

Vault Masters Wine Club Tasting Notes

Upshot White Blend 2018

Upshot – The final or eventual positive outcome or conclusion of a discussion, action, or series of events.

Rodney Strong Vineyards is dedicated to crafting world-class wines that capture our passion for winemaking. With this blend we bring together three appellations that are unique and true to our commitment to world-class wines. We aspire to conserve and protect the environment in all winery operations through sustainable practices.

Upshot is the end result of our winemaker's passion for blending flavorful, deeply nuanced and unique wines. Exclusively from vineyards in Sonoma, Monterey and Mendocino County, our White Blend offers an unexpected, almost magical outcome of the growing season and winemaking process.

The 2018 growing season was dry through the spring with well below normal precipitation. Cooler weather dominated this vintage with only two short, relatively mild heat spikes through the entire growing season. Summer days were very pleasant in Sonoma County with highs in the 70s and 80s and with August having even warmer temperatures. The fruit has excellent color, pronounced flavors and high quality across varieties.

Wine Enthusiast 90 pts.

For a venerable winery, with long-standing successes, Rodney Strong continues to roll out new and exciting wines. The 2018 Rodney Strong Upshot White—a recent addition to the winery's line—is quite an impressive wine. TASTING NOTES: This wine is a blend of six grape varieties, and it is a beautifully refined wine. Its aromas and flavors of ripe fruit, sandalwood, and mineral should pair it well with pan-fried sand dabs and capers.

Varietals: 27% Chardonnay, 21% Grenache Blanc, 18% Gewurztraminer, 17% Pinot Noir, 11% Viognier, 6% Sauvignon Blanc



Vault Masters Wine Club Food Pairing

Sand Dabs with Capers

- 4 sand dabs fillets (flounder)
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1/3 cup milk
- ½ cup flour
- Salt + pepper
- 1 tablespoon capers, drained

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a large frying pan over medium heat.

Dip each fillet in milk, then in flour and place carefully into pan. Season with salt and pepper. Fry over medium heat for about 3 minutes per side. Remove fish and add remaining butter to pan. When melted, add capers and heat through. Pour over fish and serve immediately.

If sand dabs or flounder is unavailable another white fish such as sole or rainbow trout can be substituted.

The Wine Vault

230 N. Burkhardt, Evansville, IN



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Rocca di Montemassi Sassabruna 2015

The Etruscans were the first to plant vines in our lands and our ties to the vines have not faded since. In fact, our vines have been present from the times of the Romans to the Aldobrandeschi, from the Salinbeni to the Bichi and from the Malaspina to the modern times of the 18th century. The Estate, has been the property of the Zonin family since 1999. On the Estate one also finds the "Museum of Rural Civilization", created by Cavalier Gianni Zonin and his wife Silvana, which represents a major contribution to the Maremma area as well as, bearing witness to the oldest and most authentic traditions of rural culture and civilization in Tuscany.

The grapes are machine harvested, gently crushed and de-stemmed. The must is vinified in vertical fermenters for about 20 days at a temperature of 82° F. After malolactic fermentation, the wine is placed in 350 liter French oak barrels and aged for 12 months. Following barrel aging, the wine spends an additional period of three months aging in the bottle.

James Suckling 92 pts

Highly intense ruby red. Complex with notes of ripe red fruit accompanied by scents of spices and licorice. Rich and medium bodied revealing fresh and vibrant mixed berries, savory notes and milk chocolate that lead to polished tannins and a persistent, delicate finish. Pairs well with rustic pasta dishes, wild game and decadent sauces. Tuscan tradition, savory introductory dishes, grilled red meats and moderately aged pecorino cheeses.

Varietals: 80% Sangiovese, 10% Merlot, 10% Syrah



Vault Masters Wine Club Food Pairing

Perciatelli with Meat Sauce and Fontina

- 1 tbsp. Cooking oil
- 1 onion
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/2 c. red wine
- 1 1/2 c. canned crushed tomatoes in thick puree (one 16-ounce can)
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 2 1/4 tsp. salt
- 3/4 tsp. fresh-ground black pepper
- 1/2 lb. perciatelli
- 1/2 tsp. red-wine vinegar
- 2 oz. Fontina cheese
- c. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 c. chopped fresh parsley

In a large stainless-steel frying pan, heat the oil over moderate heat. Add the onion and cook until starting to soften, about 3 minutes. Add the ground beef and cook until the meat is no longer pink, about 2 minutes. Stir in the wine and simmer until reduced to 1/4 cup, about 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes, oregano and the salt and pepper. Reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes.

In a large pot of boiling, salted water, cook the perciatelli until just done, about 15 minutes. Drain and toss with the meat sauce, vinegar, Fontina, Parmesan and parsley. Serve with additional Parmesan.



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Craggy Range Te Kahu 2016

Te Kahu means 'the cloak' in te reo Maori and refers to the mist that envelops Giants Winery in the Tukituki Valley. Legend has it that this mist was used to protect a mythical Maori maiden from the sun as she visited her lover Te Mata.

The fruit for Te Kahu is grown in the Hawkes Bay Gimblett Gravels Vineyard, which enjoys one of the warmest, driest, most sundrenched climates in New Zealand. Stony gravel in the soil forces the vines to fight for water, giving the grapes a particular vibrancy.

With strong El Niño weather conditions predicted for the 2015/2016 growing season, many feared the worst for the 2016 harvest. Instead, what occurred was a nearly perfect growing season in Martinborough. Dry conditions were maintained throughout the season, which began with coolish weather during crop set and slow, even ripening as temperatures warmed. We were fortunately not impacted by an abnormally early frost period in mid-April just prior to completion of the harvest. The young Pinot Noirs show lovely purity with moderate alcohol, fine grained tannins and more freshness than the previously strong El Niño season of 1998.

James Suckling
93 pts
Decanter
97 pts

"Brambly plums and vanilla-lead spices, as well as notes of cedary oak. There's also a stony edge to this. The palate has plump, fleshy fruit, backed by some grainy tannins that weigh in amid smooth plums and mulberries. Espresso-tinged finish."

Varietals: 63% Merlot, 18% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot, 2% Malbec



Vault Masters Wine Club Food Pairing

Red Wine Beef Stew

- 4 pounds chuck roast, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 2 cups dry red wine, such as Pinot Noir or Syrah
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 medium yellow onion, quartered
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 sprigs thyme
- 10 medium carrots (about 2 pounds), peeled and cut into 3-inch pieces
- 1 1/2 pounds baby white or red potatoes, halved

Preheat the oven to 325°F.

Season the meat with salt and pepper, place in a large bowl, and toss with the flour.

Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven or wide-bottomed pot with a tight-fitting lid over medium-high heat. Cook the meat, in batches, until well browned on all sides, 6 to 8 minutes, transferring the pieces to a plate as they are browned. Pour off and discard any drippings from the pot.

Add the tomato paste, wine, broth, onion, bay leaves, thyme, and 2 of the carrots and bring to a boil. Return the meat and any juices back to the pot (the meat should be barely submerged in liquid), cover, and transfer to the oven. Cook for 2 hours.

Using tongs, remove and discard the cooked vegetables. Add the potatoes and the remaining 8 carrots to the pot, cover, and return to the oven. Cook until the meat and vegetables are fork-tender, about 1 hour more.

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