

# *Amherst Wines & Spirits*

**April 2012**

## **SPANISH WINE DINNER – LAST CALL**

We are pleased and excited to announce our first wine dinner of 2012 featuring the wonderful foods and wines of Spain. Gastronomically, Spain flew under the radar for a while, but no longer. Some of the world's most exciting cuisine originates from the Iberian peninsula and we will offer a menu faithful to the ingredients and preparations found in Spain. We will, of course, pair these with wines which illustrate the excitement and spirit of innovation running rampant in this historic wine region. Mauro Aniello, chef/owner of Bistro 63 at The Monkey Bar – his name sounds Italian but he is a student and fanatic of classic international cooking – is the chef de cuisine for the evening. Please attend if you can. This should be a beauty.

### **First Course**

*Gazpacho* – classic regional soup, includes tomato, Spanish onion, bell pepper, zucchini, Spanish olive oil. Served with an Albariño from the region of Galicia.

### **Second Course**

*Calamari a la Plancha* – delicately seared calamari with a garbanzo bean puree, roasted potato with chorizo, and pequillo pepper. A red from the Penedes region to accompany.

### **Third Course**

*Cochinillo Asade* – roast suckling pig robustly seasoned with sea salt, black peppercorn, rosemary & chives drizzled with romesco sauce (sweet roasted red pepper & tomato puree, garlic, olive oil, paprika) and served with bean sofrito (puree of Spanish beans sautéed in brown butter). Served with a robust red.

### **Dessert**

*Pasteles* – cold Catalan custard with crispy caramel coating.  
*Cream sherry* (an exceptional one) to accompany.

### THE DETAILS

- Date: April 11 (Wednesday)
- Place: Bistro 63 at The Monkey Bar, private room in rear (parking in town lot just behind)
- Time: 6:30
- Cost: \$80, includes tax & gratuities

### **THE FINE PRINT**

**\*\* Reservations a must.** Phone (549-0900) or email ([steve@amherstwines.com](mailto:steve@amherstwines.com))  
**\*\* Prepayment required.** Cancellations within 72 hours of the dinner will be honored with a 50% store credit if seats cannot be filled.  
**\*\* Seating by place card.** If you're coming with friends, let us know and we'll seat you together.

## **SATURDAY IN-STORE TASTINGS**

Each Saturday from 2:00 - 5:00 we break bread, pop corks, and learn about some piece of the endless world of wine. It's informal, fun, and compliments of the house. Stop by when you can. We'd love to see you.

### **April 7: The Reds of Sicily**

*The Sicilian wine scene has taken off, quality has soared, pricing is good. Come explore these charming reds and experience the native grapes which may be new to you.*

### **April 14: Pouilly-Fuissé and Its Neighbors**

*White Burgundy is a gift from the wine Gods. While much is pricey, good value can be found in the southern Burgundian area of Macon. We'll explore a bunch.*

### **April 21: Pinot Noir – California vs. Oregon**

*Pinot Noir is Oregon's red wine success story. The style, however, is quite different from California Pinots. We'll taste side by side, comparing similarities and differences.*

### **April 28: South America Pushes the Envelope**

*We all know Cabernets, Chardonnays, Malbecs etc. from Chile & Argentina. But have you tasted the beautiful white Torrontes? How about Carmenère or Tannat for reds? We're blown away by some of these. Check 'em out.*

## NEW DIRECTIONS FROM SOUTH AMERICA

It appears that Chile and Argentina are not content to have staked out claims for both value and quality. Now we're seeing wines, both varietals and blends, from grapes which are not part of the mainstream. If this were about being different for the sake of being different, we wouldn't bother you with it. But these wines are REALLY GOOD! Put on your adventurous face and try a few. It might open some new doors.

### **Torrantes, Rodolfo 2010 . . \$10.99**

*Really stunning white for the \$\$\$. Full-bodied from high altitude vineyards in the foothills of the Argentinian Andes. Flavors of mandarine & white peach underlined with a light mineral touch. Supple, dry, beautifully made. High value vibes.*

### **Tannat, Pueblo del Sol 2009 . . \$9.99**

*Our first wine from Uruguay! The flavors of red cherry and raspberry are full but not overdone. Round, soft texture. This wine has a brightness to it we love, especially for the \$\$.*

### **Tannat, Rodolfo 2010 . . \$10.99**

*Deeply colored, this charms right out of the glass with its pretty perfume of violets and eucalyptus. The fullness of the flavors of black plum with a hint of anise is tempered by natural acidity so the second glass tastes as good as the first.*

### **Carmenère, Terra Andina Reserva 2008 . . \$12.99**

*The Carmenère grape hails from Bordeaux, where it has practically disappeared. This shows a ripe red fruits style with fruitcake and touches of licorice. Good size to this one.*

### **Malbec/Tannat, Domingo Molina 2010 . . \$15.99**

*From vineyards at 6000+ feet of elevation in Argentina. These high altitude growing sites tend to get lots of sun which, combined with cooler temperatures, yield grapes with maximum flavor and balancing acidity. The full, soft, blackberry flavors of the Malbec grape are supported by the firm black fruits of the Cabernet. A touch of rusticity adds local color.*

### **Cabernet Franc, Desierto 2006 . . \$15.99**

*Outside of Bordeaux and the Loire Valley in France we don't see much Franc. Pity, because this one from Argentina really got our attention with its lush style and flavors of dark fruits and espresso. Big fruit tied together with ripe tannins.*

### **Syrah "El Oliver Alto Vyd", Viu Manent 2008 . . \$21.99**

*One of the outstanding expressions of the Syrah grape we've seen from Chile. Another high altitude growing site. The firm, discreet, dark fruits flavors reflect this. Elegant, mineral-tinged, layered and with impressive complexity.*

### **DiamAndes de Uco 2007 . . \$37.99**

*The owners of two great Bordeaux chateaux bought this 3300 ft. elevation vineyard site in 2005, a spectacular growing area. This is a world class red combining the saturation and ripeness of a sunny vineyard with typical French restraint. 70% Malbec and 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, hand harvested, spent 2 years in French oak prior to bottling. Saturated flavors of black fruits, layered, and with enough structure to ensure a long life. Fabulous wine.*

## PASSOVER

We're pleased to offer a selection of Passover wines which would be good wines even without the kosher part. Why should you have to suffer during the seder? Here is a group that will see you through the Haggadah and to the meal beyond. Good kosher wines are being made the world over. Check 'em out. And yes, we do have Manischewitz Concord (Steve's go-to seder wine).

### **RED**

**Malbec, Guillermo 2010 . . \$8.99**

**Cabernet Sauvignon, Alfasi 2009 . . \$8.99**

**Merlot, Alfasi 2010 . . \$8.99**

**Montepulciano d'Abruzzo, Gabriele . . \$12.99**

**Cabernet Sauvignon, Barkan 2010 . . \$12.99**

**Cabernet Sauvignon, Golan 2010 . . \$17.99**

### **WHITE**

**Chardonnay, Barkan 2011 . . \$12.99**

**Sauvignon Blanc, Baron Herzog 2008 . . \$12.99**

**Moscato, Gabriele 2010 . . \$12.99**

## WHISKEY OF NOTE

Since introducing our new section of rye whiskeys in November we've seen impressive interest in this old/new kind of American spirit. Our newest discovery is **Russell's Reserve** (\$35.99), a 6 year old rye from the family who started Wild Turkey Bourbon. The silky texture, a result of small oak cask aging, morphs into flavors of caramel, almonds and sweet fruit with an interesting touch of spice in the finish. Notes of bread and sweet fruit in the bouquet. This is a beautiful sipping rye and, we think, should offer great pleasure to the whiskey lover.

## EASTER

With everything from lamb to ham to salmon and points in between, how can we suggest wines to match? Here's our take on it – when presented with too much food at feast holidays, we enjoy wine with a fresh, clean style, nothing too heavy. This keeps the palate refreshed and seems to make food taste better. This is the unifying theme for these wines. Loads more. Stop by. We'll talk.

### WHITE

**Chardonnay, Fortant de France 2010 (FR) . . \$7.99**

*Crisp, fresh, unoaked, pure. Surprising quality at this price. Also a great pre-meal aperitif.*

**Sauvignon Blanc, Ranga Ranga 2010 (NZ) . . \$10.99**

*Hints of lemon zest, quite dry with a mineral slant. New Zealand's best white grape.*

**Lugana, Zenato 2010 (IT) . . \$14.99**

*From the shores of Lake Garda in northern Italy. Full, quite dry, crisp, with mineral, lemon zest, & almond.*

**Chardonnay, Balletto 2009/10 (CA) . . \$15.99**

*Unoaked Chard from the cool Russian River region in Sonoma. Green apple, light vanilla, medium-full. A beauty.*

**Wehlener Sonnenuhr Kabinett, Kerpen 2009 (GERM) . . \$17.99**

*From the steep slopes of the Mosel, the light sweetness is balanced by crisp acidity. Nothing better with ham.*

**Botani 2010 (SP) . . \$19.99**

*Floral & fruit blossoms in the bouquet and fresh, firm flavors. Good size. From southern Spain where Easter is BIG.*

### ROSE

**Torre dei Beati 2010 (IT) . . \$17.99**

*Gorgeous color to this rosé from central Italy. Medium-full, dry, flavors of cherry & wild raspberry. Perfect w/salmon.*

### RED

**Immortal Zin 2010 (CA) . . \$11.99**

*This Lodi Zin offers up all the ripe, spicy flavors Zin folks crave without being "heavy".*

**Valle Reale Montepulciano d'Abruzzo "Vigne Nuove" 2009 (IT) . . \$11.99**

*The red fruits flavors are ripe & plump and the acidity adds lift and a sense of freshness to the whole package.*

**Pinot Noir "Santé", Coppola 2010 (CA) . . \$11.99**

*Flavors of ripe raspberry with a hint of earth wrapped in a silky texture. Serious value in "everyday" Pinot Noir.*

**Château Bellevue Lugagnac 2009 (FR) . . \$12.99**

*Bordeaux & lamb, a perfect match in our book. The ripeness of the 2009 vintage on full display.*

**Cabernet Sauvignon, Millbrandt 2009 (WA) . . \$15.99**

*Cabs from Washington display a touch of acidity framing deeply flavored, black fruits flavors. Full yet fresh. A beauty.*

**Bourgogne Rouge, Domaine de la Monette 2009 (FR) . . \$23.99**

*This "starter" Burgundy displays all the charm of this great vintage. Never heavy. Something a bit special.*

## THE BARGAIN BIN

Referred to as the "bb" by our staff, it's where we put end of bin items – vintage change, scratched labels, etc. These are all first quality and we sell them at **-25%**. Some terrific finds here (if you spot them soon enough). As a regular feature in this newsletter we'll list some currently in the bin. If interested, immediately drop what you're doing and sprint for the store or phone/email and we'll set it aside for you. Please understand that these are always small quantities and the items listed may no longer be available. But they may be. It's worth a shot.

	<u>Regular price</u>	<u>"bb" price</u>
<b>Lagrein Rose, Lageder 2010 (IT)</b>	\$16.99	<b>\$12.74</b>
<b>Merlot, Kinneret 2007 (IS)</b>	\$16.99	<b>\$12.74</b>
<b>Chateau Lamothe 2003 (FR-Sauternes)</b>	\$38.99	<b>\$29.99</b>
<b>Barolo "Bricco Fiasco", Azelia 2004</b>	\$89.99	<b>\$67.49</b>

## CHARDONNAY – THE OAK QUESTION

The world's very best Chardonnays receive some time aging in oak barrel after fermentation. Proper use of oak adds complexity, texture, and complimentary flavors to the finished product. However, the overuse of oak, which buries the taste of the grape, was common in California and has created a cult of anti-oak wine drinkers. In response, many wineries now bottle Chards which never see the inside of a barrel. Our position is this – the judicious use of oak can improve a wine but it is not necessary to make a very good wine. California has cleaned up its act and we are proud to offer a selection of excellent unoaked Chards from California and beyond. Here's a sampling.

**Snoqualmie "Naked" 2009 (WA) . . \$11.99**

**Milou 2010 (FR) . . \$12.99**

**Colterenzio 2010 (IT) . . \$12.99**

**Balletto 2009 (CA) . . \$15.99**

**Trevor Jones 2008 (AUS) . . \$18.99**

## NEW ARRIVALS

### WHITE

**Sables Fauve, Labelle 2010 (FR) . . \$8.99**

*One of the most exciting of the group, especially in the value department, is this blend of Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Colombard, Ugni Blanc, and Gros Manseng from the southwest. You'll forget that some of these sound like characters from Star Wars when you experience the explosive bouquet of pine, mint, & forest floor. The flavors are fresh, clean, and show a citrus/herbal slant with a crisp finish. Delicate and with loads of personality. Great aperitif white.*

**Mas Carlot 2009 (FR) . . \$11.99**

*Here's a 50/50 blend of Marsanne & Roussane grapes showing impressive concentration for its price. The flavors of green plum and anise are pure and vivid with good weight and a round, silky finish. Really lovely.*

**Vouvray, Picard 2010 (FR) . . \$13.99**

*Our favorite warm weather white – Vouvray from France's Loire Valley. Just a hint of sweetness, finishes dry. Creamy texture, flavors of bosc pear. Perfect with chicken, salads, seafood, or just hangin' out. Super delicious.*

**St. Bris, Domaine Azo 2010 (FR) . . \$15.99**

*St. Bris is an official appellation tucked into the side of Chablis. Unlike Chablis and other white Burgundies, Sauvignon Blanc is the grape in this tiny region. Ultra dry, crisp, minerally, with a laser beam of acidity.*

**Meursault "En La Barré", Jobard 2009 (FR) . . \$66.99**

*Big league white Burgundy shows its class upfront with a cascade of fruit in the aromas. Dry and elegant style, merging notes of sweet butter, mineral, and apple with plenty of depth and purity. Crisp finish. A thoroughbred.*

### RED

**Sao Cristovao 2008 (P'TGL) . . \$10.99**

*Portugal continues to amaze. Here's a blend of 95% Aragones, a local clone of Tempranillo, and 5% Merlot. The concentration and depth of flavor are amazing for a wine at this price. The fruit is perfectly balanced by natural acidity, so the style is full but never heavy. Marries so well with food. High value vibes.*

**Inkberry Shiraz-Cabernet 2010 (AUS) . . \$13.99**

*A terrific blend of 60% Shiraz and 40% Cabernet Sauvignon. The firm style opens up after a few minutes in the glass to reveal deep flavors of blueberry, blackberry, & licorice supported by ripe, dusty tannins. You get the weight you expect from an Aussie red but it's never over-the-top while showing complexity and balance. Well done.*

**Aglianico, Cantina del Taburno 2008 (IT) . . \$15.99**

*Aglianico, an ancient grape found in southern Italy, is one of our absolute faves. It displays the purity and elegance we look for in better wines. The aromatics are really lovely – spring flowers, coffee, roasted nuts – and the flavors have a roundness and balance. There's a sort of harmony here, all parts pulling together.*

**Rosso Piceno, Boccadigabbia 2008 (IT) . . \$17.99**

*RP is a small wine growing region on central Italy's Adriatic coast. The grape blend here is 50/50 Montepulciano & Sangiovese. The Montepulciano is wonderfully ripe and provides pretty fruit flavors while the Sangiovese kicks in the acidity which brightens the flavors, and a bit of that good Italian earth. This will handle a full flavored dish beautifully.*

**Cain Cuvee (CA) . . \$29.99**

*Cain Cellars has, perhaps, the most spectacular vineyards this writer has seen in CA. Carved into a bowl on the top of Napa's Spring Mountain and planted to all 5 Bordeaux varietals. Their top wine, Cain 5, sells for very big bucks and this is their "modestly" priced wine, a blend of 48% Merlot, 32% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Cabernet Franc and 6% Petit Verdot. A stunning red, this delivers a mouthful of black fruits, silky texture, minty bouquet. Impressive concentration, drinking well now. A special wine.*

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