

Compass Wines

1405 Commercial Avenue • Anacortes WA 98221

www.compasswines.com

Cellar Notes September 2011

Finally! Summer has sprung up here and as I am writing this, it is actually sunny and 70 degrees with no rain in the forecast. While the rest of the country has been sweltering, we have been gathering moss with less than a handful of days even passing 75 for the whole summer, and countless more hovering at 60 with lots of clouds and sprinkles. Last week we went to Mt. Rainier to visit our son (proud parents of an archaeology intern) and were doing the usual tent thing with two dogs. We were prepared, but still 48 degrees and rain, with 3-5 feet of snow at the upper parking lot does not seem much like July. Witnessing the various 'summer' tourists in Bermuda shorts, flip flops, white tennies and Hawaiian shirts even made me shiver. We all know that winter and fall up here are proving grounds for fleece, Nano Puffs and Filson, but July? Anyway, it appears our summer has finally arrived and now all our visitors will get to see the Northwest in all its glory.

Our 10th Anniversary sale and ded reckoning retrospective tasting were both smashing successes, even though there was a snafu with the mailing, so some of you did not find out about them until after the events. This is just one more reason to get on the e-mail version of our mailing list. You will be the first to know about events and newsletters and will also get our twice weekly e-mail specials. To put it bluntly, those on the e-mail list got Tulpen Cabernet for half price, found out about a mind blowing collection of Cayuse Bionic Frog, got a crack at a fantastic Washington Chardonnay for \$6.99 and found out about our Anniversary tasting and ded. reckoning party and those who get snail mail only missed out. I can't spell it out any easier for you. You get more information, you get it faster and it doesn't cost you a penny. Every newsletter we send via e-mail instead of conventional mail saves us about \$1 and those savings go towards finding you better values for your fridge and wine cellar. When we trim our mailing costs, we don't need to make as much margin on our wines, so they get even cheaper for you. You get better information quicker, fewer trees get ground into paper, our Postal Service has less business and your wines get less expensive. Any other questions?

The ded. reckoning ship keep going faster and faster. As of this writing, we are already through well over half the davey jones's locker Cabernet Franc that was released in July, we are issuing 'last call' on the 2009 Plunder and BBQ has really taken off. If you want to guarantee a spot on upcoming ded. reckoning releases, make sure you ask to have your name put in the 'book of the ded.' You can sign up for as little as one bottle upon release, or as much as you would like and you will guarantee the best pricing as well. All folks that are signed up prior to the release of any given wine will get it at the 'pre-arrival' pricing and as a teaser, we have a ded. reckoning in the works that is so limited that ONLY folks in the 'book of the ded.' will be able to have access to it. The retrospective tasting showcased all 17 wines and demonstrated that they are not only spectacular values, but age beautifully as well. One of the most telling attributes of the tasting was that there was no clear favorite wine and no wine that was deemed a 'dog'. We will be issuing an extremely limited library release of some of the early wines and some ultra scarce larger format bottles via our e-mail list in the coming weeks (hint, hint).

Keep the fingers crossed for a glorious end of summer and some spectacular September weather!

Doug, Will, Laura, Jessica and Mikaila



What's New For Fall?

Plunder 2009 "last call"

Plunder, our daily drinker ded. reckoning, came about as a surprise that we never intended to do. However, when a wine maker like Scott Greer from Sheridan makes a proposal to bottle up some killer Dineen Syrah and get it to us so we can put it out for \$9.99, who are we to question it?



We started with roughly 500 cases last December and it will all be gone before we know it. We are down to roughly 50 cases as I write this and at the clip that it is going out of here, it may not make it to the publication of this newsletter. We have another in the works, but there will probably be a gap of a few months.



Mandraro Nero d'Avola 2009 \$8.99

Italian wines as we have come to know them over the years are loosely based on the Chiantis and Barbera from the north for daily drinking and the Barolos, Brunellos and Amarones, also from the north, as our special

occasion wines. This is a shame as there are countless other fantastic wines in both the budget minded way of thought and the luxury cuvees from all over the boot. Thinking all Italian wines taste like Chianti is like saying all wines in the US taste like California Zinfandel. This superb value comes from way down south on the boot, where the climate is warmer and things get a bit riper. Nero d'Avola is one of the darker and richer grapes in Italy and it comes across almost more domestic in style than imported. Blackberry, loganberry, chocolate and mocha, with a lilac and violet note. Full bodied, but soft tannins and gentle acids. A truly fantastic value.

Fabla Calatayud Tempranillo / Garnacha 2009 \$7.99

Spain just keeps cranking out remarkable value after remarkable value. This is yet one more head scratcher that has us wondering how they can put so much in a bottle for so little. A little more subtle than the wine above, it is a classic blend of the two most widely planted grapes in Spain. Calatayud is just north of the 41st parallel, where the majority of the top wine regions in Spain reside, so this is about as classic a wine as one can put together in that country as is possible, on paper at least. Where many of this combo of grapes from this region are characterized by leather, and dried fruits and flowers, this one is dominated by a pure, fresh fruit profile. Raspberry, pie cherry, cranberry and red plums, with a dash of damask roses. Incredible value here. A little more on the middle weight side of things, but with a tenacity that can punch up a weight class. Lamb, pork and grilled veggies, or even a middle eastern style kebob or tagine would work perfectly.



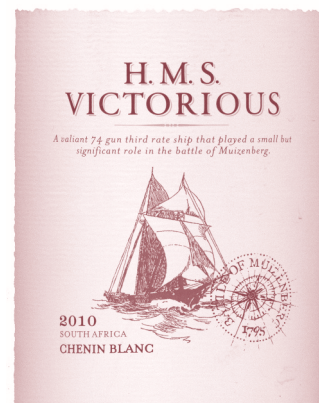
Monte Volpe Primo Rosso 2007 \$9.99

This one has an Italian name, but is all California. Made by the Graziano family in Mendocino County of primarily the Italian varietals of Nebbiolo, Negroamaro and Sangiovese, with some Zinfandel and Carignane for good measure. Lots of ripe, old school California fruit, with the acid and herb of old school Italian style.

This wine harkens back to early days of California when the Italian immigrants first started the wine making tradition. Martini, Mondavi, Parducci, Sebastiani, Seghesio, Gallo, Cribari, Gundlach Bundschu (OK, forget the last one, I just wanted to see if you were paying attention) all took homage to their roots and this wine sort of brings it back full circle. A red and white checked tablecloth, a violin player and a plate of spaghetti and meatballs is all you need for this one.

H.M.S Victorious Chenin Blanc was \$12.99, now \$9.99

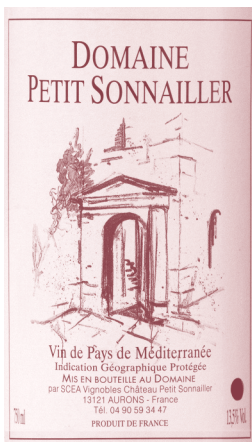
South Africa is still one of the most undiscovered wine regions on the planet as far as Americans are concerned. Chenin Blanc (or Steen, as they often call it there) has been the benchmark white grape there for well over 100 years. What Sauvignon Blanc is to New Zealand, Chenin is to South Africa. Lots of tropical fruit flavors of papaya, mango, pineapple and passion fruit, with a zesty and mouthwatering finish. The wine is named for a famous British ship of the line from the Napoleonic wars, but this wine gets its point across with finesse, not brute force. Fabulous with seafood and poultry. This with a slab of Frazier River white king salmon this fall would be a match made in heaven. The \$3 that was knocked off the price makes this an even better tasting wine!



More Fall Wines

Domaine Petit Sonnailler Vin de Pays de Méditerranée rouge NV \$9.99

I know this is a real mouthful of a name, but trust me, it is even more of a mouthful in a glass. Non-vintage, from a basically unknown region of France for wine (on this side of the Atlantic anyway) and a name that is nearly impossible to pronounce. An easy sell, right? Try layers of blackberry and cassis fruit, with a bright mid palate that reminds me of wild huckleberries and those tart blueberries you find when hiking. Very bright acid and mild tannins make this a fabulous red for the usual red meat offerings, but also peppers, tomatoes, garlic and those distinctive lavender-thyme-tarragon seasonings one finds in recipes from the south of France and the Riviera. Very cool stuff and the first time we have ever seen it. We bought every bottle available within 5 minutes of tasting it.



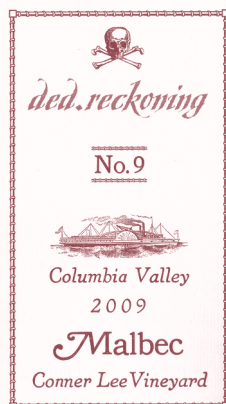
Domaine de la Croix Bouquie Touraine Sauvignon Blanc 2009 \$9.99

The Loire Valley is the benchmark of fruit driven Sauvignon Blanc that everybody else on the planet tries to emulate. The wines of Sancerre and Pouilly Fume are world renowned and are recognized as the pinnacle of what this grape can achieve. However, the down side is you

have to 'pay to play' with these famous appellations. For years, restaurants have known that a Sancerre by the glass with oysters is as good as it gets, but many a wily waiter has slipped many an unwary customer a glass of the runt down the river, Touraine, and pocketed the difference. Quite literally, right down the Loire River is the appellation of Touraine, that although not as famous and pedigreed as the more prestigious Pouilly and Sancerre, it offers extreme values in scintillating Sauvignon with aromas of talc, lime zest, fresh grass and bracing acidity. There is a reason the Loire valley whites go so stunningly with shellfish the world over.

Early warning: ded. reckoning No. 9 Connor Lee Vineyard Malbec 2009 late fall arrival

This is the first 'number' series ded. reckoning since the wildly popular USA 17 Cabernet from last year. Produced for us by Sean Boyd at Woodinville Wine Cellars (father of the Eagle Eater, but if you get the e-mail, you would already know that). 100% Malbec, extremely limited and due just in time for our Holiday Sale and tasting on December 3rd (mark your calendar NOW). This is just a teaser to get you in the 'book of the ded' We have only 125 cases of this one. Release price will be \$29.99, pre-release price is \$26.99 or \$25.49 per bottle by the case. If the pre-orders take all the wine, we will have a TINY amount available for the tasting on December 3rd, but not enough to keep people happy.



Wine Clubs

Welcome to the world of wine clubs.

We have several different clubs for all your hassle free wine buying. We will select your wines and either ship them to you, put them in your locker, or have them ready for pickup at the store. And best of all, by being a club member, all featured wines come to you at a minimum of 10% off our everyday price.

The New Washington 'Hot List' Wine Club

Our new Washington 'hot list' wine club will provide the lucky recipient with two bottles of wine per month, of the newest, hottest and tiniest production wines in the state. We are lucky to be in a position to taste and actually have the opportunity to buy many of the ultra limited production wines made out there that often are only available at the winery (or through us). In many cases, we are talking about production levels in the range of less than 50 cases total. The price will vary each month, with the average bottle being in the \$30-\$40 range, and always discounted well below our usual price. If you want the newest and the hottest properties, and those hyper limited production wines that others just dream about, then this club is for you.

Washington Wine of the Month Club

One, or one each red and white, Washington wine each month.
\$14.99 for one bottle, \$28.99 for one each red and white

World Club

6 bottles of great value wines from around the world \$75.00/month

Washington Club

6 bottles of the finest Washington has to offer \$150.00/month

Unlimited Club

You decide what you want, or let us decide! Do you want Grand Cru Burgundy, First Growth Bordeaux, or California Cult wines? Give us a budget, and let us do the rest. Some restrictions apply. Mkt/month

Rare Washington Club

Sold Out

Washington's New Classics Wine Club

With the 'Rare Washington Wine Club' all filled up now, we continue to be bombarded with calls for a new club, loaded with a bunch of the new wine stars in the state. We will set aside any amount you would like of each of the following wines upon release.

We bill your credit card as the wine arrives, and either ship the wine, or keep it in the store for pickup. All of these wines are released periodically throughout the year, but we will not hit you with more than two in a given month.

You will get the following wines: OS BSH, Cadence, Fidelitas Optu, Sheridan L'Orange, Five Star Cabernet Sauvignon, Mark Ryan Dead Horse, Rulo Syrah, Gorman Evil Twin, JM Tre Fancuili, Woodinville Wine Cellars Indomitable, Boudreaux Merlot, Bergevin Lane Intuition.

Mkt/month

Upcoming Events

Stephenson and Dynasty Cellars

Saturday September 24 / 1:00-5:00

David Stephenson is one of the nicest folks in Walla Walla and also one of the finest winemakers there, but few have ever heard of him. We have been huge fans for years and this year is no different. Come by, meet the man, and taste his fantastic wines.

Pieter and Olga from Dynasty Cellars north of Bellingham have jumped into the Washington wine scene with a bang. Last year, one of their wines made our 'top ten' list and it was long overdue that we have them here for a tasting. Again, extremely nice people (is there a theme here?). A FREE event, as usual.



Lantz and Lost River

Saturday October 29 / 1:00-5:00

Right in the heart of harvest we have two of the smaller wineries from up north, that both make fantastic wine and most have never heard of. This is of course a FREE event and the winemakers will both try to be here, but harvest does take precedence. So if the grapes are rolling in, we will still be pouring the wines but we might have cardboard cut outs in their stead.

All wines subject to prior sale.

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Contact us 360.293.6500
compasswines.com

Store Hours
Monday - Thursday 10 - 6
Friday 10 - 7
Saturday 9 - 6
Sunday 11 - 5

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