

COMPASS WINES

1405 Commercial Avenue • Anacortes WA 98221

www.compasswines.com

Cellar Notes Late Spring 2017

Well, the rains appear to be slowing down out west, but both California and the Pacific Northwest have gotten their share this winter/early spring. The snow packs are back where they are supposed to be, most reservoirs are back where they need to be and the vines got a healthy drink this year. Some areas in California got too wet, so root rot is an issue for some, and the freeze in Walla Walla did cause some vine damage, but nothing appears too severe, at this point, in either spot.

We also made it through spring with no real frost issues at all, so everything is shaping up to be a great growing season, as long as the sun comes out like we hope it will.



One sure sign that spring is really upon us is the annual arrival of the attack swallows which inhabit my farm buildings and more specifically, my front porch. They arrived on Easter Sunday this year. Yes, they do make a bit of a mess of things, but the pleasant chittering they emit and the down crested, Muppet-clone chicks which they pop out over the season are well worth the clean-up. The sheer fact that they inhale mosquitos at a rate which would make a curiously difficult video game is enough by itself to love their company.

The second warning that spring is coming is the rash of new releases. We have been struck by an incredible run of great vintages in the past few years and the stellar 2014 reds are rolling in now. Three 'classic' years of wines, 2012, 2013 and 2014 are enough to keep any cellar full. When the riper 2015's arrive next year at this time, chances are that you may be drinking them before any of the past three vintages. Kind of like a decade ago when the tightly wound vintages of 2000, 2001 and 2002 had to sit for a few years, but we got blessed with the plush 2003 and freeze limited 2004 vintages to sip on while waiting.

We saw lots of you at Taste Washington and again at the North West Wine Experience at Semiahmoo. Set your calendars for several more great summer events, the annual SeaDoc 'Wine and Sea' auction on Orcas Island and our own midsummer, anniversary party. We will have the usual festivities with our storewide sale and the release of the newest of the ded reckoning wines. We are also expecting a fantastic bunch of Sicilian wine makers here in the beginning of October and we will for the third year in a row be hosting an event in conjunction with Decanter Magazine from London celebrating their World Wine Awards. The exact dates for these are still being penciled out, but plan on early autumn for both of them. Keep up to date on these plus our regular weekly tastings by joining our email list.

It is great to see all of you in the shop and again at these great venues celebrating all that is Washington vino!

Bring on the sun!

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

DELIGHT YOUR PALATE

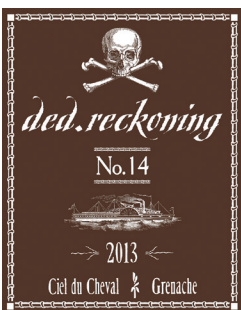
Bereziartua Basque Country Cider, was \$10.99, now \$6.99

Cider, or 'Sidra' is the fastest growing segment of the booze business and the Basque country of Spain/France is home to some of the best. If your only experience with hard cider is the pretty bottles in the beer section of the grocery store and marketed by massive beer companies, think again. Thinking all cider is like that is like assuming all red wine tastes like Yellow Tail. The cider producing heritage of the Bay of Biscay, which forms the coast line from northern Spain right into Normandy in France, goes back centuries. In France, one often sees them bottled in Champagne style packaging, complete with the wire cage over the cork. In Spain, the bottles look more like wine bottles, with conventional corks. The effervescence of the Spanish ciders is also much more like Moscato than Prosecco, hence the 'normal' corks, or in this case, screw caps. The other big difference in Basque ciders is that for the most part, they are totally unfiltered. Picture Kombucha and you get the idea. Cloudy, with notes of yeasty, herby goodness. Just a hint of dry (not sweet!), with fresh apple crispness and wine style complexity. If you have been afraid to try these crazy but really cool and really 'hot' ciders because of the funk or the price, never fear. This one is as cheap as it gets. Our resident food and beverage anthropologist (yes, he really is one and is off to London in the fall for his PhD in it), Theodore, discovered this producer in January while he was exploring Spain for cider, vermouth and fatty pork products. We found the importer and arranged for a full pallet of this multi award winning gem. Because the labels were all wrinkled when they were put on, we got a screaming deal. We have the only bottles of this in the state and are passing on the insane price. Note, this price is for full 750ml, wine size bottle, not puny little beer bottles and the case discount still applies.



Perrin Family L'Oustalet Rouge 2015 \$9.99

The Perrin Family of Chateauneuf du Pape fame owns multiple properties in the southern Rhone, the most famous of which is the revered Chateau de Beaucastel. When putting together the wines from these various estates, there are always left over batches which don't quite fit. This is the hazard of selected blending. When you have 10 barrels of Syrah from 'plot x', but the blend is best when you only use 9 of them, what do you do with the extra barrel? Some places sell them off to negotiants, some just sell them to the bulk markets or when you are a very forward thinking winery and have multiple vineyards in the neighborhood, all of which are organically farmed, you just hang on to all these odd lots and make your own blend. As the Perrins have control over all these wines from the time they are picked, they are in a perfect position to do just this. As the different properties are all in different appellations, the wording on the label gets very difficult, so they just opt for 'Vin du Pays' to cover all their bases. This vintage is a blend of Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre and Merlot and has all the character one expects from a southern Rhone. Ripe berry, smoked meat, floral notes, cassis and a bit of chocolate from the merlot. Considering the pedigree of the fruit, with some undoubtedly from Beaucastel and all of it from the potentially legendary 2015 vintage, this is a bargain and a half.



ded reckoning No.14 Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Grenache 2013 \$39.99 (due June 1)

This is a first for the ded reckoning program, a Washington version of a southern Rhone. We are huge fans of Chateauneuf du Pape, as many of you know and Grenache is the key component in the wines of this appellation. In Washington, Grenache is not as well-known as Syrah, but it definitely is on the upswing. It is very sensitive to cold, so plantings are much more limited, but higher elevations in the valley tend to keep it going through nasty winters. From the much lauded Ciel du Cheval vineyard on Red Mountain, this is an extremely rare example of a Grenache from the Yakima Valley's most famous spot. Crafted by Rhone style specialist James Mantone of Syncline and in this case, Force Majeure, it has classic notes of strawberry, raspberry, red currant and game. Notes of dried roses, mint and a whiff of

bacon round out the elegant and refined nature of the wine. Crisp acids and gentle tannins are some of the defining notes of the grape, and they come through here in spades. Enjoyable now, it will continue to evolve in the cellar for a decade or more. This is one of the smallest bottlings of ded reckoning in a number of years and is likely to sell out rather quickly.

FOR YOUR FEASTS



Patient Cottat Le Grand Caillou Sauvignon Blanc 2015 \$9.99

From one of the great producers of the legendary Sauvignon Blancs of the Loire, Sancerre and Pouilly Fume, comes this fantastic value. Basically a blend of grapes which the Fournier family sources from Touraine and Anjou, which fall outside the appellation boundaries of Sancerre and Pouilly Fume. Considering that they have been crafting Sauvignon Blanc for multiple generations, the family has pretty much got it figured out. Classic notes of fresh grass, lemon and lime zest, flinty minerality (that smell when a rock is broken open), crisp acids and a tangy finish. If the weather stays on the chilly side, the oysters will still be yummy and this would be the perfect wine to crack with a dozen or two. As the weather warms up and halibut and shrimp season shows up, again, this in a bucket of ice will be just the ticket. As graduation season, and with it wedding season nears this would be a real crowd pleaser for the masses. Bright and crisp for those who favor Kiwi Style Sauvignon Blanc, lots of citrus for those who lean towards fruity wines (even though this is bone dry) and dry enough to please all those wedding style Chardonnay drinkers. A hard wine not to like.



Mona Sangiovese Terre di Chieti 2015 \$9.99

Sangiovese is the most widely planted grape in all of Italy and is the mainstay of Tuscany, comprising 100% of the grapes in Brunello, and the majority of the blends in both Chianti and Montepulciano. If you head a little to the southeast, towards the Adriatic coast, you run into Abruzzo. Here is where things get confusing. Centuries ago, a nobleman from Abruzzo was visiting Montepulciano. As a parting gift, he was given some vine cuttings, which he planted when he returned home. This is the grape which is now known as 'Montepulciano d'Abruzzo'. However, it is not Sangiovese, which is the grape which is most famous for Montepulciano. Confused yet? Now it gets even more twisted. This wine IS Sangiovese and it IS from Abruzzo, and more specifically Terre di Chieti. It has very Tuscan style, with bright notes of red fruits, herbs, cherry tart and a zippy finish. Fantastic pizza or pasta wine and also with any dish containing garlic or tomatoes, regardless if they are from Tuscany or Abruzzo.

All wines subject to prior sale.

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'Orange, 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
Anacortes WA 98221

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



UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, July 8

SeaDoc Wine and Sea Auction

Every year, we do our best to help out this fantastic organization who's sole purpose is to help preserve the environment and creatures inhabiting the Salish Sea, which is right in our back yard. This annual auction out on Orcas Island is their primary fund raiser of the year. Wine, art, experiences, great food and a fantastic cause.

Contact them directly for tickets. jean@seadocsociety.org.

Saturday, July 22

Annual Mid-summer Anniversary Sale and ded.reckoning Release Party

Pencil this in now. We are still formulating all the details of who all will be here, but rest assured, it will be a great bunch of wineries, plus the new ded.reckoning and one of only two days per year when the entire shop is on sale. Watch your emails for updated information as we get it together.