

COMPASS WINES

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Cellar Notes Summer 2017

Summer has officially arrived. The temps have heated up, the tourists are in town and the flood of crisp and refreshing whites and pinks are here in droves. We had a ton of rain this winter, but late spring was surprisingly warm, with the local flowers putting on a great show and the multiple nests of attack swallows all filled to the brim with chicks which look a lot like Cookie Monster. Yes, they do make a bit of a mess, but considering that each bird supposedly consumes up to 1000 mosquitos per day, all one has to do is some simple math to see why we love having the little peepers around, especially after a wet winter.

The vineyards in Washington got off to a really slow start this year, due to the long, cold winter. At one point, they were running about three weeks behind last year, which was unusually hot and early. However, as rough as that may seem to our farmers, one just

has to take a look at Europe this year. Hail and late frosts wreaked havoc in large parts of Champagne, Burgundy, parts of the Rhone, the Loire and even into Northern Spain and Italy, most notably Piedmont. While Spain and Italy did sustain damage, parts of France saw nearly total crop loss due to the weather. As a result, especially in Burgundy, supply on the 2017's will be extremely tight, right on the heels of the tiny, weather reduced 2016 vintage. So, expect prices to rise on Burgundy in particular, so if you are a fan of these wines, start your planning now to fill that cellar. Luckily, both 2014 and 2015, which are the wines in the marketplace right now, are both fantastic vintages, but supplies are waning on both of these as I write this.

2016 in Washington is on record as the largest harvest in the history of the state, with fruit coming in early and then it just kept on coming. Initial reports out of barrel are extremely positive and the whites we have already seen, along with the rosés are all spot on. We have not seen any of the reds yet, but again, initial reports have all been extremely good. The potential flip side is the freeze which hit in the early winter, just after harvest, causing some vine damage, mostly in the lower spots in Walla Walla. That combined with the slow start to this year, may mean a smaller crop in 2017. It is still too early to tell for sure. If we have a nice warm summer, then there may be little or no issues at all. Keep your fingers crossed.

Our annual summer sale and ded reckoning release party is just around the corner. Please read the back page for all the details and watch your inbox for emails with more specifics. Decanter Magazine in London has again asked us to pair up with them for a tasting showcasing their 'World Wine Award' winners. This is the third time we have worked with them and just like in the previous tastings with them we are shooting for an October date. Again, watch your email for more specifics on this truly international event.

Let the balmy breezes, warm evenings and throngs of tourists be with you!

Doug, Will, Laura, Sandy, Ally, Brandi and Theodore



SUMMER SPECIALS - REDS...WHITES...

MAN Family Wines Skaapveld Shiraz 2015 \$8.99

The values that keep coming out of South Africa are simply amazing. MAN is a producer who we have featured many times before, but we just keep coming back to them time and time again as the insane values that they produce year after year are just too good to pass up. The naming is not some sexist flaunt, but rather the first initials of the wives of the three partners. Clever, huh? One of the primary members of the trio, Tyrell Myburgh has actually been to the shop for a tasting a few years back, so you may remember him from then. This is classic Syrah in a very much Northern Rhone style, even though the name may remind you of Australia. There are a multitude of theories regarding the name of this grape, but one of the more intriguing is that a Persian nobleman brought the grape to South Africa long ago and named it for his homeland, in what is now Iran. From here, it went to Australia, keeping the name. Separately, when the Crusaders brought the grape to France, the name was changed due to the difficulty of the letter 'Z' in French. How much of this is true? Anyone's guess, but it sure sounds pretty cool. The wine has all the smoked meat, dried herbs, dark berry fruit and tannin structure of a Rhone version, with the bright fruit and soft acids which we typically associate with Australia. A very stylish wine which drinks at about 4x the price. Add in a '90' from Robert Parker and you end up with a pretty much slam dunk of a value here. Load up on this baby.



Maison Bleue Metis Red 2013 (Enthusiast 90) was \$40, now \$10.99

Maison Bleue is one of the new wave of wineries that just seems to always be in the news for good reasons. Based on traditional Rhone style wines made with a European sensibility, they have a seemingly never ending string of accolades, big scores and as a result, are not the easiest wines to find. We blew out the 2012 version of this wine back in the fall and of course ran out before we could fill all the requests. The winery offered us the 2013 at the same price to fill these orders and as much as we loved the first wine, this one is even better. The 2013 is mostly Grenache so it drinks even more like Chateauneuf du Pape than Columbia Valley. Originally released at \$40, it has already scored a '90' from the Wine Enthusiast. This wine then became our 'Washington Wine of the Year' for 2016. People pretty much went bonkers for this at the ridiculous price of \$14.99. We sold 1000 bottles of it, making it the best-selling wine in the shop so far this year. Well, the winery came up with one more pallet they wanted gone, so the price dropped again and instead of taking extra margin, we dropped the price to all of our loyal fans as well. So we have here a stunning Washington Rhone style wine, with 90 points, our current best seller, plus the 'Wine of the Year' for 2016. How about 75% off the original price? I have been called lots of things over the years, many of them not so nice, but even I have to call myself stupid for selling this so cheaply. When it sold out at \$14.99, why are we dropping the price? Because that is the way we roll. We get a great deal, we pass it on. End of story. Boom, drop the mic.



Chateau Teulon Côtieres de Nimes Blanc 2015 \$8.99

OK, I get that you may not know about the region of Costieres de Nimes, tucked down between the Rhone and Languedoc, but this guy surely knows a bit about the dirt here. Phillippe Teulon is a 7th generation grower at this estate since 1696. This tiny estate makes three wines. A red, a white and a pink. The white is 100% Roussanne, which oddly enough, is just starting to take hold in tiny amounts in Washington as well. Kind of like a more subtle and structured version of Viognier, it is characterized by notes of tropical flowers and fruits, with bracing acidity and texture which is not unlike Chardonnay. Jasmine, passion fruit, mango and star fruit, with the zing of guava, orange marmalade, and hints of green papaya. Even though this may read as if this is a sweet wine, it is anything but. Dry, with a weightier feeling that reminds me of a non-oaked Chardonnay, but with a bit more fruit profile. We are sourcing this from a local importer, who we have worked with since about day 1 in the shop. By buying from the small guy, we don't pay the overhead of a large importer and the price to you is all the better for it. Delicious stuff and not one you will find on every street corner.



All wines subject to prior sale.

...AND BLEUES



Chateau de la Jousseiniere Perle Bleue Sur Lie 2015 \$8.99

Odd, but true. We have two 'Bleu (Bleue)' wines in the same newsletter, but rest assured neither of them is than nasty 'Blue' stuff you have been reading about. This gem is from the far western reaches of the Loire valley, in Brittany. The grape is the almost forgotten 'Folle Blanche', which these days is most often used in the production of brandy, usually Armagnac and to a lesser extent, Cognac. Even though the grape is also known in the region just to the south as 'Picpoul', it is not even related to the 'Picpoul de Pinet' of Languedoc. Confused yet? The wine which this resembles the closest is that other gem from the Loire, Muscadet. Like its more famous neighbor, the wine is crisp as a green apple with just about the same amount of acidity. It has an oyster on the label for good reason. Brittany is famous for oysters and thus, this wine is perfect with them. Not a wine you see every day, but for the summer season, it is hard to think of a more refreshing wine to have with those shellfish on the grill or that bucket of steamed clams on the beach.



Turasan Selda White Cappadocia 2015 was \$12.99, now \$8.99

Now, central Anatolia or more specifically Cappadocia are not wine regions which roll right off the tongue, but in reality, there has been wine produced there WAY longer than in France, Germany, Spain and Italy. Turkey is actually the #6 grape growing country in the world. The varieties we see from there are for the most part not household names: Emir, Narince, Misket etc, but the end results are wines of great complexity and interest, which are not unlike the wines of Portugal and Sicily. Again, if I had my druthers, I would ban all varietal labelling on wines and just sell them by what they taste like and where they come from. This delightful white has a very floral note in the nose with essence of roses, paper white narcissus and wisteria, with a citrus and green pear note in the mouth. I suspect that Misket is a relative of Muscat, which would explain the floral notes, but this definitely does not come across as sweet. Kind of like a cross between a honeydew melon a kiwi fruit and a gooseberry. Hard to put your finger on, but delicious any way you look at it. We don't have very much of this, so hesitation on this one is not recommended.

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.

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 bottle, or one each of Washington State red and white wine per month, or 4 reds, 2 for drinking now and 2 to lay in the cellar.

\$14.99 single

\$28.99 for one red and one white

\$99.99 for 4 bottles

Unlimited Club

You decide what you would like, or let us decide! Would you like Grand Cru Burgundy every month? California Cult wines? How about a case of cider or sake every few weeks? Give us a budget and some parameters to shoot for and we will do the rest. Some restrictions apply. **Mkt/month**

Rare Washington Club

With every release, you will get the following wines: Leonetti, Quilceda Creek, Woodward Canyon Old Vines, Doubleback, Reynvaan, Rotie, Upchurch, Andrew Will Ciel du Cheval, Sleight of Hand Archimage, Betz Syrahs, Corliss and Walla Walla Vintners Select.

This club is currently sold out, but we do have some limited 'provisional' memberships available. Please contact us for details.

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: **Cadence, Fidelitas Optu, Sheridan L'Orage, Mark Ryan Dead Horse, Two Vintners Syrah, Gorman Evil Twin, JM Tre Fanculli, Woodinville Wine Cellars Indomitable, Golden Ridge, Hightower Red Mountain Reserve, Lawrelin Cabernet, Avennia Justine.**

Mkt/month

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1405 Commercial Ave
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Store Hours

Monday - Thursday 10 - 6
Friday 10 - 7
Saturday 10 - 6
Sunday 11 - 5

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, July 22

annual mid summer Anniversary sale and ded.reckoning release party

Pencil this in now. We will be pouring the new ded.reckoning 2013 No.14 Ciel du Cheval Grenache all day, plus visits from Force Majeure, Cuillin Hills and Lobo Hills at various times throughout the day. Email will keep you up to date on specific times. This one is of course a free event and every item in the store will be at least 10% off the regular price, with many items marked down even more. Get here when we open for the best selection of wines with the deepest discounts, as they always go quickly.

Saturday October ?????

Decanter World Wine Awards Tasting

We are still nailing down an exact date for this one, but keep an eye on your inbox. We are bringing in some amazing wines from the largest, world-wide competition on the planet. The folks at Decanter in London know how to put on a tasting as well as the best of them and we are thrilled to be asked for the third year in a row to be one of the few retail outlets on the entire globe to host an event with some of the biggest winners. Don't miss this one!