

UPCOMING EVENTS

TUESDAY, MARCH 7
TANTARA WINE DINNER
AT THE BASIL PRESS
6:30 Reception; 7:00 Dinner
\$65 per person, all-inclusive
6 wines and 4 courses

Tickets are still available for this exclusive event! A delightful menu has been put together to highlight some extraordinary wines, presented by Ernest Vandegrift from Tantara :

Hank's Faultline Red on entrance
Santa Barbara Pinot Blanc with a U-10 scallop over corn and leek ragout with basil
Bien Nacido Chardonnay with a cheese plate of rich, creamy cheeses and toasted hazelnuts
Santa Maria Pinot Noir with sliced lamb loin on a field green salad with raspberry balsamic vinaigrette
Bien Nacido Adobe Pinot AND La Colline Pinot with a roasted duck leg in a tomato reduction with a Pinot Noir demi glace over whipped potatoes

Reserve your Luzon Verde!

A great value at \$8.99, this 100% Monastrell from Jumilla, Spain is a fantastic everyday wine. With 89 from Parker and 90 from me, it's also been tried, tasted, and proven over and over again by our customers!

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 \$56--save \$11.00 just this month!) 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 a 12 ounce package of our whole bean coffee. Choose from 5 different roasts!

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5
VINUM CELLARS TASTING AT 283 BAR
TAPAS BY SPEAKEASY

6:00 P.M.
\$30 in advance, \$38 after March 25

Vinum is hot. Great wines that are anything but mainstream. We love their attitude almost as much as the wine. We'll be having a formally informal, casually dressed-up kind of evening.

Call us for reservations at 208-0010.

And drop in any Saturday between 1:00 and 5:00 p.m. for our theme tastings.*

**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
FINE WINE & GOURMET

"There is no question that a decade from now... Paso Robles will be as well-known as the glamorous vineyards of Napa Valley. The potential is enormously promising... noteworthy values as egos and prestige value have not yet afflicted the Rhône Rangers of California's Central Coast." -Robert Parker

Halfway between San Francisco and L.A., Paso Robles is being recognized more and more as a star of the American wine industry. With the oldest plantings of vines in California and an eclectic selection of wines to choose from, it is easy to see why the area is so popular. Or is it? What actually makes this appellation so special? Well, let's start with the elevation. Paso Robles is rocky--as a matter of fact, the elevation of the area varies from 740 to over 2,000 feet above sea level. Compare that to, say, Napa Valley at 30 feet. This makes a tremendous difference in the stress placed on the vines, which results in better quality grapes. This also means that the drainage happens naturally, with rainfall flowing to surrounding areas, keeping the wine country nice and dry (also a stress factor). And while we're talking rainfall, let's address the climate in Paso. It practically never rains during the vintage, although the soil sees some good moisture in the off-season. And this factor not only makes for a good season, it makes for consistent grape-growing weather vintage to vintage--great for finding quality year after year. The days are warm and the nights are cool, which is exactly what you're looking for in the Farmer's Almanac if you were to outline perfection in a growing area. The weather actually does a pretty dramatic temperature swing--it drops 40 to 50 degrees every night! This allows the sugars to set in the prize crop so they don't get overblown and out of control.

Another specialty of Paso Robles is that vineyard managers can grow a multitude of grapes--and well. There are over 40 different varieties of grapes that thrive in the region. Compare again--Bordeaux is restricted to 5 reds and 2 whites for premium wines. One interesting note is that although Syrah is what this part of the country has become known for, it is not the primary grape grown there. The winner? Cabernet, by a landslide. Between it and the number two by tonnage, Merlot, they make up well over half of the grapes grown there. Syrah is most certainly the claim to fame, though there's certainly room for some of the other varieties to move up.

With so many things going for them, why did it take so long for the wineries there to be seen? Although the region feels like a new one to most wine drinkers, it is actually very well-established. Most of the Syrah grown in California originated from a clone developed by Eberle, a winery from--guess where? Gary Eberle also introduced Viognier to the region, where it spread to other parts of California. Perhaps part of the reason it feels so new is that Paso didn't actually become its own recognized appellation until 1983, almost 200 years after the first grapes were planted there. Or the fact that up until 10 years ago, there were 35 wineries, and now there are over 100. Or it could be because Paso juice has been the secret ingredient to bottles from other parts of California for years; in fact, 65 to 75 percent of the grapes are actually sold off to non-Paso wineries. Whatever it is, people are at least taking notice. And it's hard not to, with the fun and laid-back attitude of the winemakers, vineyard managers, and owners. They are much more casual and cool than most of their more famous areas' counterparts. Not only are the people more welcoming if you're visiting the wine country and want to stop by, but they are eager and anxious to inform about the region, tell people about their wines, or just chat about - well, almost anything. Inviting tasting rooms, fun people, and good, different wines make it a much different trip than some big, cold facilities that seem more like a mausoleum are much more my cup of tea for sure. The table at a recent tasting with Chris, the winemaker for Four Vines, was more akin to a rock concert than a stuffy old tasting--and it's great to see people on both sides of that interchange not taking things too seriously--remember, this is supposed to be fun!

We're going to be seeing a lot more from this terrific wine region. The band of Rhone Rangers, Bordeaux masters, and other diligent devotees to the vine have joined forces in educating people about why their part of the world is so special. In the future we're going to be seeing "East" and "West" Paso Robles on the label as well, as the public starts to recognize differences within the region. But for now, the largest and most diverse region in California is working hard to make sure you try a bottle for yourself. And you should. Try some of the innovative Bordeaux, Rhone, or Zinfandel blends, or savor the results of the largest plantings of Viognier, Syrah, or Roussanne in the U.S. With a heritage of the famous Californian, Zinfandel, the big performer, Cabernet, and their location in the middle of the "Rhone Zone," it's actually harder to find a wine you won't like out of the offerings.

If you haven't checked out Paso, here are wineries we feature at Shiraz:

- EOS • Opolo • Justin • Tobin James • Vina Robles • Four Vines
- Clayhouse • Gravity Hills • Eberle • Clos • Mimi • Flying Cloud

MARCH 2006

EMILY'S WINE CLUB
SELECTIONS FOR
MARCH

So here we are in that short interval between Winter and Spring. I found two similarities among the wines I picked this month: one was that they were all red. They range from delicate to robust, but they're all rouges nonetheless. The other was they all sounded sexy. Looking through my notes, I found words like sensuous, beautiful...even voluptuous. My only conclusion can be that I was looking for comforting wines--to warm you up, or to share in front of a roaring fire. And speaking of fires, as we near warmer weather, we've included ideas for a great barbecue inspired by the 2004 release of one of the all-time value wines, Hank's Fault Line Red. We hope you stay warm and comfy!

Artazu Artazuri Red 2003
Navarra, Spain
100% Garnacha

I have three words to describe this great value: raspberry, raspberry, raspberry. From 75-year-old vines in Spain's Northern cool climate zone, it really is a beauty. It has tight and lean flavors with loads of earth behind the berries. Some spice, dried cherry, and hints of smoke and leather become full, dry flavors of raisins and blackberry. It takes some patience (less, of course, if you have a decanter) to find out why Robert Parker once called it a "Grenache whore", but it is worth the wait. It becomes more plump, while remaining deliciously elegant. Ripe and fruit-laden, the raspberry, strawberry, and boysenberry flavors are laced with star anise and vanillin oak. Along with its delicate texture, it has a clean but lingering finish not unlike a Chateaufort du Pape. Pair it with absolutely anything.
\$11.99

**TASTE WHAT THE WINE CLUB ALREADY KNOWS--
OUR PICKS ARE DELICIOUS!**

**THE FIRST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH, THE WINE
TASTING WILL STAR THE WINE CLUB PICKS!
JOIN US ANYTIME BETWEEN 1 AND 5 P.M.**

EOS Estate Zinfandel 2003
Paso Robles, California
(18.5% Petite Sirah, 3% Sangiovese)

One of the leaders in the Paso Robles wine industry, EOS carries a wide range of different varietals. Jammy and rich, with oakey notes and cedar, black cherry, and bushels of raspberry, this stunner has full, heavy, dark, ripe fruit galore. Smoky and rich, it is a nice balance of fruit and terroir. The dark fruit and good tannin come together in a finish that is both very drying and mouthwatering at the same time. Try it with blackened chicken or salmon, or with the winemaker's choice, barbecued ribs.

Regularly \$17.99
This month only \$15.99

Cascina Adelaide Dolcetto d'Alba
2003
Piedmont, Italy

What a beautiful wine this is--thick, soft, and voluptuous. Its aromas are soft, with spice, blueberry, dark fruits, and roses. It is very earthy as well, with dirt, tobacco, and jasmine flowers. The full, rich flavors are silty and coating, with viscous and meaty qualities, along with black raspberries and orange peel. You can almost taste the colors purple, orange, and red. Light notes of dried herbs complete the fleshy, elegant finish. Try it with veal, a bacon-wrapped filet, or my favorite--gnocchi with a saffron cream sauce and Italian sausage.

\$18.99

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED WINE:

Hank's Faultline Red 2004
Paso Robles, California

Made by the fabulous Tantara winery, this Sangiovese-based mystery blend has an earthy, yet sensuous aroma. Let it breathe for an hour or so to shed the heavy oakey, barny notes and reveal vanilla, Bing cherry, raspberry cream, and spice. Creamy oak, mulberry, raspberry, red plums, and custard are full and fleshy, and finish with earthy notes and blood oranges. Don't be misled by the light color--it's very full. And we at Shiraz have an exclusive for the state of Georgia on this gem! Hank's was created to pair with Santa Maria-style barbecue--recipes follow...

SHIRAZ'S RECIPES FOR
MARCH

For over 60 years, Santa Maria, known throughout the country as the "Barbecue Capital of the World," has been serving their own special recipe at outdoor restaurants throughout the area. Driving through the County, it is impossible to miss the stands, the billowing smoke, and the smells of tri-tip on the grill. The stuff is so popular that the recipe was actually copyrighted by the Chamber of Commerce! The secret to their wonderful grilled meat is the simplicity of the dry rub and of the only garnish used--fresh salsa. We are offering you the traditional menu served for a true Santa Maria roast. Enjoy!

Santa Maria Style Barbecue Menu
Top Sirloin Beef, Choice Grade, Well Aged,
Cut 3" Thick
(Served with Fresh Salsa)
Tossed Fresh Green Salad
Pinquito Beans
Toasted French Bread with Sweet Melted Butter
Macaroni and Cheese

Grill over an open flame of red oak coals and season with robust spices including salt, pepper and garlic salt. Best when served with a bottle of your favorite Santa Maria Valley wine and tangy-sweet strawberry shortcake.

Barbecue side dish recipes

Santa Maria Style Pinquito Beans

Pinquito are small pink beans, related to the pinto, that are native only to the Santa Maria valley. Traditionally, ranchers gathered around the fire to share these along with their BBQ. We've used their recipe with Pintos.

1 lb. small pinto beans
1 strip bacon, diced
1/2 cup diced ham
1 small clove garlic, minced
3/4 cup tomato puree
1/4 cup red chili sauce
1 tbs. sugar
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. dry mustard

Pick over beans to remove dirt and small stones; cover with water and let soak overnight in a large container. Drain, cover with fresh water and simmer 2 hours, or until tender. Sauté bacon and ham until lightly browned; add garlic, sauté a minute or two longer. Add tomato puree, chili sauce, sugar, mustard, and salt. Drain most of liquid off beans and stir in sauce. Keep warm on low heat until ready to serve.
*Note: Pinquitos are grown locally only; contact the Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce and Visitors & Convention Bureau for a list of resources. (800) 331-3779.

Santa Maria Style Salsa

Yields 3 1/2 cups
3 medium fresh tomatoes, chopped
1/2 cup finely chopped celery
1/2 cup chopped green onions
1/2 cup finely chopped California green chiles
2 tbs. snipped cilantro
1 tbs. vinegar
Dash of Worcestershire sauce
Pinch of garlic salt
Pinch of dried oregano, crushed
Few drops of hot pepper sauce

Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Cover and let stand for one hour to blend flavors.

Santa Maria Style Tri-tip

1 tablespoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
1 prime top sirloin steak (3" thick), or tri-tip
Red oak logs, or charcoal and oak chips

Directions:

First, oakwood logs are placed in a pit with movable grate and burned until red-hot. Backyard chefs also can use charcoal mixed with oakwood chips and bark available at local markets. Once lit, the fire should be hot but not blazing. Season the meat with salt, pepper and garlic salt to your desire. Do not trim off the fat before putting the meat on the grill. By placing the fat side over the fire first, the juice will come up through the meat and make it tender. Sear the lean part of the meat over the fire for 5 to 10 minutes to seal in the juices, then flip over to the fat side for 30 to 45 minutes, depending on the size of the cut and the desired degree of doneness. When juice appears at the top of the meat, it is time to flip for another 30-45 minutes. The fat can easily be trimmed after cooking. It is important to slice tri-tip against the grain the long way, not across the triangle. It won't be a uniform cut but it will be more tender.

