

Red Feet Wine Market
HANG TIME “Interesting Blends”
Thursday, November 13, 2008

PRICES ARE FOR:

1 BOTTLE–6 BOTTLES–12 BOTTLES (mixing is ok!)

Vallarom “Vadum Caesaris,” 2006 (Trentino, Italy) 50% Pinot Bianco, 30% Chardonnay, 10%

Sauvignon Blanc, 10% Riesling

\$13 each - \$11.70 (6) - \$11.05 (12)

Aromas of flowers, almonds, and pears lightly touched by honey lead into a medium-weight palate laced with herb, mineral, citrus. Pleasantly tart with a long finish. A hit with the Red Feet crowd and certainly proof that new blends have merit!

Domaine Pelaquie Cotes du Rhone Blanc, 2007 (Rhône, France)

Marsanne, Clairette, Bourboulenc, Viognier

\$13 each - \$11.70 (6) - \$11.05 (12)

Lightly tropical aromas, with mango, apricot, citrus and flowers. Expressive and round in the mouth, with honey, apricot, vanilla, stone, and sunshine. Medium body and a long finish.

Domaine Lafage “Cote Sud,” 2006 (Rousillon, FR)

50% Grenache, 30% Syrah, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon

\$15 each - \$13.50 (6) - \$12.75 (12)

The nose is complex, with dried herbs, cedar, rosemary, black currant and blackberry. Good concentration of flavors, dominated by black fruits and supported by red. Well-structured by young tannins that cry out for food.

“PQ” Picnique by Ledgewood Creek Winery

2007 (California) 56% Merlot, 20% Cabernet

Sauvignon, 14% Mourvedre, 10% Grenache

\$10 each - \$9 (6) - \$8.50 (12)

Lovely nose—strawberry rhubarb pie and black caps. Good acidity and light tannins provide a structure for bountiful fruit—blackberries, black raspberries, and red berries. Medium bodied with a medium finish and utterly charming.

Castello Monaci “Liante,” 2006 (Salice Salentino, Puglia, Italy)

80% Negroamaro, 20% Malvasia Nero

\$16 each - \$14.40 (6) - \$13.60 (12)

A smoky bouquet that includes cooked currants and black cherries opens to a fairly full-bodied palate that's refined and elegant while boasting smoked red and black fruit. The finish is concentrated but sleek and refreshing. Try all the Castello Monaci wines for outstanding character and value.

See you next Thursday for HANG TIME!
Our subject: “Preparing for Thanksgiving!”
Beaujolais Nouveau will be here and Samantha Izzo of Simply Red will be on hand to answer your Thanksgiving cooking questions.

Interesting Blends (Red and White)

Why are wines sometimes a blend of grapes and at other times composed of only one variety?

One reason is that certain wines are “field blends”—the grapes have always grown together and are more easily picked together than not, such as in Portugal. Another reason is that we have realized over the centuries that certain grapes enhance one another very well. One popular such blend is comprised of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvedre. This trio, which originates in the south of France, is emulated in California, Australia, Spain and South Africa. Blending can add aroma, complexity and even out certain notable aspects of a grape, such as balancing out tannins. Another classic blend is Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. This most-imitated fine wine red blend, originates in Bordeaux and serves as the inspiration for the American-coined term, “Meritage.” It is so revered, that winemakers across the globe have tried it. A third reason that grapes are blended is to hedge a winemaker's bets should one variety fare poorly in a vintage, while other varieties perform perfectly well. The winery can produce a more consistent wine with more than one variety. Different grapes can be co-fermented in a tank or barrel, or they can be blended together after fermentation is complete.

Though there are many classic and proven blends, in recent years, we have begun to see more unusual blends. Sometimes, these may simply be odds and ends put together out of necessity and other times, they are the creation of an open-minded winemaker who is trying to explore new territory or to craft a delicious new cuvee. Critics sometimes claim that although these wines are tasty, they do not express a sense of place, and that the mass-produced versions resemble a “beverage” as much as they do a wine.

Today's Hang Time wines are a mix of traditional and unusual blends, all coming from family estates which grow their own fruit. Cotes du Rhone Blanc is less recognized in the U.S. than its popular red counterpart. It can be composed of a variety of white grapes, and is usually an aromatic, lower acid wine that is versatile with foods as varied as appetizers, vegetables, fish, chicken, spicy food, or cheese. It drinks well as an aperitif, with sunny flavors that transport one straight to the South of France. The Vallarom Caesaris is an atypical blend from Northeastern Italy. This is a one-man show; he grows all of these white grapes organically and blends them into a crisp white.

PQ Red is a tasty, inexpensive second label for Ledgewood Creek Winery which melds Bordeaux and Southern French grapes in a fun package. Castello Monaci's “Liante” blends two traditional varieties from Puglia into a ripe, elegant reflection of the Mediterranean. The Domaine Lafage Rouge joins the popular Grenache-Syrah combo with a grape from nearby Bordeaux—Cabernet Sauvignon. As a result of its grape mix, it is registered as a “Vin de Pays,” not the more specific appellation of “Cotes de Rousillon.”

We hope you'll continue to explore wines composed of multiple grapes. We think you'll often find them food friendly, balanced, tasty and “complete.”