



February 5, 2014

Dear Members,

The number of registrations for our events in Sydney indicate that we will probably sell out of all of them before we reach the convention so, if you would like to attend one or more of these, please do so quickly.

### **RI Convention in Sydney, Australia**

We are once again planning some special events at the International Convention and we hope you are planning on attending. Chris Joscelyne is coordinating all our events and we now have the sign-up information. Click on the links below each event to reserve and pay for your seats. **Note that the prices are quoted in Australian Dollars.**

#### **Saturday, 31 May at 10:00 AM**. **SOLD OUT**

There will be a cooking school where Australian food will be prepared to pair with some good Aussie wines. Participants will learn, eat the finest seafood, and enjoy some delightful Australian wines. It will be a fantastic, once in a lifetime experience.

We have secured the services of Travis Harvey, one of the world's finest seafood chefs, for our Seafood Master Class. This is a best of the best+seafood experience for participants who will learn the cooking methods for chilli mud crab, crispy skinned barramundi, seared scallops, and wait until you see what they will learn about shrimp cooking!

This was a small class for only 12 participants and since it filled quickly we added a second class of 12, scheduled at 3:00pm, same day. **ONE TICKET LEFT**

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/rotary-seafood-masterclass-tickets-10213885005>

#### **Sunday, 1 June at 7:30pm**

Rotarian James Gamvros will be our host at his Aesop's Restaurant in Macquarie Street Sydney for an authentic Greek banquet accompanied by Australian wines. This will be a fun fellowship night that will be a wonderful way to start our Sydney convention experience. 160 guests. Cost: A\$74.00 per person including the banquet and the wines.

<http://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/rotarians-wine-appreciation-fellowship-at-aesops-tickets-10181439961>

#### **Tuesday, 3 June at 7:30pm**

The venue is the Australian Ballroom at The Menzies Hotel where our Wine Lovers Banquet will feature delicious Australian food produce and superb Australian wines. This night will feature some wonderful wines and a keynote speaker from the Australian wine industry. 190 guests. Cost: A\$115.00 per person including dinner and the premium Australian wines.

<http://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/rotarians-wine-appreciation-fellowship-at-the-menzies-hotel-tickets-10181652597>

### **Wednesday, 4 June at 7:30pm**

We will take the free train from the city across the Sydney Harbour Bridge to the Kirribilli Club at Lavender Bay, overlooking Sydney Harbour. We will enjoy a first class buffet and Australian wines as we look out on the harbour lights of Sydney. 120 guests. Cost A\$88.00 per person including the buffet, Australian wines and Australian beers.

<http://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/rotarians-wine-appreciation-fellowship-at-kirribilli-club-tickets-10181744873>

### **Thursday/Friday, 5-7 JUNE - NEW**

Our plans to travel to the Hunter Valley have apparently fallen through so we have switched to a wonderful 3-day tour to the Orange wine region. The tour is limited to 40 members so please sign up soon:

#### Itinerary for Rotarians Wine Appreciation Fellowship Tour to Orange Wine Region

Our Rotarians Wine Appreciation Fellowship Tour to Orange Wine Region departs Sydney on Thursday 5 June at 9.30 am, returning to Sydney on Saturday 7 June by 4.30 pm.

Orange is a principal wine growing area in Central Western New South Wales located 270 km (170 miles) directly west of Sydney, over the Blue Mountains.

Orange city is at 900 metres altitude above sea level and premium quality wines are grown in local areas over 1000 metres above sea level. This produces a wide variety of high quality cool climate wines. Principal varieties include sauvignon blanc, chardonnay, pinot noir and shiraz.

The area has over 50 wineries varying from large international commercial operations to boutique wineries. A principal attraction of this Rotary tour is the opportunity, in small groups, to discuss varieties and wines with the winemakers.

This Wine Appreciation Tour features home hosting with Rotary families, a wonderful opportunity to get to know this wine region and its people.

Thursday 5 June

9.30 am Depart from the Menzies Hotel Carrington Street Sydney

11.15 am Visit to the Three Sisters in the iconic Blue Mountains at Katoomba (one of Australia's most photographed locations).

12 noon Brunch at the historic Carrington Hotel, Katoomba

2.30 pm Visit Bathurst's Mount Panorama Race Track, home to Australia's premier production car classic. Drive around the race track in our bus at a gentle pace.

4.00 pm Arrive at Orange Visitors Centre after short tour of Orange. Meet with Orange Daybreak Rotarians for home hosting.

6.00 pm Dinner with host family, and overnight home stay.

#### **Friday 6 June**

9.30 am Visit to De Salis Wines at 1050 metres. Pinot Noir and Wild Chardonnay. Tastings from the barrel followed by Morning tea.

11.30 am Visit to Ross Hill Wines, Wallace Road Winery (rated 5 star winery) for tasting of their much awarded Pinnacle Series Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon wines

1.00 pm Aussie BBQ Lunch at Montoro. Presentation by Cargo Road Winery of their award winning Zinfandel and International Gold Award Riesling

3.00 pm Visit to Phillip Shaw Winery, Koomooloo for tasting of No 5 Cabernet Sauvignon 2010 and No 89 Shiraz 2011

7.00 pm Dinner at Highland Heritage Estate

Overnight home stay with host family.

## **Saturday 7 June**

9.30 am Tour of Anson Street Special Needs School (sampling their Tempranillo) followed by morning tea,

11.00 am Travel to the Charles Sturt University Winery for final tastings, a light lunch and final farewells

12.30 am Depart Orange

4.30 pm Return to Menzies Hotel Carrington Street Sydney

Cost: A\$360.00 plus Eventbrite booking fee.

Cost includes home hosting with members of the Orange Daybreak Rotary Club, breakfasts, lunches on days 2 and 3, dinner both nights, coach transport Sydney to Orange and return, and all wine tastings.

Here is the link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/rotary-wine-appreciation-tour-orange-region-tickets-10385496299>

For further information please contact Murray Paterson at [murray.paterson@keystosuccess.com.au](mailto:murray.paterson@keystosuccess.com.au) or +61 418 206 485

**Please ensure you are registered to attend the RI Convention prior to booking our events, as there can be no refunds once you book online. All bookings will be managed by Eventbrite and we will accept MasterCard, Visa or PayPal.**

**Note: Sydney is an expensive city, similar to New York, London and Tokyo, so the prices that Chris has negotiated are good deals. Note also that the above prices are in Australian Dollars and the current exchange rate is about: A\$1.00 = US\$0.91**

**Chris Joscelyne, RWA Events Coordinator – Australia [chris@apro.com.au](mailto:chris@apro.com.au)**

## **Primitivo vs. Zinfandel**

By Sunny Brown

One is from Italy. The other is distinctly Californian. One has a history that can be traced back thousands of years, the other less than 200. One DNA test says that they are one in the same. Another does not. Which is it? The answer varies as much as the wines themselves. But one thing is for certain, Primitivo and Zinfandel can both produce a wide array of wines and some can be quite wonderful. It can be difficult to separate the fact from the fiction with these distinct yet similar varieties, but there are a few things to know about each.

First things first. Are they the same grape? It depends upon whom you ask. This much is clear. Both grapes descend from the rare Croatian varietal Crljenak. The Zinfandel is thought to be an exact replica of this grape, the Primitivo more of a clone but a very close copy. But are they the same? When planted side by side they produce grapes of differing sizes, color and bunch density. But the wines that they produce are similar enough that the U.S. ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms) is considering a proposal to allow Italian Primitivo to be labeled as Zinfandel. This is causing quite a stir in California as Primitivos tend to fall in the value range of \$10-15. Fine examples of both varieties are dense, very ripe and high in alcohol. To know the difference we must first know the grape.

## **Primitivo**

We start with the Primitivo because it has the history and the mystique. Not as well-known as the Zinfandel, Primitivo can trace its lineage from the ancient Phoenicians who settled in the province of Apulia (Puglia), the heel of Italy's boot. Many legends surround this grape. They range from the hard to prove (the wine served at the Last Supper is said to be Primitivo) to the hard to believe (it is called Primitivo because it is thought to be the first, or Primi, grape). The truth may lie somewhere in between, but we do know that it is called Primitivo for its propensity to ripen before all other varieties.

Primitivo thrives today in its original home of Apulia. This tiny region is renowned for massive production of ordinary wines. In fact the heel of Italy's boot produces more wine than the entire continent of Australia. Vines are coaxed to their highest yields, most of which end up being either shipped north for blending with other wines or re-fermented for industrial alcohol. But change is afoot for this tiny region.

New world techniques, low yields and careful winery management have brought new examples of Apulian wines to the forefront of southern Italy. Instead of flabby and thin wines we have rich, concentrated and hearty versions that develop well under the hot Italian sun. Primitivos tend to be juicy, well structured, and heavy with pigment and concentration, and high in alcohol. Lighter versions can be floral and fruity, but these are becoming increasingly rare. Aromas and flavors of ripe blackberries, violets and pepper are common. Primitivos can be wonderful value wines, and even reserve bottles are rarely more than \$20. The best examples come from the coastal region of Manduria, though many forward-thinking producers are trying the outlying regions as well. Some of the most famous wine-making names of Italy are trying to capitalize on Primitivo's long overdue success. In the future look for wines from Antinori, Zonin and Pasqua along with established producers of Primitivo such as Rubino, Tormaresca and Masseria Pepe.

## **Zinfandel**

Even the most novice of wine enthusiasts has probably heard the name Zinfandel, be it the hearty red version or the ubiquitous sweet pink garbage that changed the American wine scene in the 1980s. So famous was this plonk in fact that the red version was almost lost to antiquity. But Zinfandel has quite the storied past in America, even if it is packed into a couple of hundred years.

First brought to the U.S. in 1820 as a clipping from the Imperial Austrian Plant Species Collection, Zinfandel quickly made its way across the country gaining notoriety for its vigor and high yield. During the gold rush of the late 19th century Zinfandel was a favorite among miners and immigrants longing for wine similar to that of their homeland. Prohibition did nothing to slow its growth, and by the 1950s it occupied some of the most famous areas of northern California. As other varieties grew in popularity, Zinfandel was relegated to producing mainly jug wine in the hot central regions of California. A large surplus in the 1980s led to the production of White Zinfandel, made by either shortening the contact of the wine with the skins during fermentation, or by blending it with light, fruity varieties such as Riesling. This was a rousing success, and the true version of Zinfandel was pushed to the brink of obscurity.

But during the 1990s a few wineries in California began to make wonderful reds from the Zinfandel grape. Wineries such as Ridge, Turley and Ravenswood proved that Zinfandel could be a heavy, hearty and world-class red wine. The wines they created were rich, heavy with black fruits and almost sweet from the high sugar content in the very ripe grapes. An explosion in popularity occurred and today there are hundreds of great Zinfandels coming from all of the major wine growing areas of California. Particularly good are versions that boast an old vines designation on the label. The old in this case often is 40+ years but can be as high as 100 years.

But Zinfandel is not without its faults. The high sugar content can lead to very high alcohol content, with levels of 15% abv. and higher quite common. If left unchecked these wines can taste hot or have

volatile acidity which makes the wine unstable and prone to a short life span. Despite its resistance to rot and disease Zinfandel can be hard to grow. Grapes on a single cluster can range from green and hard to raisiny and overripe, thus requiring more than one pass through the vineyard during harvest time. Like many wines it is often the winery or the producer that matters as much as the vintage or location. Look for fine examples of Zinfandel from Robert Biale and Seghesio or head for the better regions of Dry Creek Valley and Lodi.

There are many similarities in both style and flavor between Zinfandel and Primitivo, but the differences remain. Grape growers in both Italy and California will fiercely defend their version as the best, but what will happen if both can be labeled as Zinfandel? Or better yet, when both are grown next to each other in the vineyard. Will these two kissing cousins ever become one varietal? Probably not, but as the lines between the Primitivo and the Zinfandel grow closer together, one thing is for certain: We will have lots of great wine to try in order to be able to tell the difference.

## **CORAVIN**

### **Changing how we enjoy wine or just another fancy toy?      By Eric Guido**

Can you imagine being able to enjoy a glass of wine from any bottle in your cellar, without pulling the cork, or starting that bottle on a path to oxidation and deterioration?

Over the years, we wine lovers have all been inundated with pitch after pitch from companies trying to sell us wine preservation systems. Some use pumps, some use gas and one even encases your entire bottle in a wine coffin, along with tubes reaching into your bottle like something out of Frankenstein's lab. In the end, no one seems to have been able to pull it off without a hitch. Suction doesn't last, inert gas isn't perfect in an open bottle and not everyone can afford an Enomatic tasting machine. After all the hype and sales pitches, I've resorted to decanting into a half bottle, corking it and keeping that half bottle in the fridge; but still, half the wines don't last past 24 hours without degradation until now, because we now have Coravin.

Coravin is a remarkable new technology that seems so simple, yet was only thought of in the last 14 years by a medical technology researcher. The process is easy, and the results are astounding. A small needle is inserted into the cork of any bottle; the bottle is then pressurized with inert gas, allowing the wine to pour freely, and as the needle is removed, the cork reseals itself with the argon gas left in place of any added oxygen—simple, right? Honestly, it is, and to watch the process and enjoy a wine that was first tasted two or more weeks beforehand truly seals the deal.

My quality test was at the Coravin launch party, where I had the opportunity to taste three bottles of the same wine (a bottle I've tasted before at trade tastings, 2008 Produttori del Barbaresco Riserva Montestefano), but these three bottles all came from different tables at the event, and each had been tapped by the Coravin and tasted within a two week period. Each had different amounts of wine left in the bottle, and each tasted nearly identical. What's more, I'd be hard pressed to say that they tasted any different than the pop-n-poured bottle I had at a trade tasting earlier in the year.

The possibilities are endless. Imagine not having to open a young bottle of wine to test for maturity; instead you can simply try one glass (Coravin's creator attested to tasting the same wine over ten years). Imagine having a tasting at your home and the leftover wine being completely safe and able to be stored away until you feel like enjoying it again. Or imagine being able to have ten wines up and ready to taste at any time in your kitchen— you choose what the lineup will be each night.

I will say that I was skeptical until I saw it in action. To hold this item in my hand and pour a glass and to taste all of these bottles that have been tapped over the course of weeks, and have them taste so fresh, is amazing. I left this tasting with one thought in mind— I must buy one.

However, grounded in reality, I would be remiss if I didn't mention a few things. For one thing, each argon gas capsule (Coravin proprietary product) is capable of twelve to fourteen servings. The unit (\$299 from Coravin direct) comes with three capsules, and replacements are around \$10 each. Second, although Coravin stands strongly behind their product and states that mature corks are completely safe with Coravin— I can't help but think of some of the difficult corks I've pulled out of 30+ year old bottles (in the end, I will be buying a unit and will end up testing this out myself). Lastly,

although not a single bottle at this tasting showed signs of seepage, an imperfect cork will seep. Coravin works under the principle that a wine's cork has created a good seal. you can't hold them accountable for an inferior cork.

That said, I do intend to buy this product. I left the tasting giddy. I must admit that Coravin is the next evolution in wine preservation; it's not just hype. Get ready for a paradigm shift



**Editor's Note:**



Leftover wine???????HELLO!!!!!!

**Wine Quote of the Month:**

"Burgundy makes you think of silly things, Bordeaux makes you talk of them and Champagne makes you do them." - Jean-Anthelme Brillant-Savarin

### **Calendar of Events:**

In this section we want to publicize any upcoming events that either the RWAFF or local chapters are planning. An annual calendar will be maintained on the new website.

June 1-4, 2014: Rotary International Convention in Sydney, Australia. Register early! Early registration ends on 15 January 2014. Go to the RI website or directly to: [impromo@rotary.org](mailto:impromo@rotary.org).

June 6-7, 2014 Le Tour de Vin in Norman, Oklahoma

WHAT - The 12th Annual Le Tour de Vin is a joint effort of the Cross Timbers, Norman, and Sooner Rotary Clubs. It is a weekend festival of fine wine tasting, food sampling, and silent and live auctions to benefit the Center for Children and Families and other Rotary projects.

WHEN - Friday, June 6, 2014. The Friday night party features fine wines paired with food catered by Benvenuti's Ristorante. Limited reservations are \$150 per person.  
Saturday, June 7, 2014. Saturday evening is a "grand tasting" of over 200 wines, gourmet food, and silent and live auctions. Reservations are \$100 per person.

WHERE - The Friday event is at a private residence in Norman. The Saturday event is held at Riverwind Casino (a very large casino on I-35 one mile south of Norman). Lodging is available at two hotels on the casino property.

**NOTICE - Advance reservations are required to comply with state law.**

Thank you for helping get the word out. We have a successful event every year but would like to make sure that wine loving Rotarians in the region have enough notice to make plans to attend.

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August 10, 2014 Paso Robles Rotary WinemakersqCook-Off

Contact Linda Midkiff for information [lmidkiff105@gmail.com](mailto:lmidkiff105@gmail.com)

### **Recommended Value Wines:**

As we continue to do, we will list about ten value wines with each newsletter. These are wines from around the world that are readily available in many markets, are rated by some expert+as being at least 88 points (out of 100) and which cost \$20 USD or less. We would appreciate any additions suggested by any member. We feel that no matter what type of wine you enjoy, you ought to be able to find a good one at a reasonable price.

Year	Name of Wine	Specific Designation	Type	Cost	Rating	Rater
2009	Orma	Bolgheri Rosso	Tuscany	\$20	93	WE
2009	Decero	Mendoza, Argentina	Red Blend	\$18	94	WA
2010	Montes	Alpha, Colchaqua Valley, Chile	Cabernet Sauvignon	\$16	91	WA
2011	Seghesio	Sonoma County, California	Zinfandel	\$20	92	WS
2011	Dashe	Dry Creek, California	Zinfandel	\$19	89	WS
2009	Vidal-Fleury	Crozes-Hermitage	Northern Rhone	\$18	88/91	WA
2011	Chalone	Monterey, California	Pinot Noir	\$11	90	WE
2009	Baileyana	Firepeak, Edna Valley	Pinot Noir	\$17	90	WA
2009	Husch	Anderson Valley, California	Pinot Noir	\$18	92	WE
2011	Catena	Mendoza, Argentina	Malbec	\$17	91	WS

### **A Few Special Wines:**

Year	Name of Wine	Specific Designation	Type	Cost	Rating	Rater
2010	Joseph Drouhin	Clos des Mouches	Burgundy	\$69	93	WA
2010	Ch. Lillian Ladouys	Saint-Estephe	Bordeaux	\$30	94	WE

WS = %Wine Spectator+

WA = %Wine Advocate+ (Robert Parker)

WE = %Wine Enthusiast+

CCH = Not yet rated, my score

We will always appreciate your comments and suggestions. You are receiving these newsletters because you are members of the RWAF and publishing a newsletter is one of the duties of a Rotary Fellowship. If you would like to discontinue receiving these newsletters, please so indicate by return email and you will be removed from our address list.

Thank you for the continued opportunity to serve.

Conrad C. Heede, PDG  
 President  
 RWAF