge, please contact A.S.A.P.**

**I am pleased to hear that just about everyone has sent in their dues for next year.**

**Shortly, everyone will be receiving his or her copy of the WineMaker magazine.**

**We are still looking for information to be posted in the AWOnews, or on our**

**Website. So if anyone, or a club, has done experiments, or have had some great tastings, they would like to pass onto the rest of us, please forward them to Paul Dunseath Editor of AWOnews, or Paul Stuart our Webmaster, so that they can be written up or posted for everyone to read.**

**We are fast approaching the Festive season of the year and I would like to remind everyone to be responsible and take care.**

**For those who are heading to the warm and sunny south for the cold weather months, enjoy yourselves and come back safely. In closing I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

## **ROSÉ**

**by Don Panagapka ©**

**Last June on Winetalk I mentioned that I felt that it would be a good idea for members to perhaps put one of their winning recipes on Winetalk to stimulate discussion on a particular category of wine and, more importantly for**

**winemakers to better their winemaking skills. I received some positive response from a number of winemakers and so now that my summer holidays are over and I am home more than one night at a time I thought I would submit my recipe and philosophy of a wine category.....in this case the class Rosé.**

**Background: it seems to me that Rosé is an unheralded class that warrants more recognition. In the Rhone/Provence/Languedoc areas of France Rosé is considered a part of everyone's daily consumption of wine. The Rosés of Tavel, for example, are excellent examples of some of the finest Rosés in the world. Here in Ontario, however, it seems that they are not taken seriously at all. After all, most AWO members blend a red and a white until it is the right colour and enter it into our competitions.**

**I had the opportunity to travel to Provence and taste many Rosés. I attempted to dissect the components that I thought made a nice Rosé and came back to Ontario with what I thought was perhaps the right formula. Since that time (1996) my success at making Rosés has improved dramatically.**

**The following is the approach I took:**

**The Rosés I tasted had the following qualities:**



- 1) they were subtle in flavour with light tannins**
- 2) they had an obvious fruity component that was there but was not overpowering**
- 3) the sugar component was dry to ever so slightly off dry**

**Firstly, how was I to get the fruit? For the most part In Provence the Grenache grape is used. Since Grenache is not available here I acquired some from our good friend Dominic via the Lodi area. This Grenache I used for two purposes: to rack off early in the fermentation for the Rosé part, leaving the rest to make a Rhone-style wine (with more intensity, perhaps combined with Syrah)**

**Secondly, I looked for Ontario red grapes that might make a nice Rosé. In my mind the Pinot Noir, Cab Franc, and Merlot had the right qualities to potentially produce a good quality Rosé. They all have nice fruit and subtle flavours (as opposed to say the Cabernet grape). All of these grapes were dealt with in the same way. Start the fermentation, then when the colour is atypical Rosé, rack off approximately 15% of the must to make a Rosé, and the rest will be more concentrated to make a more full-bodied red.**

**Then I made a Rosé out of each of Pinot, Cab Franc, Merlot, and the Grenache.**

**All of these (with the possible exception of the Grenache) were still heavier than I wanted when the fermentation was finished. I determined that the tannins were too high for a Rosé and so went about reducing them with the addition of egg-white. Now I had 4 subtle-tannin fruity Rosés.**

**Then in the final summation I blended the 4 Rosés using different blends of the 4 until I had 2 or 3 that I thought were ideal. After that it was the task of the judges to determine which was the best.**

**I have to say that at the beach a Rosé is the most appealing of the wines that my guests want. Perhaps it is the novelty, but I believe that the subtle flavours, the light fruitiness, and cool serving temperature of the Rosés are their attractions.**

**Hopefully this will stimulate some discussion and all of us (including me) will make better and better Rosés in the future.**

## **DISTILLATION**

**by Paul Dunseath © 1998, 2001**

**Distillation, in its simplest definition, refers to the extraction of a pure liquid from a mixture of liquids by means of boiling and collection of the vapour, followed by cooling and condensing. In the case of fermented liquids (wine or beer, for example), it is the process of separating the alcohol from the water so that a much higher-strength beverage can be produced. As a case in point, a typical table wine may contain 12% alcohol. If 3/4 of the water is removed, the resulting liquid will be 48 % alcohol, which is over 84 degrees proof (imperial).**

**Now for the LARGE print: DON'T DO THIS AT HOME. Distillation without a permit is illegal in every jurisdiction in Canada, the USA, and Western Europe, as well as most other civilized parts of the world. It is also potentially very hazardous, and if not done properly can lead to blindness, paralysis and death.**

**You have been warned.**

**Since distillation is an integral part of the production of many commercial beverages, however, and there is considerable curiosity about it, no examination of wine would be complete without at least a general overview of the subject. The following should nonetheless be regarded as an academic treatise, not as a "how-to" explanation.**

**Distillation is based on the principle that different liquids boil at different temperatures. At sea level (standard 1 Atmosphere pressure), water boils at 100 C (212 F). Ethyl Alcohol however boils at 78.30 C (173 F). Consequently if a mixture of water and alcohol (wine, for example, or beer) is heated to boiling, the alcohol will boil off first, then as the temperature continues to increase to 100 C, the water will boil off. In its most basic form, a distillation column (or "still") consists of a closed container (commonly called a kettle) containing the mixture to be distilled, and which can be placed over heat; a tube leads from the top of the kettle, through which the steam can escape; a cooling column, often made by winding the tube into a spiral, perhaps inside a water jacket, is connected to the tube; and a collecting tap is fitted at the end. The liquid to be distilled is placed in the kettle and heated; after the liquid reaches its first boiling point, the steam given off will be condensed back into liquid in the cooling column and is collected in a receptacle. If the original mixture consists only of alcohol and water, this first "distillate" will be mostly alcohol with a small amount of water carried with it. After the first collection, which is carefully set aside, the run through the tap will decrease greatly. If heating were continued, little run off would occur until the second boiling point, that of**

**water, was reached, at which point it would build up again. This distillate would be almost entirely water.**

**A "double distillation" can be done by emptying the kettle and refilling it with the alcohol recovered from the first distillation and repeating the process. More of the residual water will be removed and consequently the distillate will be alcohol of higher purity or concentration.**

**As a variant, some "backwoods" illegal stills have an extra, unheated, container inserted in the tube between the top of the kettle and the beginning of the cooling column. The steam drops slightly in temperature as it passes through this container and some of the water vapour which has been carried over with the boiling alcohol condenses, to be drawn off later by a tap in the bottom. This device goes by the colourful name of "slobber box", and is used in lieu of the time-consuming process of double distilling. Time is of the essence when the "revenooers" may be on your tail!**

**All of this sounds harmless enough, but in reality there are a number of minefields strewn across the path of the would-be distiller, in addition to the tax and criminal penalties which apply to illicit distilling.**

**As you are undoubtedly aware, "alcohol" is not a single entity, but rather is a "class" of organic compounds. These range from ethyl alcohol, which is food-grade alcohol, through progressively heavier alcohols such as butanol (butyl alcohol), methanol (methyl alcohol), propanol (propyl alcohol), and so on.**

**Parenthetically, you will notice the similarity to the classification of heating gases which also grow heavier through the range of butane, methane, propane etc.**

**While some of the heavier alcohols are harmless to humans - glycerol, for example - others such as methanol are toxic to human life. Even small quantities can cause severe headaches and sickness, and larger amounts will result in permanent nerve damage or death.**

**If the fermented liquid which is to be distilled was derived only from sugar and water, the only alcohol present will be ethyl alcohol, and this can be distilled in a simple "pot still" consisting of a copper kettle and cooling column. Even here, however, most distillers employ double distillation to further purify the distillate of the "heads and tails", the water (and flavour)-bearing portions that are carried in the steam at the beginning of the alcohol boil and as the last of the alcohol boils off. This is the traditional approach in the production of fine**

**cognacs and Single Malt Scotch.**

**If, however, there are proteins present in the fermenting liquid - and there are in many - these will produce the heavier alcohols (known colloquially as "fusel oil") during fermentation. A small quantity is essentially unnoticeable, but if there are sufficient proteins - such as unconverted cereals - the quantity of higher alcohols can be sufficient to create a dangerous result after distillation and concentration of the alcohol.**

**In the commercial production of most liquors, many of which include a variety of carbohydrates in their formulation, distillers employ a device called a "fractional distillation column" to separate the ethyl alcohol from the other alcohols, which have a different boiling point (for methyl alcohol, for example, this is 64.70 C). This technique is well beyond the capability of the small-scale distiller, and accounts in part for the lingering reputation for high quality which Canadian whiskies first acquired during prohibition in the USA. At that time, an unopened Canadian Government seal on a bottle of whisky in one of the better speakeasies was a guarantee that this was "the good stuff", safe to drink, and not an imitation made in someone's bathtub.**

**If one is able to overcome these obstacles to produce a "clean" ethyl alcohol distillate, the end is not yet. The result is an unpalatable, harsh product which needs to be adjusted to a suitable alcohol level for consumption - typically under about 90 proof imperial - and then aged to smooth off the extreme rough edges.**

**This usually means two or more years in oak, and preferably longer, during which it will pick up colour and flavour from the wood and lose some of its fieriness. During this period one can expect, under ideal conditions, to lose at least 5% to evaporation. In Cognac, this is known as "The Angel's Share".**

**Of course, having gone through all this, there is no guarantee that what has been produced is palatable. Poor flavour in the source material will result in poor flavour in the alcohol; and congeners - such as are found in red wine - will carry through to cause headaches and hangovers. One can, for example, buy commercially in France a "Marc" - brandy - distilled from the pressing of fine red wines. The amber liquid has a smooth, attractive flavour; more than one ounce in an evening will lift your head off the next day!**

**Finally, a word about the origin of the term "Moonshine". Conventional wisdom is that it was coined by backwoods distillers in Tennessee or Kentucky, but**



**actually it apparently originated much earlier, in England. At the time of the American Revolution and the Napoleonic wars the British government introduced a number of taxes to pay for the costs of the various campaigns in which the Army and Navy were engaged. Among these was a sharp increase in the duty on imported spirits. This led to a major increase in smuggling, to the point that respectable citizens, including even members of the clergy, placed orders in advance with the smugglers in their villages. The "orders" were usually delivered to homes after dark, on a night when moonlight made torchlight - which would have led the customs agents to the smugglers - unnecessary. Hence the orders usually were delivered "by moonshine". The term became corrupted in the new world to mean the product of illicit stills, rather than the illicit product of legal stills.**

## **A SAD FAREWELL**

**Capital Amateur Winemakers, the oldest club in Ontario, announces with sadness the passing of Dorothy Hazlitt, one of its longest-serving and stalwart**

**members. Many of us will recall with pleasure Dorothy's energy and enthusiasm at many AWO conventions, at which she was often instrumental in organizing the club table and formed many friendships. Our condolences to Bert and the family.**

## **THE UNSINKABLE GORDON BARNES**

**Friends of Gord Barnes will not be surprised to learn that, despite some health problems, he is about as active as ever in the affairs of AWO, and making not only his usual exceptional contribution but also picking up the slack elsewhere. If there were not a Gord Barnes, we would have to invent him.**

**Gord, your friends in the hobby wish you a speedy recovery, a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year!**