



Summer 2018

Late spring and early summer is wine competition season. Being a certified, veteran wine judge, I would like to offer some insight into this sometimes-daunting process.

Judging panels consist of 3-4 judges who are served wines in groups, called flights, categorized by varietal or region. These wines are judged by the individuals first, then as a panel when a group score is given. Possible awards are: Double Gold, Gold, Silver, Bronze or No Award. A Double Gold is awarded when all judges independently give the wine a Gold Medal. There is generally some deliberation between judges and one can make a case for a wine they feel strongly about, in an attempt to sway the other judges. Believe it or not, I have seen disagreements that lead to a judge walking out of the competition (this is serious stuff)! From here, the real fun begins. Golds and Double Golds are forwarded on to the next round and pitted against each other in what is known as "Sweepstakes". Sweepstakes determine Best of Show Red and Best of Show White. All wines are judged blind, meaning judges know nothing about them, beyond varietal and vintage. This way the wines receive an honest score, with no preconceptions. The red and white wines are served at the same temperature-cool room temperature. In larger competitions I will taste upwards of 85 wines in a day (spitting out all of them). Now this may sound daunting...but all it takes is practice. 😊 Sometimes to refresh the palate we are served green olives, roast beef and lots of water. I've tried to cover a lot of info here.....If you have any more questions about the process, feel free to ask me.

Jackson passed the 8 hour, UC Davis wine tasting exam in the summer of 2008 and has been judging actively since.

Amusing Oenophile Trivia

- 1) When the corkscrew was invented in the 17th century, the steel worm, or helix, derived from a pre-existing tool. What was its original purpose?
- 2) What is desuckering?

Summer Wine Club Shipment

2017 Solstice Sauvignon Blanc Our 2017 Solstice was picked at optimal ripeness and displays a richness and depth not common to Sauv Blanc. Fermented in 3 different vessels, it boasts complexity and charm. Stainless steel, new French oak and our concrete egg were used to coax out a myriad of flavors and textures. Meyer lemon and white peach crackle with intensity and minerality on the palate while grapefruit and graham cracker linger on the finish. Versatile on the table, think spring salad or beer battered fish tacos. **Double Gold & Gold**

Medal Winner

2015 Rising Starr Cabernet Franc Our estate Cabernet Franc vines have produced some beautiful wines, and this 2015 is a Starr in the making. These vines are dry farmed, meaning we did not irrigate them during the growing season. This creates rich concentrated fruit (in extremely limited quantities) and in our case made a real show stopper of a wine. So dark you can hardly see through it, this Cab Franc smells of black cherries and licorice while blue fruit and spice coat your tongue. Enjoyable now, this bottle will age gracefully for 3-5 years. Our 7th vintage in a row of **Gold Medal**, for Cab Franc.

Starr Search

Sirius Sippers Shawn Ledbetter, Lucas Blair & Janet Yartz enjoy a bottle of Sierra Starr recently at Avila Beach. Thanks for taking Sierra Starr on your trip!

WINE CLUB PRICES

Starr Bright Champagne		\$ 12.80	\$ 153.60
Almond Sparkling		\$ 12.80	\$ 153.60
Peach Sparkling		\$ 12.80	\$ 153.60
2017 Solstice Sauv Blanc	Double Gold Medal	\$ 16.00	\$ 192.00
2014 Riesling		\$ 12.80	\$ 153.60
2014 Celestial Semillon		\$ 12.00	\$ 144.00
2016 Cosmic Reserve Chard		\$ 16.00	\$ 192.00
Jacks Blend 8	Best of Class	\$ 13.60	\$ 153.60
2014 Old Clone Zin	90 pts & Best Buy	\$ 14.00	\$ 172.80
2013 Phil's Selection Zin	91 pts & Gold Medal	\$ 20.00	\$ 240.00
2015 Barbera	silver medal	\$ 20.00	\$ 240.00
2015 Petite Sirah	90 points	\$ 19.20	\$ 230.40
2014 Inertia	Gold medal	\$ 20.00	\$ 240.00
2015 Cabernet Franc	Gold Medal	\$ 22.40	\$ 260.80
5 Starr Port	750mls	\$ 26.40	\$ 316.80
	375mls	\$ 16.80	\$ 201.60
Aurora Gold	750mls	\$ 32.00	\$ 384.00
	375mls	\$ 20.00	\$ 240.00

Tasting Room
124 W Main St
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 477-8282

Vineyard and Winery
11179 Gibson Drive
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 477-8277

Upcoming Events

Westwind Brass Concert July 14th

Bring a picnic and come see Eric Starr and the other members of this Brass Ensemble in a memorable night of entertainment, music and humor at the winery



Trivia Answers

1) It was used in the military to pull misfired bullets from gun barrels

2) The removal of young, non fruit bearing shoots from a grapevine. This is done in spring to concentrate the vines energy to the fruit.