

“Respect for the terroir means preserving old vines as long as possible, limiting yields and analyzing the soil of each parcel in respect of nature.” ~ Philippe Chartogne

Champagne is a battleground and we love it. Big Champagne houses with huge budgets and huge profit margins have seen the dramatic rise of the little guy in the last few years. The effect has been twofold. First, quality has improved across the board as competition increases. Second, and most importantly, Champagne’s wonderful diverse terroir can now be fully appreciated. While the big guys blend to make the same consistent product every year, the little guys (in many cases the growers that used to sell their grapes to the big houses) strive to express the unique characteristics of their particular terroirs. So this month, in celebration of the holidays, we salute the little guy who cares. Both our wines come from family run operations where quality of the product and sense of place are paramount.

Our first wine comes from the lesser known village of Merfy, an area that is often overlooked since many growers there still sell their fruit off to the big Champagne houses. Chartogne-Taillet is the exception. They are currently the only récoltant-manipulant ("grower Champagne") in the area, which makes them very special and unique! The Chartogne family has owned vines in this region since 1683. The young Alexandre Chartogne is now at the helm, maintaining older vines rather than planting new vines for higher yields, and often implementing organic and biodynamic practices in the vineyard. The soil here is clay, sand, and stone over chalk. According to Alexandre, the chalky layer allows the bold minerality of the wine to shine through while the sand and clay layers bring out the soft roundness of the fruit. Enjoy this champagne with something traditional, like oysters, or mix it up with some of our favorite pairings like a fresh batch of onion rings or this month’s recipe for Mac and cheese.

Our second wine comes from closer to home, the tiny Applegate Valley which is located within the larger Rogue Valley in Southern Oregon. This part of the state is much dryer and warmer than the larger Willamette Valley (where Pinot Noir is king), and is home to warm climate varietals such as Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Syrah and Zinfandel. The valley’s unique higher elevation combines warm days and cool nights with well drained granite soils that are the base needed for high quality wines. The region has roughly 25 small production, family owned and operated wineries. Slagle Creek has been growing grapes since the 80s, and making wine since 2001. With organic and biodynamic practices in the vineyard, this family run winery really shows the unique quality of this part of southern Oregon.

This month we have included a Woodblock Chocolate bar made here in Portland, Oregon as a way of saying thanks and also as an invitation to try something hand crafted, made with as much care as the wines themselves. We thank you for your patronage and loyalty and hope you have a Happy & Healthy Holiday season. Cheers!

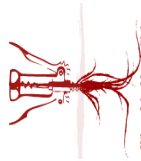
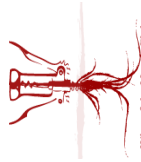
Questions, Concerns, Suggestions, Extend your Subscription?? Please, speak your mind!!

Purevinewines.com, (877) 404-1121

Until Next Month,
Joe, Tom, & Andria

(over for recipe of the month)

“fighting for the soul of wine..”



This Month's Biodynamic® / Organic Selections

Chartogne-Taillet Sainte Anne Brut

50% Pinot Noir, 50%
Chardonnay

Region: Merfy, Champagne,
France

Degorgement Date: 2012

This grower Champagne from the village of Merfy has a lovely lightly aromatic nose of green apple and pear. There are hints of yeast that round out the fruit, leaning toward apple pie mid palate, with a clean and crisp finish. Notes of minerality keep this sparkler fresh and flinty.

Slagle Creek Vineyards Claret

45% Merlot, 30% Cabernet
Sauvignon, 25% Cabernet
Franc

Region: Applegate Valley, OR.

Vintage: 2007

This smooth Bordeaux style blend has a nose of muted dried cherry, with additional cocoa/coffee aromatics. Elements of saddle leather permeate and sweet licorice spice lingers. Structured and ready to drink with a bit of decanting or a swirl or two in the glass. It will pair well with that Holiday standing rib roast. Only 450 cases produced.

Hey, why did my wine come in a used box?

In conjunction with Portland Wine Storage and our commitment to the environment we re-use wine shippers as many times as possible making them 100% recycled on our end.