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Weekly Review

Wines for Thanksgiving

A Thanksgiving toast for you...

*"He who clinks his cup with mine,
 Adds a glory to the wine."
 George Sterling*

Thanksgiving is the perfect time to share food, stories and a variety of wines with friends and family. For this tasting, I chose an assortment of Gewürztraminers, Pinot Noirs, red blends and a couple of big, bold Petite Sirahs, just for fun. These wines all compliment turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, even Mom's "Green Bean Surprise." I don't think there is a wine out there that pairs well with that green Jello mould thingy with the little marshmallows, though.

All of these wines are all good choices, but don't be afraid to try your own pairings. The results may surprise you!

My panel and I enjoyed tasting thirteen assorted wines for Thanksgiving. Of the thirteen wines we tasted, the following seven were our favorites:

****1/2

Panel Favorite!

2004 Gewürztraminer, Monterey County

[Thomas Fogarty Winery](#) Gewürztraminer may well be the ideal wine for Thanksgiving, because it is a spicy, fruity white wine that compliments a wide variety of foods. This 2004 Gewürztraminer from Thomas Fogarty Winery is absolutely delightful! Sassy scents of grapefruit, honeysuckle, rose petal, spicy cinnamon and anise leap out of the glass. In the crisp, clean mouth, flavors of grapefruit with honey, lemon drops, tropical fruit and spice leave your mouth watering wanting another sip. Juicy, spicy and delicious!

2003 Cuvee Rouge, Paso Robles

[Chateau De Deighton](#) This happy little red wine is a Rhône blend of Grenache and Mourvedre. Aromas of raspberry, chocolate, brown sugar and a hint of clean leather delight the nose. One panelist loved the nose of this wine so much that she said that she wanted to "crawl right into the glass!" This wine is medium bodied and silky in the mouth, with juicy flavors of red cherry, raspberry, vanilla, mocha and pepper.

***1/2

2003 Pinot Noir, Harper's Rest Vineyard, Russian River Valley

[Arista Winery](#) I always think of Pinot Noir as the "Little Black Dress" of the wine world, because of its food pairing versatility. It is a perfect red wine for Thanksgiving. This 2003 Pinot Noir from Arista Winery is a classic! Scents of ripe cherry, strawberry, vanilla and cigar box lead into a silky mouthful of cherry, vanilla, leather and pepper flavors, which continue through the long finish. Elegant and tasty.

***1/2

2002 Pinot Noir, Bacigalupi Vineyard, Russian River Valley

[John Tyler Winery](#) This gorgeous Pinot Noir has perfumed scents of rose petal potpourri, strawberry, chocolate and clove. It is pretty and silky in the mouth, with flavors of strawberry, pomegranate, roses and pepper. Yum!

2004 Pinot Noir, Russian River Valley

[J Lynne Winery](#) Savory aromas of pepper, vanilla, smoke and leather are complimented by ripe cherry/berry



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notes. This lighter style Pinot Noir has a satiny-smooth mouthfeel with flavors of raspberry, smoke, and warm spice.

2003 "Medley", Alegria Vineyard, Russian River Valley

[Acorn Winery](#) This opulent red blend has aromas of ripe blackberry, candied black cherry, brown sugar, rose petals and pepper. In the richly textured mouth, juicy flavors of black cherry, blackberry, vanilla, pepper and a wisp of smoke linger on. Yum!

2003 Petite Sirah, Bacigalupi Vineyard, Russian River Valley

[Foppiano Winery](#) Some may say that Petite Sirah is too heavy a red wine for Thanksgiving, but I don't think so. If you enjoy big, bold aromas and flavors and a rich, luscious mouthfeel, then this 2003 Petite Sirah from Foppiano Winery is the wine for you!

Intense aromas of dark chocolate, ripe blackberry and cherry are complimented by warm vanilla and fresh herbal tones. Dense and velvety in the mouth, with flavors of chocolate covered cherry, berry, blueberry and perfumed violets. Delicious!



Sue Straight, a freelance writer, is a familiar face to many in Sonoma County's wine industry. She has enjoyed a 20+ year career in sales and management with wineries that include Windsor, Foppiano, Fieldstone, White Oak, Alderbrook, Davis Bynum, Lambert Bridge and currently she is the Director of Marketing at Limerick Lane Cellars. Sue is a wine judge, and has annually judged for the San Francisco Chronicle and the El Dorado Fair Wine Competitions for many years. Music and wine are among Sue's favorite passions. When not busy with wine, she can be found playing harmonica and singing in her six-piece band, Manzanita Moon. Sue's mission for the last 20 years has been to gently educate people about wine. One of her favorite sayings is "Wine should be fun!"

Feel free to contact Sue with wine related questions at winewench@comcast.net

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