

UPCOMING EVENTS



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7

A TASTE OF PORTUGAL, HOSTED BY JANE GARVEY

Lady Jane, everyone's favorite food critic and writer famous for her wine picks, will be hosting a seminar on Portuguese wines and Ports.

Join us as we taste* through 5 still wines and learn more about Port-white, ruby, tawny, Late Bottled Vintage, and Vintage bottlings. We'll look at new and old vintages and the differences between regions.

As Jane just returned from a trip to Portuguese wine country, she'll have stories and slides to share from the wineries. \$40 includes appropriate savory and sweet accoutrements with the ports, as well as 2 courses of tapas platters catered by Speakeasy with the still wine courses.

Seating is limited, but there are still seats available--call at 208-0010 for reservations to this unique and very special event!

SHIRAZ OPEN HOUSE & HOLIDAY HOURS

First Annual Christmas Open House, from Thursday to Saturday, December 8-10, all day long (11 a.m.-8 p.m.). See inside for details.

Saturday, December 24th, we will be open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. We will reopen Tuesday, December 27th,

at 11 a.m.

New Year's Eve we will be open 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. In light of the holiday season, we will suspend our Saturday tastings during these two weeks, and resume Saturday, January 7th.

Besides exceptions printed above, Shiraz hours will be 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24

LOLONIS WINE DINNER

Lolonis, wine growers since 1920, became America's first organic winery in 1953, long before the rest of California caught on to the fact that ladybugs and praying mantises did a better job of controlling pests than loads of chemicals. Located in Mendocino's Redwood Valley, the cooler climate does wonders for the ripening of the Loloni family's grapes, making the intense, balanced flavors of one of my favorite wineries in the U.S. Richard Hudson will represent Loloni in a wonderful dinner... at a special surprise location. Check with us as more details unfold.

Call us for reservations at 208-0010.

*Our tastings are for educational purposes only. All wine must be poured by Shiraz staff, with no more than 2 oz. per wine per person.

Shiraz
675 PULASKI ST
SUITE 400
ATHENS GA 30601

JOIN OUR WINE CLUB!

Each month, Emily and the staff here at Shiraz select 3 wines we think are special and that you are sure to enjoy. All wines that we pick come complete with tasting notes and serving suggestions. Though all of the wines may be purchased separately, members receive a substantial discount on their package every month. This package consists of the three wine picks and one of our gourmet items selected for your sampling pleasure. The cost of the wine club package each month is \$45 (the cost separately is \$50-60; this month the value is \$58--save \$13 on only 4 items!) If you are a member of our wine club, you'll also get the first peek at special items here in the store, as well as a guarantee that you'll receive the 3 wines each month (sometimes they do run out!) Also, each month we will draw a name of a wine club member, and that person will receive his package free that month! Please ask us if you'd like more information or to join--it's the best deal in town! This month, the featured gourmet item is our Aztec Spicy Hot Chocolate. With vanilla, cinnamon, and cayenne, it has a delicious spicy kick!

DECEMBER 2005

Shiraz
FINE WINE & GOURMET

Port: A Wine Born of Adversity

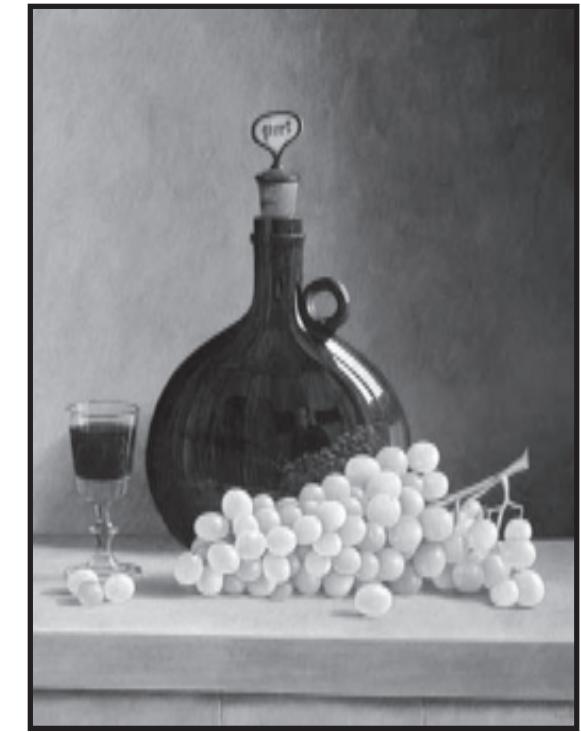
The Douro Valley in Northeastern Portugal is one of the harshest regions of the world in which to grow grapes. The winters are frigid, the summers parched, and the vines are by necessity grown on carefully constructed terraces carved out of slopes of schist and slate that can have as much as a sixty degree incline. The roots of the vines must dig deep into the rock to find what water there is. This inhospitable valley by definition produces very low yields, but low yields mean that the grapes it does produce have intense concentration of color, tannins, and sugars. The primary grape varietals that can brave the Douro are Touriga Nacional, Tinta Roriz (Spanish Tempranillo), Tinta Barroca, and Touriga Francesca.

It may seem curious that almost all of the best known ports have British names- Warres, Graham, Sandemans, etcetera. In fact, the British and the Portuguese have a long and entwined history concerning wine. Portuguese wines were exported to England perhaps as early as the 12th century. However, it was during the Nine Years' War against France in the late 1600s that the British began to take an active interest in the production of Portuguese wines. With high tariffs on French goods, the British began to look elsewhere for their wines. Because of long standing trade agreements it was natural for the British to import more from the Portuguese. However, most of these wines were not up to the British, which is to say French, standard. Many British companies in the wine trade established branches in Oporto, hence the name Port, at the mouth of the Douro river. Warres was the first of these port houses, established in 1670. This influx of British capital provided the means for an expansion of the wine trade.

No one knows for certain when some red table wines of Portugal became what we know today as port. One legend has it that in 1678, two Englishmen were treated to a "very agreeable, sweetish, and extremely smooth" wine by the Abbot of Lamego. The good monks of Lamego had been doctoring their wines with brandy. Done early in the winemaking process, the adding of brandy stops fermentation, producing wines that are still sweet and fruity. Another less colorful version of events has it that the brandy was added to stabilize the wine for shipping. However and whenever the process was started, port aficionados can only be grateful that it did.

"In this place, man with his bare hands wrings wine from a stone."

- Miguel Torga
Portuguese Poet



**EMILY'S WINE CLUB
SELECTIONS FOR
DECEMBER**

**GUNDERLOCH DRY
GEWURZTRAMINER 2002
RHEINHESSEN, GERMANY**

Gunderloch is widely accepted to be the Rheinhessen's best producer. Their estate is known for a very slatey, petrol-filled character from deep red soils filled with iron and slate. Because of this soil, their wines have higher levels of complexity, more balanced acidity, and intensely aromatic wines. The word Gewurz itself literally means "spicy" or "perfumed." One whiff of this exotic wine will explain why. With a nose full of lavender and roses, this overtly floral beauty draws you in with intensity. Classic Gewurztraminer notes include clove oil, petrol, and spice in addition to the flowery scents. The palate is full, dry, and crisp, with hints of dried herbs, such as rosemary and basil, as well as a big element of pink grapefruit, pears, and nectarine. It is a bright and focused offering with minerals and flowers almost literally jumping out of the glass. The tart, clean citrus is matched extremely well with the minerals and a light spice component. I absolutely love this wine with Asian food--the flowery, herbaceous components marry perfectly with a little bit of spice, especially when paired with soba noodles, lemongrass, and even saffron. Perfect with Pad Thai, it is also ideal with the soup recipe on the next page, courtesy of Jim Okey's semi-annual food and wine course at The Rolling Pin.

\$16.99

**GRAVITY HILLS TUMBLING TRACTOR
ZINFANDEL 2002
PASO ROBLES, CA**

The vineyard manager rolled his tractor all the way down this slope, hence the name. Gravity Hills wines are grown on extremely steep slopes for more unique and complex wines, with 20 to 45 degrees to climb making farming a serious challenge. How steep is this in real terms? Most cars can't manage more than 30 degrees, and 90% of all avalanches occur on slopes of 20 to 45. We're also talking black diamonds for all you skiers. It may be hard to grow them, but we think the end product is well worth it. The nose on this wine is almost leading in its earthiness. Barn, prunes, and dark dried fruit seem to imply an old world style. On the palate, however, the wine opens up into chocolate, vanilla, and a buttered creaminess to pair with the spiced dark fruit. Fleshy raspberries and blackberries are completed with hints of ginger and cinnamon. The long, lingering, balanced finish is full of pepper, heavy fruit, and glycerin. Even though it has loads of creamy, rich, almost thick fruit, it is more complex than you sometimes see in what can sometimes be a California fruit bomb. Zinfandel is such a great wine for this time of year--it is such a warm, rich drink--it's like the comfort food of wine. And not only is it great with the fare served when it turns colder, such as roasts, hearty stews, rich cheeses, and heavier pasta dishes (also great with Chinese food), it works extremely

\$16.99

well as something to baste the roast, etc. with--as Jennifer Rosen says, "don't just drink it, paint with it."

\$16.99

**ALVEAR PEDRO XIMENEZ DE ANADA
2003**

MONTILLA MORILES, SPAIN

Alvear is a fantastic sherry producer which has been owned by the same family since 1729. Montilla is in the heart of Andalusia Spain, world renowned for sherry and flamenco dancing. Dancing aside, this dessert wine makes me want to curl up by a fireplace. The PX grapes used were sun-dried before the wine was made, giving it the lovely amber color in your glass. It has scents of butterscotch, caramel, and a light vanillin oak component, along with orange and other citrus notes. The flavors on the palate continue with beautifully smooth, light, soft flavors of chocolate and oranges. The citrus is present right until the very end. I was surprised at how soft and light, yet full, the flavors are--it is only medium-sweet, making it wonderful by itself at the end of the meal or with something simple such as nuts or chocolate. How can you go wrong with flavors of caramel, nuts, and toffee? And as incredible as the flavors are on your tongue, which are very, very creamy, the finish is just as fantastic; it is clean, yet it stays with you. Speaking of Alvear, Robert Parker says, "Americans have never warmed to the fascinating aspects of sherry, and I am by no means an authority on the subject, but I do know what's good...and these are tasty products." I agree with him, as well as with his remark that Alvear makes some of the best sherries available. But don't trust us--see for yourself. I think that you might just become a dessert wine fan. And it's wonderful with our spiced pecans!

94 = ROBERT PARKER

\$16.99

**THIS MONTH'S FEATURED WINE:
HENTLEY FARM GSZ 2004
BAROSSA VALLEY, AUSTRALIA**

Hentley Farm officially makes the only Zinfandel that I've ever seen out of Australia--and their success with this traditionally American grape is amazing. The Grenache, Shiraz, and Zinfandel blend is full of scorched earth, blue fruit, and vanilla. It even smells of blueberry pie, along with the rich boysenberry and blackberry fruit. The briary flavors evolve with good spice and a light licorice component, along with a bit of gaminess. It is very concentrated in its pure flavors, and barely misses going over the edge--but there is a pretty, though dense, side to it, and is contained well enough to still describe as medium-bodied. Full and rich, the pretty finish has light vanilla and clove flavors, along with mulberry, vanillin oak, and peppery, bright fruit. Though juicy, spicy, and fruit forward, it manages to be very elegant--a nice balance to the bright, focused, spicy style. This is a great food wine. It would pair well with a multitude of flavors, from lamb to roasted vegetables to anything you could put on a grill--but we think it is unbelievable with kale, white bean, and sausage stew.

90 = ROBERT PARKER

\$25.99

**DON'T FORGET YOUR CHAMPAGNES FOR THE HOLIDAYS!
SOME HIGHLIGHTS:**

Jansz Sparkling Cuvee NV.

From Tasmania! Louis Roederer helped establish the vineyard for this wine, which has a climate similar to the Champagne region. This complex bubbly has doughy, citrus structure, full of nuts and creamy strawberry. Hints of apple, oranges, and nectarine round out this great value. Oh, and by the way, Parker said "these are the most serious sparkling wines I have tasted from south of the Equator." **\$21.99**

Marguet-Bonnerave Brut Rose NV, Grand Cru.

This winery has been owned by the same family since the 1600s, managing to survive even the revolution. 80% Pinot Noir drives the golden delicious, sour cherry, and brioche undertones. The touch of maritime air, mineral notes, and minuscule bubbles in the blend indicate its high pedigree. And the Chardonnay in the blend is from the same region as Krug, Salon, and Dom. **\$31.99**

Etoile Brut Rose 1999.

Etoile means "star" in French, and this wine is the star of Domaine Chandon, Moet's California line. 2 years on the lees made this golden/pink wine creamy like lemon souffle, big, structured, and bready. There are elements of dried red fruit in this French style rose, which is dry and bright. **\$39.99**

Laurent-Perrier Ultra Brut NV.

Founded in 1812, L.P. has been avant-garde in creating unique and elegant Champagnes for nearly 200 years. Perhaps the most clean Champagne I've ever tasted, fresh as a breeze, with at least 4 years aging in bottle leaving a fine mousse of bubbles with purity, power, and concentration of flavor. It's intense, with honeysuckle, citrus, and minerals. **\$54.99**

**SHIRAZ'S RECIPE FOR
DECEMBER
BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND LEEK SOUP**

2 Tbsp. Butter
3 leeks, coarsely chopped
1 rib celery, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 quart chicken stock
1 butternut squash, peeled and diced (1/2 in.)
1 Tbsp. Tomato paste
1 bay leaf
salt and pepper
1/4 cup parsley, chopped
1/4 cup cream

Melt the butter in a heavy saucepan. Cook the leeks, celery, and garlic in the butter until softened (7 to 8 minutes).

Add the stock, squash, tomato paste, and bay leaf. Season. Cook over moderate to low heat until the vegetables are tender (about 25 minutes).

Discard the bay leaf and add the parsley.

Puree the soup in batches in a blender or in the saucepan with an immersible blender. Stir in the cream and heat through.

Open House

Join us for our first annual Christmas Open House! We at Shiraz would like to welcome you to hectic-free holiday shopping. From Thursday to Saturday, December 8-10, all day long (11 a.m.-8 p.m.), escape the hustle and bustle for an elegant, yet comfortable, shopping experience. Sample our unique cakes, cheese, chocolates, and olive oils. Relax on an ottoman and have some holiday punch, coffee, or hot tea. We'll have great discounts over the three-day event. We'll also have live music all three days to enhance your shopping experience.

We gift wrap for the holidays too...

PERSONALIZED GIFT BASKETS!

For only a \$5 charge, we'll put your gift selection in a unique basket, and complete with stuffing, beautiful ribbon, and a gift tag.

Some of our favorite packages include:

- Two wines and olive oil
 - Hot chocolate, tea and a holiday mug
 - A bottle of wine, corkscrew, and wine charms
 - Coffee and an assortment of chocolates
- And don't forget cheese, chocolates, and a baguette for the perfect hostess gift!