

COMPASS WINES

1405 Commercial Avenue • Anacortes WA 98221

www.compasswines.com

Cellar Notes Late Spring 2019

April showers bring May flowers, right? If this is true, we are going to have a hum dinger of a bloom coming up in a few weeks. My yard is like a lake right about now. A few weeks back, record snow. March? record warm and dry. April? someone left the super soaker on full blast. At least, the grass will be green for a while this year, before another smoke filled summer arrives. With all this recent rain and all the snow in December, the snowpack is still way below average, so fire season may be nasty yet again. Keep your fingers crossed.



So far, it looks like there was no real damage to the vines in Washington this year, thankfully. When the temps dropped in February, we were on pins and needles, but apparently, the snow was deep enough that it worked like a blanket and kept the plants just warm enough. Kind of like the igloo of the plant world.

France has not gotten off so easily. As I write this, the vineyards of Burgundy and parts of Champagne and the Loire have been hammered by yet another spring of brutal frosts. The jury is still out, but rumor has it that there may be some appellations which actually will not get any crop at all this year. If the wines from central France are your favorites, brace yourself. It may be a rocky ride in a couple of years, not unlike the tiny vintages of 2015 and 2016 back to back.

Back to a more positive note, my resident attack swallows have made their bold return from the warmer climes of the south to the drippy greyness of the north. We always anticipate their return. I know others cannot stand the mess they make, but frankly, we find it endearing. We get to see the same birds or their offspring, return each year to the same nests, fledge out multiple broods of muppet-like chicks and then watch them sweep the skies around the farm, clearing them of mosquitos at a breakneck pace. We have lost count of the number of nests, but speculate them to be in the several dozens. With roughly 5 chicks per nest, plus mom and dad, devouring nasty biting insects at a pace of up to several hundred each per day, all the while chittering to each other in conversation, one only needs to know basic math to figure out that it is well worth cleaning up a bit of bird poop in exchange for them cleaning up the skies and making it much more pleasant to be outside, when the sun finally shows up.

By the time you read this, Shelly will be on her way back to Nebraska. We will miss her, but the Huskers are calling her name. However, we are welcoming a new addition to the team, Gabriela. You may have seen her at the Co-op in Mt. Vernon in the past, and we are thrilled to add her to the Compass Wines family. Make sure you say 'hi' on your next visit to the shop.

Bring on the sun!

Doug, Will, Laura, Sandy, Chris, Gabriela and Theodore (from the boonies)

WARM WEATHER WINES

Viano Vineyards Contra Costa County Chardonnay 2016 \$9.99

We originally ran this as an email on April Fool's day, but it is such a stunning value that we just had to bring it back. Contra Costa County does not roll off the tongue like Napa or Sonoma, but in this case, that is a good thing. Viano Vineyards was originally planted here in 1888. In the 1920's the Viano family took it over and now 5 generations later, they still farm it. The vines are all dry farmed and head pruned and the wines are all fermented using native yeasts. Everything about this winery screams that the wines should be expensive and this is confirmed when you taste them. However, since they are hidden in a backwater of San Francisco Bay, instead of in the heart of Napa, things are way different. This Chardonnay has the crisp acids of a European (read French) version, with a bright note of fresh oak, but not in a heavy way. Some oaky California Chardonnay leans towards caramel, butterscotch and Kettlecorn. This one leans more towards fennel, anise and licorice root. Incredibly tasty, extremely versatile and a stupendous value. No, this price is not a joke.



Saint Felix Corbieres Rouge 2017 \$8.99

Last year at about this time, we ran a similar special in the email on the rose version of this wine. Back in 2014, we did a feature on a different red Corbieres, so in the nearly 18 years we have been here, this is only the third time we have put a Corbieres in the newsletter and only the second red version. One of the older appellations in southern France, but often overlooked on this side of the pond, it is an extreme value amongst the wine savvy out there. Smoked meat, pan drippings, berry compote, black pepper and a finish like cassis. A bit on the gamy side but in a good way. Imagine a roast coming right out of the oven, all spitting and popping in the pan, and you then deglaze with a dash of raspberry vinegar and fresh loganberries. That is what this wine smells like. Fantastic stuff and way more complex than belies the price.



Bicudo Vinho Verde Vinho Branco 2018 \$9.99

Vinho Verde (green wine) has for years been a low alcohol, go-to summer quaffing white. However, now that it is an official appellation in Portugal, we see, we not only are seeing pink and red versions, but also some more serious whites, like this one. Coming in at a more 'normal' 11% alcohol, this is a wine which can take its place as a fun, slightly spritzy summer white, like we all remember, or a replacement for wines like Pinot Gris. Loaded with lemon, lime, tangerine, green apple and passionfruit, it has lip smacking and mouthwatering acidity, a refreshing tang of tropical fruit, and a just slightly off-dry finish. Brilliant with things like halibut or prawns on the grill, or heck, hot dogs or fish and chips. A beautiful wine to kick off the summer season.



Cantine Povero Dolcetto Monferrato 2017 \$9.99

When I see the name 'Monferrato' on a label, I immediately think 'Barbera' and this winery has a really, really tasty one, which we also sell and comes in a 3 liter box, but this Dolcetto is a stunner in its own right. Bright red and black currant, with hints of tobacco and cinnamon, zinging acidity which reminds me of pie cherries and a beautiful finish of fresh berries. Normally, we don't expect this level of complexity and sophistication from Dolcetto, unless it is Dogliani and well over twice the price. This is a screaming deal on a classic Italian wine and perfect for all that spring time fare. If you want to step it up a notch, ask us about their amazing Barolo and Barbaresco! Yousa!



All wines subject to prior sale.

RARE SPANISH WHITE

WINE CLUBS

El Coto Rioja Blanco 2018 \$10.99

A few newsletters ago, we ran a Rioja Blanco and it was a smash hit and was the first wine of the bunch to sell out. We don't often see them, so when we found another star version of this wine, we brought it in for another shot. When folks think of Spain, they most often think of Tempranillo driven reds. However, all that is Tempranillo is not red. This contains the rare white version. In 1988, amongst all the glorious red clusters of fruit, some mysterious white grapes appeared in a vineyard within the Rioja appellation. After years of study and propagation, the legal authorities of the region proclaimed that this was in fact a naturally occurring mutation of the classic red grape and allowed this new white clone to be propagated and bottled as 'Rioja'. Rare as hen's teeth, but well worth tracking down, if you can find it. Brilliant and lively in the glass, it has the character of green apples, lemon pie and slightly green papaya, notes of flowers and ocean breezes in the nose and a delightfully refreshing and mouthwatering finish. Surprise all your snobby wine friends who think they know everything about wine with this one.



The Rare World Wine Club

Our 'Rare Washington Wine Club' is without question, the most popular of all of our wine clubs and it basically all sold out all the time. However, we do get to taste some ridiculously cool, high scoring, hyper rare wines from around the world, so we have decided to add a similar club for these wines. In many cases, we get to taste wines which are so limited, that we cannot even send out an email on them. If this sort of thing appeals to you, then this is the club for you. We will do one selection per month, from around the world with an average price of \$100 per bottle. You just let us know how many bottles you want to sign up for, and we will do the rest. If you want one bottle per month, great. If you want more, no problem there either. Just let us know and we will set aside the same amount for you of each selection. Most of these wines will be red, but if we find some really cool white or bubbly, it may show up here occasionally as well. As with all our clubs, there is no fee to join, the wines are discounted and as long as we have the club wines in stock, your discount will apply to them. However, as rare as these wines are, don't count on there being many extras! As an introductory offer, pre pay for a year of one bottle per month at a 20%+ discount, for \$1000 per year. If you want multiple bottles, the same discount will apply there too. We will just multiply it out. Perfect for that gift for Mother's or Father's Day this year.



Welcome to the world of wine clubs.

We have several different clubs for 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.

Washington 'Hot List' Wine Club

Two bottles of wine per month of the newest, hottest and tiniest production wines in the state. 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 21 Grams. **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

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'Orage, Mark Ryan Dead Horse, Two Vintners Syrah, Gorman Evil Twin, JM Tre Fanculi, 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.**

Bubbly of the Month Club!

Welcome to all that sparkles! Each month, you will receive a new bottle of fascinating sparkling wine from around the globe. Sometimes it will be true Champagne, sometimes a Cava or Prosecco and sometimes a cool discovery from elsewhere. As with all our clubs, there is no fee to be a member; the wine is always discounted and reorders of the same wine will always get the 'club' price. **No set dollar amount on this one, but it will average in the \$30-\$40 each month, with some months being less and some a little more.**

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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

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doug@compasswines.com
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UPCOMING EVENTS

4th of July

We will be closed for the holiday! Stay safe!

Our Annual Summer Anniversary Sale and Wine Tasting

Saturday, July 13 10:00-6:00

Keep an eye on your email for all the details!

Seadoc Society Wine and Sea Auction

Saturday, July 13 5:00-8:00 on Orcas Island

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.

www.seadocsociety.org/auction