

Summer 2023

# GRAPE PRESS

*"In wine there is truth."* – Roman Proverb

## TOP 50: *Your Summer, Your Wines*

A convivial group of long-time attendees and new discoverers met together on a spectacular June afternoon to make The Wine Sellers' Top 50 a sold-out success and a joyful welcome to our 27th year.

With a noted winemaker in attendance, a crazy popular wine making a splash, and unprecedented sales, there were three "firsts" for the Top 50 that promise your summer may be made all the more delightful by the wines waiting for you in the shop this season.



One of our best Top 50s ever!

Continued on Pg 2

## TOP 50 TOP FIVE The best sellers!



***Avinyó Petillant 2022***  
**\$17.95**

Summer in a bottle! This refreshing wine is the traditional summertime quaffer of the Penedès region of Catalonia. Aromatic, lightly fizzy blend of 70% muscat de frontignan, 20% macabeo, 10% Xarel-lo. White flowers, stone fruit, apple and citrus peel on the aromatic nose and palate with an incredibly delicate, soft bubble finish.



***Tenuta Le Calcinaie***  
***2021 Vernaccia Di***  
***San Gimignano***  
**\$19.95**

A bright, crisp dry white to drink now and over the next few years. Lemon peel, tree fruit and white flowers are beautifully delineated. A captivating balance of aromatics, fruit and structure, with light tropical notes.

Continued on Pg 2

## Sailing into the Red Sunset with Greg

In a first for the Top 50, we were honored to have a prominent winemaker at the event. **Greg Morthole of Sonoma's Davis Bynum Winery showcased his one-of-a-kind 2021 Pinot Noir, "Red Sunset," which we were elated to purchase at the invitation-only 2022 Sonoma County Barrel Auction.** Greg's enthusiasm for his special wine and his mellow personality won over our guests.

**Red Sunset sold so well at Top 50 that there is now a limited supply in the shop (\$95.00).** It is a unique blend of Dijon, Swiss and heritage clones of Pinot Noir from the incredible 2021 vintage, making Red Sunset a "never before, never again" wine that collectors will eagerly anticipate opening for only the most special occasions.

Meanwhile, our favorite reps from Great Lakes Wine & Spirits, AHD Vintners, Banville Wine Merchants, Imperial Beverage and Woodberry Wines were at the top of their game, wowing the crowd with their selections. For example, Kim Johnson of Banville dedicated her entire table to Italian wines. **Her choices included one of our personal favorites, Terlano Cuvée Terlaner 2022 (\$39.00), a complex composition of Terlano's three traditional white varieties, Pinot Bianco, Chardonnay and Sauvignon.**

There were also Rosé wines at every table, because of course, it's summer! **Commanderie de la Bargemone 2021 Coteaux d'Aix en Provence Rosé was a top-five seller (see sidebar).**



Winemaker Greg Morthole of Davis Bynum Winery (with Jacqui) showcased his one-of-a-kind 2021 Pinot Noir, "Red Sunset."

Continued on Pg 3

## TOP 50 TOP FIVE The best sellers!

Continued



### *Dipinti Pinot Grigio 2021* **\$14.95**

An easy white quaffer for the summer. Delicately perfumed with scents of flowers and spice, featuring almond, tangerine and apricot fruits. Softly textured and balanced with a crisp citrus finish. A delicious aperitif or pair with seafood and salads.



### *Masciarelli 2019* *Montepulciano d'Abruzzo* **\$16.95**

Daily wine par excellence. The warmth and freshness seduce at first taste: dark cherries, blackberries, black raspberries and underbrush. The palate is taut and finely wrapped in fine tannins and pleasant acidity. Medium to full-bodied, displaying red cherry fruit accented by currants and violet nuances. A great value.



### *Commanderie de la* *Bargemone 2021* *Coteaux d'Aix en* *Provence Rosé* **\$25.00**

Bargemone is a benchmark producer of the delicious, dry rosé for which Provence is famous. A harmonious blend of Grenache, Cinsault, and Syrah, with aromas of flowers and red berries and a refreshingly crisp finish. Classic aromas of wild strawberries and red currants, with a light, floral character, and a crisp, bone-dry palate.



# *Crazy* FOR SANCERRE

Greg Morthole was not the only “first” of the event. **A second first was to offer three Sancerres, and one Sancerre wannabe, at Top 50. They went over in a big way.**

Sancerre is a white wine made from Sauvignon Blanc grapes grown in the Sancerre Appellation of the Loire Valley, and its popularity has boomed. How popular? While we were still in the planning stages of Top 50, we had clients who have never even purchased a white wine before asking about the availability of Sancerre at the event.

Some enthusiasts will tell you that Sancerre is the ultimate expression of the Sauvignon Blanc grape. Top 50 attendees said our selections were simply delicious:



A beautiful afternoon for Top 50.



***Domaine Daulny  
2021 Sancerre,  
Clos de Chaudenay  
(\$34.50)***

offers focused Sauvignon aromas, a medium-weight texture and a crisp, long finish. The palate is zippy acid and a flavor set of fresh grass, lime, melon and crushed rocks.



***Romain Reverdy  
2022 Sancerre  
Florilège (\$34.00)***

is nicely weighted, with tart citrus, fresh herbal notes, snappy acidity and a dash of white pepper.



***The radiant gold  
color of Domaine  
Durand Sancerre  
2022 (\$38.00)***

is an invitation to its subtle aromas of citrus and white flowers, along with delicate mineral notes. The palate is fruity and full-bodied. Remarkably balanced with finesse.



***Famille Dubard  
2022 Sauvignon  
Blanc Coeur Du  
Mont (\$18.50)***

is a Sancerre wanna-be, also from the Loire Valley. Certified sustainable, 100% Sauvignon Blanc and a delicious bargain. Aromas and flavors of lemon, lime zest and oyster shell, with a subtle ginger note.

## ***Outlook: A WINE-FILLED SUMMER***

**There was yet a third and final “first” for the Top 50. Every wine offered at the event had sales. Never happened before!** We always try to balance our portfolio so that whenever you visit the shop, you will find wines that are just right for you. The across-the-board sales of this year’s Top 50 tell us we’ve really hit the bullseye. This summer, The Wine Sellers invites you to refresh the pleasures of the season with some truly wonderful wines.

# Porch Wines:



The Wine Sellers' Porch Wines are light and lively summer sippers, ideal for lounging on the porch and sunning on the beach. But don't limit yourself! Think of the porch as your stepping-off point, and indulge in all the leisure activities that summer has to offer, whether it's admiring the garden or contemplating the stars, watching the Women's World Cup or watching the world go by.



## *Cognole 2021 Sinopie Chianti Superiore DOCG* **\$17.95**

TWS' choice for this summer's easy-drinking, all-purpose Sangiovese from Italy. 93% sangiovese, 7% merlot. Soft and juicy, medium-bodied, with intense aromas of cherry/raspberry fruit and a pinch of dried herbs.

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## *Domaine Berthet-Rayne 2020 Côtes-du-Rhône Vieilles Vignes* **\$18.95**

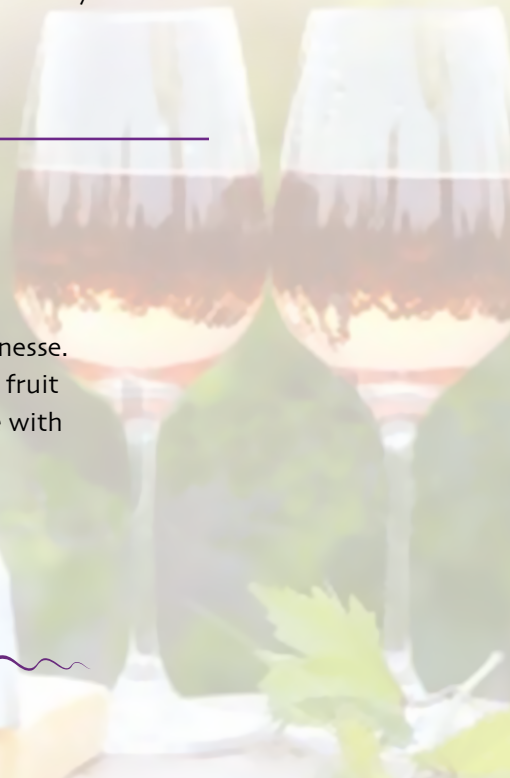
Grenache, Carignan and Mourvèdre blend. Intense nose of black fruit, prune jam, black olive, wildflowers and licorice. Remarkable texture, upfront cherry/berry flavors, herbs d'Provence. Soft, ripe tannins carry it home with a lengthy finish.

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## *Stellenbosch 2021 Chenin Blanc* **\$21.00**

South African white, medium in weight, shows elegance and finesse. Aromatic nose of delicate flowers and lime. Lush, tropical, tree fruit flavors (especially pears) and lively acidity. Velvety, rich palate with prominent notes of honey and spicy undertones of vanilla.



# In the Shop

## SPRING IS A TIME FOR TASTINGS



*Jacqui personally tastes and approves almost every wine in the shop. There are a few exceptions, but they are rare. Tasting is one of the most important means by which we ensure the quality of our inventory.*

*Jacqui maintains a busy schedule of tastings, primarily in spring and autumn, when the vintages are released. This spring was full of tastings, full of opportunities!*

Taking advantage of those opportunities can be a challenge. One Chicago event featured more than 100 wineries, and at Spain's Great Match, also held in Chicago, there were 300 new vintages from the country's leading wineries. At the enormous Tre Bicchieri, celebrating Italy's top wines, there were possibly up to 1,500 wines! With careful planning, Jacqui can average about sixty tastings. The key is to sample only wines that are or will be available in Michigan.

An early spring highlight was Premiere Napa (actually in February, but close enough). One wonderful tasting was at Hestan Vineyards, where the winemaker is the visionary Thomas Rivers Brown. Their Hestan Chardonnay is the only domestic wine poured at the three-Michelin star French Laundry in Yountville. **It's hard to get (only 340 cases made), but we have some in the shop (\$62.00). We also have a Meyer Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon from Hestan (\$89.00).**

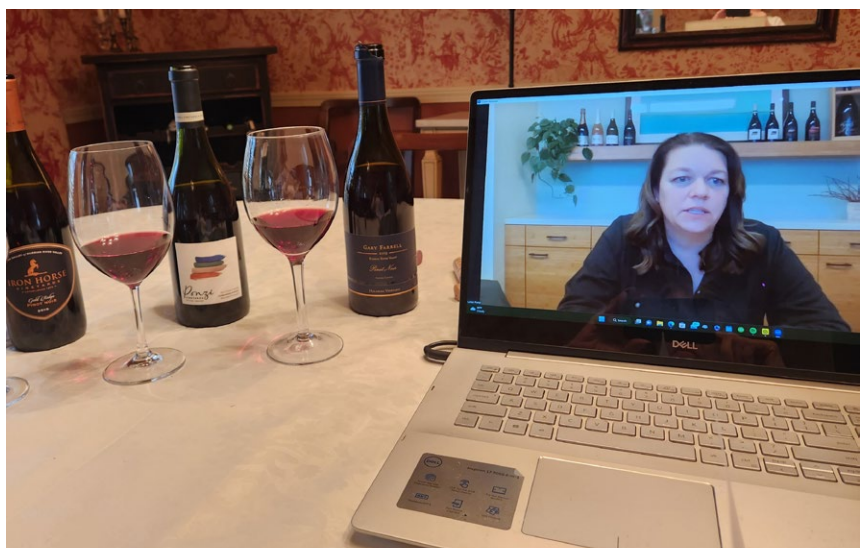


Hestan Chardonnay from winemaker Thomas Rivers Brown.

In March, Jacqui participated in a special "Women in Wine Month" Zoom seminar presented by Vintus. The event was a tasting of three Pinot Noirs from three exceptional women winemakers – Theresa Heredia, Winemaker, Gary Farrell Winery; Joy Sterling, CEO, Iron Horse Vineyards; and Luisa Ponzi, Director of Winemaking & Viticulture, Ponzi Vineyards.

**All three wines resonated, but we were especially thrilled with the Ponzi Laurelwood District Pinot Noir 2021 (\$55.00).**

Continued on Pg 6



Zooming with Luisa Ponzi.



# In the Shop

## SPRING IS A TIME FOR TASTINGS



Continued

Jacqui participated in a master class with noted expert Evan Goldstein at Spain's Great Match. And it was a delight to meet and taste wines at another spring event in Chicago with Valentina Abbona of Piemonte's Marchesi Di Barolo. **We love having their wines in the shop, such as the big, intense Marchesi di Barolo 2018 Barolo DOCG (\$86.00), and the dry, fruity Marchesi 2020 Sbirolo Nebbiolo Langhe DOC (\$31.00).**



Attending the Master Class given by Evan Goldstein (right) at Spain's Great Match.



Jacqui with Valentina Abbona of Marchesi Di Barolo.

It's obvious that the opportunity to meet with the people involved with wines – the winemakers, export managers, national sales directors, distributors and other experts – is a critical aspect of tastings. Experiencing first-hand their dedication to their wines adds a level of confidence to our evaluation of their products. The relationships we create are an invaluable investment in the quality of the wines we offer at The Wine Sellers.

# Wine is Cool

Heat can really cook wines.

To prevent heat damage in the summer:

-- **The shop is climate controlled for heat and humidity**

-- **The Wine Sellers' offsite storage is similarly climate controlled**

-- **We take shipping into consideration.** For example, some distributors use a "reefer" (refrigerated truck), but most do not. When conditions are iffy (an extended heat wave, for example), we don't allow our wines to be shipped to the shop.

## GOES WITH WINE

The Wine Sellers remains your go-to resource for attractive, practical and just plain fun wine accessories, such as these **"Life is Better at the Lake" coasters that recently caught our eye (set of four, \$25.00)**. As with our wines, you can purchase with confidence, because we focus on high quality and good value. Lots of great gifts for the wine lovers in your life.



*Life is Better  
at the Lake.*

*Wine accessories  
are better at The  
Wine Sellers!*



# WINES TO WATCH



***Lucia Vineyards 2022 "Lucy" Gamay Noir***  
**\$36.50**

Weighted to red fruit with notes of raspberry and Bing cherry with dried herbs and a bit of pepper in the mix. Well balanced with crisp, clean acidity. Layered, balanced and elegant.



***Crooked Path 2018 Zinfandel***  
**\$27.50**

Crowd-pleaser from Top 50. Concentrated aromas of rhubarb and strawberry pie with a dash of white pepper. Jammy on palate with flavors of ripe Bing cherry and strawberry. Subtle and round tannins make for a smooth, balanced finish.



***Cline 2020 Zinfandel 'Eight Spur', Dry Creek Valley***  
**\$29.50**

Another winning Zinfandel from Top 50. Deep ruby color. Intense flavors of black cherry, black currant, cinnamon and baking spice with a rich, ripe palate. On the palate it has nice deep flavors of dark fruit, medium tannins and a soft finish. Gluten free and vegan friendly.

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The Wine Sellers is open Wednesday through Saturday from noon until 6:00 p.m., Sundays from 1:00 until 4:00 p.m. through Labor Day, fewer days afterwards by chance or appointment. Just to make sure, phone first at (269) 469-7566.

We accept American Express, VISA, Mastercard, Discover and Diners Club.

The Wine Sellers is wheelchair accessible.