

UPCOMING EVENTS

MONDAY, MAY 22
VINNOVATIVE IMPORTS WITH GUEST
PETER CLINTON AT EAST WEST BISTRO
6:30 RECEPTION, 7:00 DINNER
\$60 ALL-INCLUSIVE

ENTRANCE
Bradgate Chenin Blanc/ Sauvignon Blanc

1ST COURSE - SHRIMP PERI PERI
White shrimp sautéed in a spice blend of African bird chili peppers, butter, and Chenin Blanc and Asian pear With Vinum Africa Chenin Blanc

2ND COURSE - LAMB PEPPER POT
Lamb loin cooked with sweet yellow and purple potatoes in a dark stock with bacon, served with dhal With Bradgate Syrah

3RD COURSE - CHEESE COURSE
Duck and orange pate in pastry with aged Sweetgrass Gouda and balsamic fig preserves With Jardin Chardonnay

4TH COURSE - POMEGRANATE OSTRICH
Seared ostrich with masa, fried corn and poblano peppers in roasted in corn husks With Vinum Africa Cabernet Sauvignon

5TH COURSE - DESSERT
Macadamia Chocolate cake with banana cream center With Jardin Merlot

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7
DEPALMA'S DOWNTOWN
STEVE LAWRENCE SELECTIONS
ITALIAN PORTFOLIO
6:30 RECEPTION 7:00 DINNER
\$40 ALL-INCLUSIVE

FRIDAY, JULY 14
DONDERO'S KITCHEN
SOTIRIS BAFTITIS GREEK IMPORTS

Call us for reservations at 208-0010.

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

Tuesdays between 4:00 and 8:00pm, taste our featured wine of the day.

**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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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 \$54--save \$9.00 off of four 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 Cuisine Perel's Late Harvest Riesling Vinegar, great with numerous recipes or served alone over ice cream! (yep, I tried it myself!)

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Shiraz

FINE WINE & GOURMET

"...frivolous spontaneity is just what rosé is particularly suited to."

-Adam Tolmach,
The Ojai Vineyard

I'm engaged in a debate over the exact locale of the second smallest appellation in France, and I realize that I am in the presence of greatness. Meet Pax Mahle. Unlike our lunch companion, who has been on Pax winery's direct mailing list since its conception, today is my first exposure to these gems. By the time an hour passes, however, I am in love with the wines, and have found a kindred spirit in my industry. If I had to describe Pax in one word, it would be passion. Both he and his wife, Pam, were interested in pursuing M.S. degrees (for all you non-wine geeks out there, that means Master Sommelier)--at least, that is, until they met one. It seems that this man who "knew everything about wine" didn't know much in the realm of practical applications and real-world experience. Though he could talk about amounts of rainfall and every aspect of particular vintages, he hadn't walked the vineyards in the Cote de Beaune. The couple ditched the idea of an M.S. and decided instead that they should live in Burgundy, the Piedmont, or Sonoma, and devote themselves to a more hands-on approach to immersing themselves in wine. They couldn't wait to put on overalls and play in the dirt at harvest. After a reality check of checkbook and languages spoken, they decided on California, and a winery was born. After the first vintage in 2000 with a known winemaker, Pax took over himself in 2001.

But, unlike most winemakers, it is difficult to get Pax to focus on his own work. Instead, we talk about a combination of Widespread Panic, microbrews (shout out to Terrapin--I sent him to buy some), and restaurants, and have some of the most enthralling talk about wine I've had in a long time, focusing on Viognier from the Rhone Valley and wineries near his own that have gained his respect. And my respect for him grows as I watch such excitement for other bottles; I realize that we are alike in our fervor for what we do that exudes over and above our personal projects. He is extremely interested, for example, to taste the Frogtown Cellars Marsanne that I am excited about, knowing the area was conducive to Rhone varietals. His curiosity paired with knowledge echoes my own craving to experience things for myself in vineyards I have visited, whether in California, Australia, or France, and my desire to share wines with customers to increase their hands-on understanding of wines' similarities and differences. Hearing him speak of Rhone soil gives me flashbacks to my tentative question in my first visit to Bien Nacido: "is it okay if I touch the dirt?"

The word "soulful" is used more than once, and at one point I wonder if we are at church or at lunch! It just proved how much respect we had for vines, land, and mother nature. We speak of the soul of the wines in hushed tones while tasting. There is literally a shock of electricity at the table by his excitement for his work, and the energy is contagious. How did this verve get bottled? In fantastic juice that did indeed seem to embody the soul of the vine. Pax's secret? He leaves them alone! It is, in fact, extremely hard to get him to talk about himself in the winemaking process. We were too busy analyzing his vineyard sites and the qualities that they possess. As for my question of how he makes his Viognier? He simply responded that he picks the grapes when they're ready, crushes them, and throws them in a tank. His goal is to produce the best wine possible from great vineyards, not to define his own "style." Each vintage has its own particular attributes to add to the style of the wine, and since Pax prefers to let the vines speak for themselves, there is not a specific type of wine that he makes. Wines of such extreme grace and personality gained the attention of much more important people than myself as well; the same philosophy that gripped me apparently held the attention of Steven Tanzer and Robert Parker: "We are not trying to replicate any other Syrah produced in the world; Hermitage can only be made from one place." In fact, one of the signs of quality was that both Tanzer and Parker picked as their favorite of the new vintage bottles that were most unlike the wines they tend to rate the most highly. When Pax questioned Tanzer on his choice, the response was that it was simply perfect in its balance.

Pax is the consummate traditionalist, not only in theory but in his methods. Not just because he "goes by his gut" in his decisions, but because he uses only minimal handling, and no fining or filtration. He is also the only person I know who uses all foot stomping for grape crush! The method for transfers from tank to barrel is a tunnel and a bucket, and there is no temperature control in the winery. The first vintage it was by chance, but now it is by choice--because the wine is left on its own to ferment in a completely natural environment. At Pax, they use cold soak (grapes left alone to develop flavor) before fermentation. How long? As long as it takes before the grapes naturally start converting sugar to yeast. And while he uses extremely old-school methods, he has created some new terminology for his work in the vineyards. One example is "field heat," which is the warmth at optimum picking time so that the grapes are cool enough for the soaking process but hot enough to generate the fermentation process. I felt strange writing so much about one person and his style, or lack thereof (Pax would likely feel awkward having this much praise lavished upon him, in fact), until I realized that he is one person that encompasses the whole of the type of person I like to buy wine from. He is truly a student of the vine, and is so passionate about vino in general that this overtakes any interest in his own enterprise. The only downside is that he makes as little as 40 cases of some--so get this tremendous nectar of nature while you can. And cheers to you, Pax!

By the way, Chateau Grillet, only 7 1/2 acres, is just South of Condrieu in the Northern Rhone.

www.shirazathens.com

MAY 2006

EMILY'S WINE CLUB
SELECTIONS FOR

MAY

Carro Tinto 2004

Murcia, Spain

**50% Monastrell, 20% Syrah, 20%
Tempranillo, 10% Merlot**

Briary with lots of blackberries on the nose, along with a heavy smoky, spicy note. The light spice has some charred notes as well, with cardamon, raisin, pepper, and even a meatiness to it. The finish is full of heavy vanilla and oak components, with cooked fruit, including black cherry, raspberry, and currant, and cooking spices, like licorice, vanilla, and even cinnamon. Altogether medium-bodied, full, and rich—an obvious child of its hot, dry, climate—it is intense, unoaked, and has roasted meats and dark chocolate to offer. Robert Parker gave this one an 89 rating, stating, "This estate is one of the top discoveries of all my tastings." Or to put it more bluntly, "Got sorrow? Try Carro!" **\$9.99**

Domaine du Raifault Chinon 2003

Clos du Villy, Loire, France

100% Cabernet France

Full and smoky scents with bacon and earth underlying them welcome you into this beautiful bouquet. With a full and chewy texture, it delivers, rich with herbs, black fruit, and earth, along with lead pencil shavings. The flavorful palate has dark cherry and ink to offer, and, as time passes, less of the herbs and ink and more of the lingering, dark, full, textural fruit. Violets and other flowers come alive with full, Bordeaux-ish notes of dark fruit and oak, dirt, and gravel. I have been known to describe good Chinon as a Holy Grail among wines, and so this great little find must be celebrated—while we can still get it. It is fantastic with pork, grilled vegetables, and with any beef dishes. I love it with dishes with an Asian flair or with roasted red pepper and goat cheese with a New York strip steak. **\$17.99**

**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.

Gramona Gessami 2004

Penedes, Spain

**50% Sauvignon Blanc, 45% Muscat of
Alexandria, 5% Gewurztraminer**

Gramona is a house known for sparkling Cava, so you would do well to assume that the only still wine the family makes would be something original and unique. The name Gessami means Jasmine, and that is exactly what this wine smells like! There are also notes of grapefruit, lime, and minerals to complete the bright package. Striking in its aromas, it is dry and zesty in its flavors as well, with nectarine, pear, orange, lemon, and, of course, flowers. Jasmine and white flowers hit you once again on the back of your tastebuds. Refreshing and vibrant, it is almost like drinking fruit cocktail—but without the syrup. It is perfect with simple grilled fish or salads (including this month's), and is perfect with the shrimp salad shown opposite.

\$16.99

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED WINE:

Pax Rosé 2005

Sonoma County, CA

60% Syrah, 40% Grenache

At the first glimpse of this bottle, made by one of the most intriguing producers I've found in a long time, I knew that we'd hit upon something very special. The simple label is a picture of Pangea, the land all vineyards originated from, and the back simply says Pink Wine. The color is a deep strawberry red, and the aromas are rich, full of raspberry, white pepper, and lavender. This wine tastes more like a Red wine than a rosé, with a full-bodied flavor, silky texture, and bone-dry finish. Tight and lean, with light earth-bound aspects, it gets beyond the bread dough and flowers and fleshes out beautifully with red fruits and even strawberry soda almost. Straightforward in its fullness, it is luxurious in texture and creamy in flavor, with hints of citrus and spice to balance out the raspberry and strawberry on the finish. The perfect summer wine for Red lovers, it is fabulous with those foods that usually call for crisp whites, like goat cheese and smoked salmon, or spicy shrimp, but I even tried it with a filet mignon to test its diversity, and it was lovely. Perfect with our goat cheese salad recipe.. And it's not shy on its own, either.

\$25.99

SHIRAZ'S RECIPES FOR

MARCH

JACE'S PENEDES SHRIMP SALAD

Serves 4

2 Avocados, cut into large chunks

1 lb. Shrimp, peeled and deveined, steamed

1 Pink Grapefruit, peeled and sectioned

(you can use a jar from produce if you like, or substitute orange)

5 T. Late Harvest Riesling Vinegar

2 T. Sea Salt (I use Esprit du Sel grey salt)

Toss shrimp, and pink grapefruit together with the Riesling vinegar. Add avocado. You can adjust the amounts according to the number of people served—just keep the 3 main ingredients equal and use just enough vinegar to coat them lightly. Sprinkle the salt over the top of the salad (can adjust this to taste as well).

Why do I call this Penedes Shrimp Salad? Because it is perfect with the Gramona Gessami—and if you'd prefer sparkling, Cava is delicious paired with it as well. Random fact = 95% of all Cava comes from the Penedes region, just East of the Priorat on the Mediterranean coast.

SUMMER PORCH SALAD

Serves 4

Salad:

1 bag prewashed baby Spinach leaves

4 oz. Strawberries, washed and hulled

1 cup red Grapes, destemmed and washed

1/3 cup chopped walnuts or almonds

4 oz. fresh Goat Cheese, cut into 8 rounds

Fresh cracked black pepper to taste

Dressing:

Equal parts—Late Harvest Riesling Vinegar

Olive Oil

Mix and drizzle over salad according to taste

Divide spinach among salad bowls, top with fruits and nuts, drizzle dressing over the salad, and top with goat cheese. Crack black pepper over the salads to taste.

GET READY FOR MOTHER'S DAY WITH US!!!

We have some fantastic products for
your mama:

* Savannah Bee Company
(Clementine body wash, Mint Julep
lotion, and Beeswax hand cream are a
few good ones—or try the Royal Jelly
body butter, "a gift fit for a queen!"
(Gifts \$2.99 to \$19.99)

* Bella Cucina products—and just in—the
La Bella Vita cookbook! (\$22.99) Also
available—Artichoke pesto gift sets—
artichoke pesto, beautiful baking dish,
and an olive wood spoon! (\$29.99)

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fine milled soaps—Chamomile, Cinna-
mon, or Green tea!

* or make her a personalized gift basket
— Whether it's bath goodies, fun things
for the kitchen, chocolate...or mix them
up! Only \$5 extra for a basket



Shiraz
Fine Wine and Gourmet