

# SML-Uncorked

The Wine Newsletter of Supermarket Liquors  
Fort Collins, Colorado

Issue 3, Thanksgiving 2005

Thanksgiving embodies the best of what we love about the holiday season: entertaining and being entertained, the company of friends and family, a long weekend, special dishes, and the opportunity to linger over those specialties with a relaxing glass of wine.

Unlike the holidays to follow, where the focus includes gift giving, the wines I've selected for this newsletter were chosen with an eye to value and their ability to satisfy a broad range of palates at the Thanksgiving table, which is usually surrounded by guests of widely differing tastes and wine experience. Unless your guests enjoy the adventure and interplay of wine and food my advice is to serve wines with a wide appeal. Your imperative as host is the pleasure of your guests, and the huge range of flavors gracing a traditional Thanksgiving menu make the meal very accepting – and forgiving – of just about any wine you might care to pour to achieve that goal.

In the following article, Steve Kershner takes a different approach, analyzing the compatibility of various wine and food matches, and offers some sage and reasoned advice for matching wines with the flavors of the Turkey Day table. Happy holidays.

Regards,

Tom DeLia  
Wine Manager

\* newsletter prices on all wines are in effect through December 10 and limited to stock on hand



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### Beaujolais Nouveau Day Thursday, November 17

The third Thursday of November marks the arrival of Beaujolais Nouveau, the first wine of the new vintage to come to market. Nouveau Day celebrates the recent harvest and is the harbinger of the winter holiday season. Beaujolais, nouveau or no, is always a welcome addition to the Thanksgiving table, too.

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## Thanksgiving Thoughts by Steve Kershner

Ahh, Thanksgiving, that wonder of the American holidays! I was once trying to explain this uniquely American celebration to a European friend. His idea of an extravagant meal was three or four hours of many smaller courses of food, an array of complementary wines chosen for each course, lengthy conversation, and many compliments to the host. By way of contrast, our Thanksgiving tables, much like the nation itself, usually have very diverse and complex flavors all together on one plate, as one course, and it requires some diligence and thought to match the wine and foods in a complementary fashion. Most importantly, and this is true of any holiday meal the world over, it's a great chance to catch up with friends and family.

This is one of my favorite holidays and on this occasion I want to show my hospitality at its best. Sometimes this means pulling out the rare and aged wine from the cellar, the ones I've been saving for the right moment, but at all times it means being very selective about how I pair the flavors, textures, and styles of the wines and food I serve. Bottom line, I am attempting to honor the guests with wines that **COMPLIMENT** the food and the celebration. The hosts have worked hard in the kitchen, and we don't gather as much as we would like, so give them something good to drink, and pay attention to the selection and the service.

In my more than thirty years in the wine business I can't tell you how many times I have heard people ask, "What wine goes with turkey?" The answer is to consider the entire Thanksgiving meal, not just the bird (or ham as the case may be), and choose from the following list. I have also often heard people exclaim, "I don't like wine." I believe this most likely reflects experiences where the wrong wine was selected as a companion for the meal or situation. As incredibly diverse and varied as the world of wine is, there has to be something out there that any person can consider delicious, interesting, and complementary. It is our continuing quest to match up you, your foods, and the wine. Putting the variables together is our duty and mission. Yours is simply to ask us the right questions and to provide us with the information needed to find your wine. And you may want to pick up a copy of our food and wine pairing **Quick Tips** sheet or our **Food and Wine Complements Chart** when you are in the store. They don't cost a thing.

Best wishes for a joyous Thanksgiving,

Steve Kershner

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# Thanksgiving Food & Wine Pairings by Steve Kershner

Let's examine the meal and break down a few of its many common components:

**Turkey-** a match for many types and styles of wine from dry to sweet, red, white, rose, and a meat that has different textures and flavors depending upon which part of the bird you are eating. However, the bird requires low tannin and lower alcohol wine components so big, gutsy, rippin' reds are usually not on my want list. Complements are fruity rose, either dry or slightly sweet; semi-dry whites; dry whites, but of a more delicate style and soft fruitful reds that are low in astringency.

**Stuffing-** this is wide ranging and diverse in flavor depending on the family traditions: oyster or mushroom, plum or apricot, Madeira and shallot, onion and celery. A wide range of wines might work, but the wrong choice could be nightmarish.

**Sweet potatoes, mashed potatoes, yams, squashes, and root vegetables-** a difficult wine match, with generally sweet flavors, sometimes earthy components and very starchy characteristics. Most big red wines become disjointed and bitter with these foods, showing their astringency and alcohol components.



**Green bean, peas, garden greens-** difficult wine pairing except with wines high in acid, and this style of wines will generally not go well with the other parts of the meal.

**Cole slaw-** another sweet food, which begs for the wine to be sweeter than the food, or of a very soft, fruit-forward style. Also, with a touch of vinegar this is a wine danger zone!

**Cranberry sauce-** sweet, see above.

Taken together and served on one plate these dishes require that the complementing wines have the following components: low astringency, low tannin, moderate alcohol level certainly below 14%, high fruit levels, and balanced acidity. This array of foods has the capacity to accentuate wine selection missteps. So we have to narrow our selection to wines of this general style; fruit forward; soft textured (either well-aged or low astringency); generally low or without wood tone; fresh, but not hard acidity; off-dry or slightly sweet wines, or dry wines that accentuate the fruit of the grape. And this category, with careful selection, includes these:

Riesling, Gewurztraminer, Chenin Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc, Moscato, Champagne, Rose and the array of pink wines. For red choose Gamay (Beaujolais), Syrah/Shiraz, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel, Dolcetto, so long as stylistically they are less astringent, fruitier and fresher/lighter styled, and most importantly, **SERVE THEM COOL OR SLIGHTLY CHILLED**. Room temperature is too hot! Reds should be served at temperatures in the high 50s to lower 60s for most. Bringing down the temperature of red wine brings out more fruit character, has a taming effect on the alcohol, and tends to lessen astringent qualities, especially important with the Thanksgiving foods.

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## November Wine-of-the-Month

### **Pietraluna Negroamaro del Salento 2003**

**Reg. price: \$9.79**

**Sale: \$8.49**

Some grapes are monarchs of an entire country, the immediately recognizable face that connects wine buyers the world over with a particular nation. Consider Riesling and Germany, Shiraz and Australia, Malbec and Argentina. Others, like Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Sangiovese, dominate production in states or regions, the former two Burgundy, the latter Tuscany. Still others, the minor royalty of the wine kingdom, rule supreme in growing zones no larger than townships or counties. Think of Chenin Blanc in Savennieres or Sagrantino in Montefalco. Negroamaro, a black grape grown in the torrid Salento peninsula at the bottom of Italy's heel – and little known outside there – is one of these. It produces wines with a sturdy structure, loads of rich dark fruit flavors, and the capacity to age with an unexpected grace given its modest heritage. Until recently, most of the ones on the market showed a marked leathery, earthy, prune character, the signature of traditionally-styled Mediterranean wines. The Pietraluna shows the influence of clean, modern winemaking practices in both its pure fruit flavors and sweet aromas that will remind you unmistakably of ripe freshly crushed blackberries. Hints of blueberry add complexity, and soft tannins provide balance to the almost-sweet character of this inky, delicious, deeply satisfying red. This is a not-to-miss value! (TD)



## Previous Wines-of-the-Month

### **September 2005:**

#### **L de Lyeth Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon 2002**

**Reg. price: \$9.99**

**Sale: \$7.99 (in stock)**

At \$7.99, it is a dandy medium-bodied wine showing a nice sense of complexity, depth, and a frame of moderate tannins, which carry and balance the fairly rich fruit. Unmistakably Cabernet Sauvignon, its layered flavors reveal blackcurrant, plum, blueberry, a touch of herbiness, and distinct notes of mocha, toasted oak, and cedar. I am pressed to think of a California Cabernet that offers more for less. (TD)

### **October 2005:**

#### **Bodegas Castano Yecla Monastrell 2004**

**Reg. price: \$7.99**

**Sale: \$4.99 (in stock)**

Is there another red wine selling for less than \$5 that rivals the quality of this little beauty grown in the region known as Yecla, in the southeast corner of Spain? Their 2004 is medium-bodied, juicy and jammy, overflowing with a blackberry, pomegranate, and raspberry personality, all this framed with soft sweet tannins that balance the luscious fruit and give the wine a clear sense of definition. (TD)

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## Steve's Sparkling Wines for Thanksgiving

My wife and I usually start the day in the kitchen with a bottle of bubbly, nursing it while chopping and prepping, swaying and dancing around to Charlie Parker, Henry Gray or Diana Krall. Choose your own music, but don't neglect the bubbly.

### **Coffele Brut Soave Spumante (Italy)**

**Reg. price: \$15.99**

**Sale: \$13.99**

Like any Soave, this is made from Garganega, but in a sparkling version, from another highly respected quality producer of both still and bubbly wines. It's ultra-clean, bright and energetic, with Soave's smoothness and drink-ability, though frisky, and bubbly. Good bead, nice balance and subtle flavors, easy to like lighter style; makes good mimosas, too.

### **Cantina Breganze Extra Dry Prosecco (Italy)**

**Reg. price: \$11.49**

**Sale: \$9.99**

Prosecco is the grape and also the wine, hailing from northeastern Italy. Lightly bubbly and soft, this Prosecco is widely complementary to food, is refreshing, light, easy drinking, with just a hint of sweetness, as are most Proseccos generally, balancing the natural slight bitterness in the finish, typical of the Prosecco grape variety. This is a good, clean, balanced bubbly for a nominal price.

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### **J. Laurens Blanc de Blancs Brut Cremant de Limoux (France)**

**Reg. price: \$15.99**

**Sale: \$13.99**

Limoux is a small town in the Languedoc in southwest France, at relatively high altitude in the Pyrenees foothills. Here the vines are influenced more by the cooler Atlantic weather than that of the Mediterranean, as is generally the case in the Languedoc. The sparkling wines of Limoux were once as highly prized as those of Champagne. The predominant grape is Mauzac, often with additions of Chardonnay and Chenin Blanc. This is very crispy bubbly, dry, with slight earth and mineral hints, though beautifully balanced with fruit flavors, and possessing a remarkably fine bead and aristocratic character for such a reasonably price sparkler. This is terrific on its own but is also a great foundation for mimosa or kir royal, or any fruit infused bubbly drink.



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## White Wine Selections

### **Plum Creek Cellars Colorado Riesling 2004**

**Reg. price: \$10.99**

**Sale: \$9.49**

How about serving some home grown Colorado wine for Thanksgiving? This is one of the vanguard Rieslings being produced in Colorado, with a long production history and consistently high quality level. Fresh, crisp and bright Riesling, with a touch of mineral hints and a soft finish. (SK)

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### **Columbia Winery Cellarmaster's Riesling 2004 (Washington)**

**Reg. price: \$6.99**

**Sale: \$5.99**

This is a great buy in Riesling from the northwest U.S. It is bold and ripe, bursting with apricot and peach character, with hints of vanilla and light spice. It's a little rustic and unfocused, but ever-the-more likeable for its forward, soft nature and rich flavors, and especially because it is really inexpensive for the quality. (SK)

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### **Monchhof Estate Riesling 2003 (Germany)**

**Reg. price: \$12.79**

**Sale: \$10.99**

Here is a more classic and tightly wound style of Riesling. Electric acidity balanced by ripe pear and golden apple flavors, with delicate sweetness and slate/mineral hints. This is just superb wine, benchmark Mosel Riesling at a beginner price, and a very fine, wide-ranging food companion. (SK)

### **Carlson Vineyards Colorado Riesling 2004**

**Reg. price \$11.49**

**Sale: \$9.99**

We are trying to get Parker Carlson a new pair of overalls, so buy his wine. He is the very picture of down home, and, like Parker himself, his wines are all easy to like. They show tenderness and balance and an easy nature. Just drink 'em. This is fruity, flowery, off-dry, friendly and likeable Riesling with apple and pear flavors. The 2003 vintage of this Riesling walked away with the highest honors at the prestigious Eastern Wine Competition at Cornell last year, not just for Riesling, but for the entire competition! (SK)

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### **Pra Soave Classico 2003 (Italy)**

**Reg. price: \$11.99**

**Sale: \$10.49**

As the name seems to indicate, this wine is suave, and also round, subtle, crispy and bright, with shades of pear, melon and straw flavors; a flattering companion to many dishes on the Thanksgiving table from the hills around the town of Soave in the Veneto, in northeast Italy. The workhorse grape here is the Garganega, and though co-ops control 80% of the production is the Soave zone, this is the anomaly, made from a small production estate using prime vineyard sites, with careful and attentive winemaking. Delicious wine, clean and balanced, and really cheap for the quality. (SK)



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## White Wine Selections, continued

### **La Presa Pinot Grigio del Veneto 2004 (Italy)**

**Reg. price: \$9.79**

**Sale: \$8.79**

Most Pinot Grigio should be consumed in its youth when its flavors are still vibrant, fresh, and clean like this 2004 La Presa, which comes to us from one of our favorite small importers, Steven Berardi, a national importer based here in Colorado. A bright, mouth watering acidity carries the crisp apple-like flavors directly to your palate and makes this a solid choice for pairing with a number of lighter dishes. (TD)

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### **Santa Barbara Verdicchio Classico Le Vaglie 2004 (Italy)**

**Reg. price: \$15.49**

**Sale: \$13.49**

This wine, featured in our last newsletter, is such a can't miss choice for your Thanksgiving table that we couldn't resist including it again. Here's the tasting note from the September e-mail: "Imagine a new wool blanket covered with silk, and you have an idea of the wonderful texture of this updated version of one of the classic central Italian white wines. Partly fermented in wood, partly in stainless steel, and then divided into thirds to age in neutral tanks, large wood barrels, and small oak casks, the result is a vision of loveliness we find completely seductive. The wine's elegant balance is its defining feature, an elegance that doesn't mask its wonderful richness and drive of flavor: dried pears, lemons, and the characteristic almond/hazelnut finish." Surprise even your wine savvy guests with this one. (TD)

### **Vega Sindoa Navarra Chardonnay 2004 (Spain)**

**Reg. price: \$11.99**

**Sale: \$10.79**

Here is a Spanish wine that tastes like a dead ringer for a 1980s California Chardonnay. Golden in color, this truly opulent white from Navarra in northern Spain oozes tropical fruit, ripe apples, oak, and a buttery richness that will appeal to those of us who enjoy an occasional over-the-top Chardonnay. This is a huge mouthful of wine for the price! (TD)



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## Red Wine Selections

### **Domaine Rochette Beaujolais-Villages 2002 (France)**

**Reg. price: \$10.99**

**Sale: \$9.49**

Here is a great red wine choice for the Thanksgiving meal. Full of fruit (Gamay), bright and fresh, but with a sturdy frame under the fruit, showing earthy, cranberry, and black raspberry flavors. Make sure you serve this one slightly chilled. (SK)

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### **Baileyana Edna Valley Pinot Noir 2002 (California)**

**Reg. Price: \$15.99**

**Sale: \$13.99**

Elegance and grace are the calling cards of this Edna Valley Pinot Noir. Seemingly infused with the essence of raspberry and hints of rose petal, it shows a wonderful sense of harmony between its vivid flavors and bright acidity, while soft tannins finish the statement on a smooth note. More than a little Burgundy in this Californian! (TD)

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### **Michael Pozzan Knight's Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2003 (California)**

**Reg. price: \$14.99**

**Sale: \$12.79**

Cabernet Sauvignon for \$12.79 does not get any better than this! Brimming with true varietal flavors of blueberry, blackberry, and blackcurrant, a touch of oak smokiness, and easy tannins, it shows a sense of restraint that we always find attractive. This is serious wine at a great price. (You may be familiar with Pozzan's less expensive value labels, *Dante Zinfandel* and *Annabella Cabernet, Chardonnay, and Merlot.*) (TD)

### **Di Majo Norante Sangiovese 2004 (Italy)**

**Reg. price: \$8.99**

**Sale: \$7.99**

Di Majo Norante's Sangiovese is one of the world's consistently reliable wine values. Produced in the Italian region of Molise, which sits just north of the heel of the peninsula, Di Majo Norante utilizes the services of master consultant, Riccardo Cotarella, who favors a modern, fruit forward style of winemaking. While Sangiovese is the most important black grape of Tuscany - the cornerstone of Brunello and Chianti - this deep south example is not quite as wiry as a Tuscan, showing less overt acidity, and offering a soft medium-bodied personality filled with hints of spice and typical ripe cherry flavors and scents that are more intense and long lasting than you would expect for a wine of this price. Would flatter a roasted cut of beef. (TD)

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### **Yalumba Oxford Landing GSM 2004 (Australia)**

**Reg. price: \$8.49**

**Sale: \$6.99**

GSM is the abbreviation for the blend of Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvedre, a trio long combined in traditional southern France winemaking and now widely produced by many estates in Australia as well. This 2004 Oxford Landing (71% Grenache, 20% Syrah, and 9% Mourvedre) expresses the juicy, strawberry-like flavor of the dominant Grenache on a medium-bodied frame, with a silky texture, and enough tannin to balance the delicious fruit. This would be both a crowd pleaser and a sound choice to complement the turkey or ham on your holiday table. (TD)



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## Red Wine Selections, continued

### **Panarroz Jumilla 2004 (Spain)**

**Reg. price: \$8.79**

**Sale: \$7.79**

Here is another GSM blend, this one from Spain, albeit in the proportion of 42% Mourvedre, 38% Grenache, and 20% Syrah. Unlike the Oxford Landing above, this wine's character expresses the darker fruit of the predominant Mourvedre in the blend, showing blackberries, black cherries, and a touch of earthiness. Soft as a new wool blanket, this is a great example of a new wave Spanish red just bursting with fruit. (TD)

## Dessert Wines

### **La Spinetta Moscato d'Asti Biancospino 2004 (Italy)**

**Reg. price: \$14.99**

**Sale: \$12.99**

A sweet, bubbly burst of May in a glass. Everybody loves Moscato d'Asti and its lemony, peachy, exuberance! A perfect start or end to any holiday meal and a crowd pleaser given its gentle 5% alcohol. (TD)

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### **Seppelt Trafford Australian Tawny Port**

**Reg. price: \$9.99**

**Sale: \$8.99**

In 1989 the *Wine Spectator* reviewed this wine giving it a whooping 95 point rating: "Sensationally complex and rich, a dessert in a glass with sweet flavors of caramel, coffee and many spices, extraordinarily long and dynamic. It just stays with you forever." While the numerical rating is certainly a stretch, the written rating is still accurate and aptly describes one of the best sweet wine values on our shelves. (TD)



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## Chef K's Table

### **CRANBERRY SAUCE WITH PORT AND DRIED FIGS**

1 2/3 cups ruby Port

1/4 cup balsamic vinegar

1/4 cup packed golden brown sugar

8 dried black Mission figs, stemmed, chopped

1 6-inch-long sprig fresh rosemary

1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

1 12-ounce bag fresh cranberries

3/4 cup sugar

Combine first 6 ingredients in medium saucepan. Bring to boil, stirring until sugar dissolves. Reduce heat to low and simmer 10 minutes. Discard rosemary. Mix in cranberries and 3/4 cup sugar. Cook over medium heat until liquid is slightly reduced and berries burst, stirring occasionally, about 6 minutes. Cool. Transfer sauce to bowl; chill until cold. About 3 1/2 cups.

**To place an order, contact us at:**

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