

COMPASS WINES

1405 Commercial Avenue • Anacortes WA 98221

www.compasswines.com

Welcome to Spring!

After a very abrupt and cold start to winter up here, with snow in the first week of November, the following months were kind of boring, in a Northwest kind of way. Lots, and I do mean lots, of rain, some wind, more than our fair share of gloomy and grey skies and the odd sunbreak here and there. Compared to the rest of the country, we got off really easy. The vineyards, so far, have also come through with flying colors. No big freezes or crazy weather events, but we still have another month or so until we are totally in the clear. I was in the wine country at the very beginning of February and it was sunny and 68 degrees. That is way too warm for this time of year and more like April. If we don't get a cold snap, the vines will get a jump on the season. If Jack Frost does make an appearance, we may see some natural crop thinning on the shoots which may be pushing. Time will tell. Keep your fingers crossed.

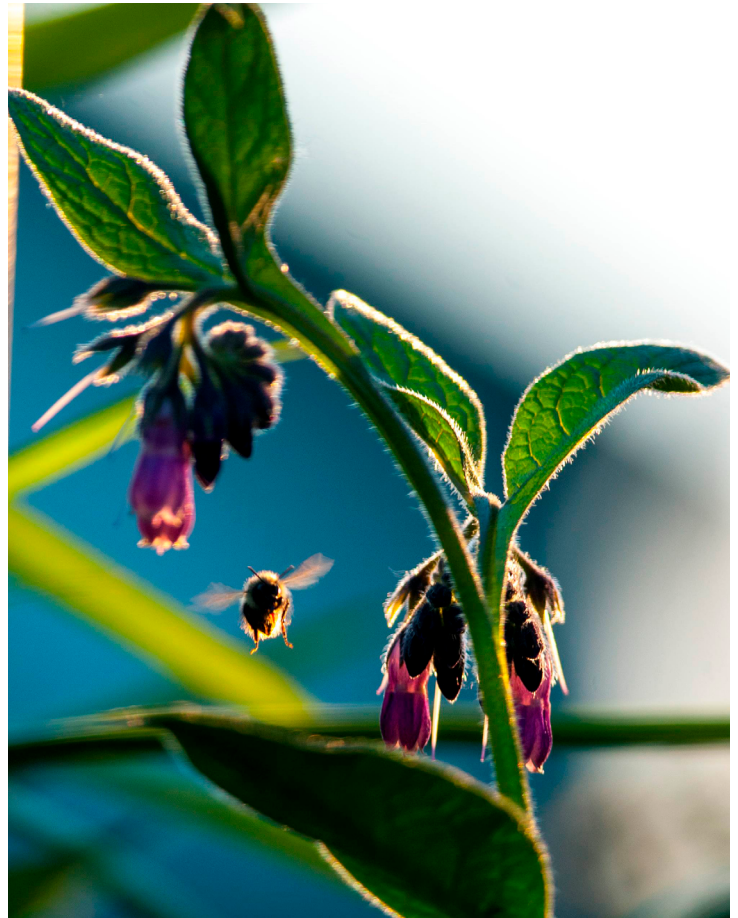
We have a bunch of new and somewhat out of the ordinary wines for this edition of the newsletter. Some different regions, different grapes and some pretty crazy pricing as well. All good things, especially for the more adventuresome in the crowd.

Coming up on March 10, our favorite Italian importer, Neal Garone, is making another appearance with one of his winemakers. If you came to the Sicilian tasting in the fall, you saw the massive crowds which show up for his events. This time, he is bringing a brand new face to us, who we have yet to even meet. We have tasted through the wines and are pretty excited about what we tried. This time, the winery is from Chianti, so expect classic Sangiovese-driven wines and the typically awesome food which comes north with Neal. Sometimes 'Ciao', that bastion of Italian cuisine in Coupeville helps him out as well, and we suspect he may be in the cards for this event as well. Even if you cannot make our event, swing into Ciao sometime for arguably the best wood fired pizza in this part of the state. Some even say he has Seattle beat as well.

At the end of March, Taste Washington takes place in Seattle. The largest regional wine event in the nation, we always participate. We will have booths for both [ded reckoning](#) and Soy Copper USA down there, so make sure you come by for a visit. You can get your tickets in advance from us. I will be leading two big seminars as well, one on Saturday the 24th and one on Sunday the 25th. For tickets to these, you have to go to the Taste Washington web site. More details are on the back page.

Bring on the sunshine, chirping frogs, daffodils and squawking blackbirds!

Doug, Will, Laura, Sandy, Candace, Brandi and Theodore (from afar, as usual)



TRY SOMETHING NEW & DIFFERENT

Prunus Dao Bianco 2016

\$10.99

Spring is here so we are starting this off with a couple of really fun whites, which not only come to us from some spots which may seem foreign to some, but from some grapes which I can't even pronounce. This is one newsletter where we intend to open everyone's eyes a bit and get them to try something new and different.

I hit you all with this first wine during the holidays and we thought we had seen the last of it. Well, we were wrong and you guys now get to reap the benefits as the sun starts its way back into our corner of the planet. Portuguese wines are for the most part incredible values. Made from grapes which are pretty much unique to that country, they can be a bit of a hard sell to those who buy based on only those grapes which are well known over here. This refreshing white is a blend of Encruzado, Malvasia Fina, Bical, Cerceal Branco and others. We know it simply as 'Prunus white'. An explosive mix of fresh flowers, citrus rind, passion fruit and guava. Lip smacking acid makes it a stunning pair for the local oysters which are in their prime right now. The employees keep buying this one and that is always a good sign, so if you cannot think to believe me about this one, trust them. A fantastic wine which just keeps on delivering over and over again.



Fairview Cape Granite Blend 2015

was \$15.99, now \$8.99

By now, you all know my affinity for South African wines. Coincidentally, if you were to take a peek at the analytics of our sales over the last 10 years, the most popular white category in terms of number of bottles sold at Compass Wines, is South African white blends, which means you guys like them an awful lot as well. Fairview is one of the wineries which I visited when I went to South Africa in 2013. They are one of the larger properties down there, but not very big by the standards here. The blend of this wine is dominated by Chenin Blanc, like the vast majority of all South African white blends. They have actually been growing Chenin in the suburbs of Cape Town for longer than Cabernet has been grown in Bordeaux. Let that sink in for a minute. And folks call this region's wines 'new world'. Hardly! Classic notes of candied almonds, lemon curd, green apples and just a whiff of cotton candy in the nose. The winery is between importers, so we were able to gobble this one up for peanuts and pass on the savings. We bought every bottle available, so when these are gone, they are gone until a new importer is found. When that happens, the price will go right back up. From the top of my soapbox, I have many times proclaimed that South African Chenin Blanc will someday be spoken of in terms not unlike 'Napa Chardonnay' or 'White Burgundy' and be thought of as its own wine category. Strike while the iron is hot and be on the cutting edge, so that when that happens, you can impress all of your friends with how smart you are.



Domaine des Lauribert Vin de Pays du Vaucluse 2016

\$8.99

We are in a great place right now in regards to the wines of Southern France. Both 2015 and 2016 have turned out to be stellar vintages and with the Euro still lagging a bit behind, the prices are great as well. Grenache makes up the majority of most of the wines of Chateauneuf du Pape and it holds court in this wine as well. Vibrant and spicy notes of wild strawberries, lavender, thyme and a finish of loganberry pie with a dusting of smoke. Really fantastic stuff here, especially for the money. These wines from the Southern Rhone are really masterful with red meat, especially when done on the grill or BBQ. As the weather starts to warm up this spring, and the covers come off those Green Eggs, Hibachis and Webers, pop the cork one of these while getting those steaks or chops ready. If being a carnivore is not your thing, try this with garlic laden tomato sauce or roasted red peppers. Think rustic Mediterranean meal and you will hit it right on the button.



GREAT SPRING VALUES



Don Ramon Antique Red 2015 \$8.99

Ten years ago, we ran rampant with the 2003 version of this wine, selling well over 1300 bottles before it ran out. Then, after a couple of good, but not breathtaking vintages, the 2007 comes along and blows right past all the predecessors, and we did it again. It has now come back for the 2015 vintage. Ripe Bing cherry and pomegranate with raspberry fruit leather, tea and espresso. In the same cool bottle with the wax stamp. This is a great comparison wine to the Vacluse. The other wine is a black vintage Jeep, this one is Ferrari red Alfa Romeo. This wine also is a great pairing with red meats, but with the bracing acidity, it also will pair nicely with seafood and poultry. Don't be afraid to mix your colors of meals and your color of wine. That is so passé. Think more about flavor than color and think of your wine as a condiment to your meal. This is the catsup to your fries or the slice of lime on your fish taco.



El Supremo Malbec 2016 \$7.99

Yep, you read that correctly, \$7.99. No foolin'. We all know how many great value Malbecs there are coming from Argentina these days and in fact, we ran a great one in the last newsletter. The seemingly endless ocean of these heading north was bound to start to cause some pricing pressure and we are now starting to see it. Ripe cocoa and blueberry, with a hint of cinnamon and clove. Soft tannins and just enough acid to cleanse the palate. Is this a candidate for a few decades in the cellar? Of course not. This is meant to be schlepped home by the case in the bed of your truck or in the trunk of your car without a care in the world about proper long term storage, the right glassware or if your Kobe beef is the right fat content. Throw this in the pantry off the kitchen, throw some burgers on the grill or take a pizza out of the freezer and enjoy. Solo cups are fine with this one, or the Riedels, if you must. This is one ridiculous value.

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, Owen Roe Red Willow Red, 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. You will get the following wines: **Cadence**, **Fidelitas Optu**, **Sheridan L'Orange**, **Mark Ryan Dead Horse**, **Two Vintners Syrah**, **Gorman Evil Twin**, **JM Tre Fancuili**, **Sightglass Cabernet**, **Lobo Hills Left Bank**, **Lonesome Springs**, **Hightower Red Mountain Reserve**, **Lawrelin Cabernet**, **Avennia Justine**. **Mkt/month**

The Burgundy of the Month Club

In this club, you can pick either red or white, or let us mix it up for you (this is how I would do it). Every month, we will pick a fantastic wine for you to try. As is true of all of our clubs, there is no fee to join and the discount you get on the club wine applies to that same wine every time you come back for more, until we are sold out. The price per month on this one will vary, but typically it will be in the \$30-\$50 range per month. Pre-pay for a year and pay an even \$450.

All wines subject to prior sale.

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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

Contact us 360.293.6500
compasswines.com

Send your e-mail address to:
doug@compasswines.com

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, March 10 1:00-5:00

A Taste of Chianti with Neal Garone

When Neal comes by with his Tuscan friends, a bunch of great food and of course, stunning wines, the crowds come out en masse. Mark this one on the calendar now. Free, as always.

Saturday, March 24 and Sunday March 25th all day, in Seattle

Taste Washington

Each year, at this time, we head to Seattle to man the booths at the largest regional wine event in the nation, Taste Washington. We will be manning both ded reckoning and Soy Copper USA booths again this year, so stop by and say 'hi' at either one, or both. I will also be moderating two major seminars down there. 'Washington through the Looking Glass' on Saturday and 'Washington vs. The World' on Sunday. Both of these seminars are expected to sell out, and you must purchase the tickets through the Taste Washington web site. We do have the VIP and general admission tickets to the gala tasting available in the shop. We cannot sell these on-line, but give us a call or stop by to get yours. The shop will be open both days with regular hours as well.