

# The Wine Guy's Wine Tasting Notes

October, 2009



## **Wine by Joe, 2006 "Really Good" Pinot Noir, Oregon \$13.**

On my recent trip to the Willamette Valley in Oregon I saw signs for Wine by Joe but didn't put it on my agenda. Recently I found this bottle in a local store and had to try it. First of all the "Really Good" is on the label and not my comment. Unfortunately this is not like most of the Willamette Valley Pinots I have had. This one is very light, almost Beaujolais like. As a deck wine in the summer it is fine, but it is too light for most foods.

## **Robert Pepi, 2006 Pinot Grigio, California \$9.**

It has been a while since I've had a Pepi wine so I quickly grabbed this one off the shelf. Crisp and clean, this is what I remember from Pepi wines. It's a great starter with light foods or as a refreshing summer wine. I hope I see more of these wines.

## **K, 2006 Syrah, Columbia Valley, Washington**

This is a wine a friend recently gave me to try. Washington and Oregon are quite different in the varieties that perform well. Washington is all about Semillon, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. This is one of the few Syrahs I've had from Washington, and it is a stunner. Bold, rich flavors and plenty of deep body creates a wine meant only for the richest food pairings.

## **Raylen Vineyards, 2007 Category 5, Yadkin Valley**

Tasted at 6th and Vine Restaurant in Winston-Salem at their Sunday half-priced wine evening. This upscale wine is a blend of five grape varieties, in varying amounts from year to year: Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Petite Verdot and about 3% or 4% Syrah. It is a soft, approachable wine that can pair nicely with some lighter food and very well with heavier dishes. This is one of Raylen's premium blends that gets a little extra barrel aging before release and will improve over the next several years.

## **Chateau Trigant, 2005 Pessac-Leognan, Bordeaux \$26.**

As yet I have not been able to find out much about this wine, but I tried it and enjoy having a Bordeaux once again at a price that mortals can afford. The 2005 vintage in Bordeaux is one of the best in years. This is what Bordeaux wines should be like. A 50-50 blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, it is a wine for current drinking and should not be kept more than a few more years. It is nice to have such a rich wine that only has 13% alcohol!

## **Penner-Ash, 2007 Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley**

In anticipation of my Oregon trip a friend gave me this bottle of Pinot Noir. In my Tasting Notes from last month I described my visit to Penner-Ash and the wide variety of single vineyard wine they offered. This is a bold, rich Pinot with very deep flavors, I was almost tempted to decant it but used my glass to get as much air as possible. For all of its richness it is a very balanced wine.

## **Windmill Estates, 2006 Petite Sirah, Lodi \$15.**

Windmill is an old favorite from the Lodi region of California, which has perhaps the most old vines in the country. The origins of this grape variety date back to the 19th century and Dr. Durif, who cultivated the vines; therefore, it is sometimes called by his name. As I always say, there is nothing petit about Petite Sirah. This dark, bold wine can make a terrific wine

when coming from cooler climates. As an added bonus, the Windmill wines are always a good value.

**Montenovo, 2006 Godello, Valdorras, D.O. Spain**

It is so rewarding to get away from the narrow range of wines that is on most store shelves. Godello is a little known Spanish variety that has unique tastes. The wine comes from a region located in Galicia, just north of Portugal. The Albarino grape comes from this same area. The wine is soft, fruity and pleasant for sipping as a starter to any evening. Look for a very mild sweetness.

**Lawson's Dry Hill, 2006 Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, New Zealand \$17.**

**Weingut St. Urbans-Hof, 2008 Riesling Qualitatswein, Mosel \$16.**

**Paraiso, 2007 Pinot Noir, Santa Lucia \$26.**

**Four Vines, 2006 Old Vine Cuvee Zinfandel, California \$16.**

All of the above wines were tasted at the Lawson Family 1<sup>st</sup> Cousin's reunion in Charleston, S.C. The selection of the first wine was a natural since it has the same name as the family. This typical New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc showed the citrus flavors you should expect of wine from the area. The St. Urbans was a light sweet wine which we offered with slices of apple to show off the food-friendly flavors of this German wine. The Pinot Noir is my current favorite, with deep flavors from this light-flavored grape. This one was offered with several cheeses to its advantage. Our final wine is my old favorite, the Four Vines. This was offered with dark chocolate and the rich deep flavors of the Zin showed off the chocolate, but was also outstanding by itself.