

UPCOMING EVENTS



SUNDAY, AUGUST 24

North Georgia Winery Tour!

We have fewer than a dozen spots left for the magical vino bus! \$175 per person, all-inclusive; \$150 for wine club members. Charter bus loads at 9 a.m. and returns late Sunday night. Breakfast from Mama's Boy; brunch, tasting, and a winemaking facility tour at Wolf Mountain Vineyards, tasting and seminar at Blackstock Vineyards and Winery, tasting and apple-picking at Tiger Mountain Vineyards, and a vineyard tour and dinner in the garden at Persimmon Creek Vineyards.

For more information, check out our July newsletter (archived on our website) for the full itinerary.

Call us for reservations at 706-208-0010.

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

**Our wine tastings are for educational purposes only.*

Shiraz
FINE WINES & GOURMET
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 \$50—save money every month, including \$6 this month on each bottle of the featured wine! 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!) 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 Bittersweet Herb Farm Wasabi Hot Sauce—its great on almost anything! And it also comes in extra hot. See inside for recipe ideas.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Wine Club members-only holiday preview night!

7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Enjoy live music, appetizers, a tasting. . . and special prices on premium wines by the glass!

Have a sneak peek at our holiday items--glassware, serving dishes, cheese knives and other accessories!

Also, special deals for doing some shopping early for the holidays!

More details to follow.

This event is free to wine club members with an r.s.v.p.

Shiraz will close at 6 p.m. for this event.

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*I love everything that's old:
old friends, old times, old
manners, old books, old wines.*

-Oliver Goldsmith

www.shirazathens.com

AUGUST 2008

What makes a wine age-worthy? Or, what makes a wine in need of some time? Whether you are looking for a bottle to have for dinner tonight, or one to put away for a ten-year anniversary, it helps to know what makes a wine last. For a wine to age well, it mainly comes down to three qualities:

The first of these is tannin. Found in the skins of red grapes, as well as some other foods, they are the slight bite one finds after taking a sip of unsweetened tea or unadulterated coffee. The structure to a red wine comes from these, and the variations in the amounts in different grapes attribute to how "hefty" or "big" a wine is.

Weights should always match in food and wine pairings, so the bigger the tannins in a wine, the bigger the flavors should be in the food made to go with it. Also, tannins slice through fat, which is why a Cabernet makes a better wine for a ribeye or prime rib than a lighter-skinned Pinot Noir.

The second factor in ageability is sugar. A necessary component in wine, it is converted to alcohol, but sugar contents can vary. A good example is a wine such as Amarone, in which the grapes are left to dry to enrich the flavor. In drying the grapes, the sugars are increased. For the record, alcohol and tannin are also upped when the water is drained out of the grapes, but we'll come to that later.

The last of this triumvirate is alcohol. FYI, there are two main reasons that we're seeing more. The first is consumer demand: as people ask for jammier, bigger wines, some winemakers manipulate the juice to make it bigger. The second is global warming: as the temperature of our earth goes up, it becomes increasingly hard for vineyards to keep the alcohol content of their wines below 14 percent.

Now, just because there are three factors make wines age well does not mean that one component alone will make for a great wine to put away for 30 years. This article was actually inspired by a wine too high in alcohol that was put away, only to turn out flat after time. As with most things involving wine, this is a delicate balance among all of the aspects. The best wines to age actually have a little of all three to make the dance work.

Basically, the idea at the end of the day is that elements that may be a little overwhelming when a wine is young--the alcohol, tannins, and sugars--all drop off a bit as the wine oxidizes. Air is often thought as the enemy of fine wine, but it is actually an important ally. Both corks and stelvins allow a miniscule amount of air into the bottle, which, over time, breaks the wine down. This is the reason we decant wines as well--to let some of the good air in. Eventually, the wine will become flat and flavorless, but the goal is to drink it at its peak.

This is why big Shiraz, Amarone, etc. are prime candidates for the basement. Dessert wines actually win all prizes, though, as the very high sugar content, along with lots of alcohol, make them live for a very long time. Just keep an eye out for big wines with a good bit of qualities that might be pleasant to become integrated over the next few years or so, and you're on the right track.

And, of course, once you decide to keep some wine, you don't HAVE to have a proper cellar—just keep the wines on their side, and keep the temperature constant—and not over about 70 degrees. Remember that the difference between 55 and 70 also means they will age a little more quickly. And enjoy!

ASK US ABOUT WINE CLUB!
706-208-0010 OR
EMILY@SHIRAZATHENS.COM
EMILY'S WINE CLUB SELECTIONS FOR
AUGUST

**Ventisquero Carmenere Reserva 2006
Colchagua Valley, Chile**

It's difficult to find a Carmenere that is not overwhelming with green pepper and twigs, but we found a beauty in this label. It has all of the dried herb and leather aspects you would expect from the varietal plus grip and tannin, but it also has an inky, smooth, chocolatey texture that makes it pretty to drink. The dark berry flavors are intertwined with undergrowth to add complexity. It is ideal with red meat or mediterranean vegetables on the grill, or try it with this month's spicy asian vegetables.

\$13.99

**Falernia Sauvignon Blanc Reserva 2007
Elqui Valley, Chile**

Falernia is the most northern wine estate in Chile, and this bottling shows that freshness. The nose has classic aromatic Sauvignon Blanc aromas of lemon and fresh cut grass, along with honeydew and canteloupe, and the depth of flavor on the palate with lime and fig along with the melon is backed by cleansing acidity and finishes with lemongrass. Try it with seafood, or with anything paired with cucumber raita. I like it with spicy salmon tartare.

\$12.99

**Hirsch Gruner Veltliner #1 2005
Kampstal, Austria**

The label on this wine changes every year, but the wine is consistently good. Whole-cluster pressed, it maintains the vibrancy lost sometimes in lighter white wins. It has classic expressive lemon and lime character, and is light, dry, and peppery. Fruit is there, but the main component is the structure, with bright punches of bracing acidity. Definitely a food wine, pair it with any salads, cheeses, seafood, chicken—try it over blackened shrimp served over fresh fennel and lemon.

\$15.99

**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.

This Month's Feature:

**Broadley Estate Pinot Noir 2006
Willamette Valley, Oregon**

Broadley is family owned and operated, making handcrafted wines from start to finish. Unfiltered and unfiltered, they are bold, rich and layered--however, the family also aims to show a true expression of place, so the structure and acid balance is there too. The estate bottling showcases the terroir of the family vineyards as a whole, and has elements of cherry, smoke, and earth. The pretty dark cherry flavors show in the dark color, but the wine is smooth and easy to drink. It's actually soft enough to pair with this month's recipes. "Broadley Vineyards makes some of the lushest, thickest, most intense pinot noirs in Oregon. . . ."

-Karen McNeil

\$21.99

this month's wine club deal = \$15.99!

Introducing Wine Club Premier Cru Level!



We are adding a new optional feature for Wine Club members! With the Premier Cru level, members will enjoy all the benefits of the Wine Club with even more added perks. For \$70 a month, you will receive the three wines and food item in the club, plus another special, allocated bottle priced between \$25 and \$35. We will, of course, add other specials for Premier Cru members as well, like extra perks during our Wine Club member-only holiday preview event in September!

**Premier Cru Level Pick
Starlite Zinfandel 2005
Alexander Valley, CA
made by Merry Edwards**

The queen of cult Zin and Pinot does it again! A beautiful wine for Zin freaks and lovers of more elegant wines alike, it has serious heat and big tannin on the nose, but is much softer on the palate, and gets even nicer with a little time to breathe. Prunes, plummy red fruit, chocolate, and a rich, velvety texture make it very restrained but full. Elegance and taste now, with all of the stuffing to make it a great wine to cellar. A stunner for the first 24 members to join the Premier Cru Level!

\$39.99

**SHIRAZ'S RECIPES FOR
AUGUST**

This month's food item is Bittersweet Herb Farm Wasabi Hot Sauce. Add it to any recipe as a hot sauce for a bit of flavor, or use it as a condiment or dipping sauce. Sautee zucchini in a sprinkling of Fire & Flavor mustard & herb blend and dip in the sauce—yum! Serve with sashimi, brown rice, and fresh cucumbers for an easy meal, use as a spread for a veggie sandwich, or baste scallops and serve with fruit chutney. Bittersweet Herb Farm Wasabi Hot Sauce is only \$5.99, and comes automatically in wine club.

SPICY SALMON TARTARE

- 1/2 red onion, sauteed lightly
- 1 Tablespoon capers
- 2 Tablespoons wasabi hot sauce
- 1 Tablespoon dijon mustard
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 cup salmon pieces, raw

Chop all ingredients coarsely in a food processor (or by hand). Serve with toast points and any assortment of fresh raw vegetables.

NOTE: This can also be made with Tuna

SPICY ASIAN VEGETABLES

- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 1 red pepper, cut into strips
- 8 ounces assorted mushrooms, chopped very roughly
- 1/2 cup corn kernels
- 1/4 cup wasabi hot sauce
- 1/8 cup fat free cream
- 2 Tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 Tablespoon chopped scallions

If you are serving rice, start boiling water before starting the vegetables. Melt butter over medium-low heat. Add mushrooms, and sautee about 5 minutes until they start to brown; add peppers and corn and sautee another 5 minutes until all the vegetables are cooked and tender. Add hot sauce and cream and stir until combined; turn off heat and add cilantro and scallions.

NOTE: This is delicious as an entree served over rice, but it can also be served as an accompaniment to ginger and panko-crusted fish.

SESAME-WASABI CRUSTED FISH

- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 2 pieces of any meaty white fish
- 1/4 cup wasabi hot sauce
- 1 1/4 cup sesame seeds (can also use bread crumbs)

Heat olive oil over medium-low heat. Roll each piece of fish in hot sauce, then sesame seeds. Sear the fish for about 5 minutes on each side, until it is cooked through and firm. Serve with cucumber raita.

CUCUMBER RAITA

Raita can be made a number of ways; I like this not only for its flavor but for the texture.

- 1 medium cucumber, chopped coarsely
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons whole coriander seed (or barely crushed by mortar and pestle)
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 Tablespoon fresh mint

Mix all ingredients together well and chill before serving. Serve as a side with any spicy food to add a cool component. Serves 4

Fresh Fish at Shiraz on Thursdays!

Every Thursday, starting at 1 p.m., we will have 2 types of fresh (never frozen) fish delivered--the weekly email will inform customers as to what the catch of the week is; sales are first-come, first-serve, so come early if you can! We can, of course, advise you on wine selections to complement your fresh catch.