

# Member Newsletter

May 2013

Summer is coming...hot days, cool nights, to be celebrated with delicious white wine!

## Summer Wine Release

The wait is finally over for our Fascination Sauvignon Blanc! Now in the bottle, and in this shipment for our members of the Mixed and Whites Only clubs, this is our most delicious Sauvignon Blanc yet!

Here is an explanation from David Yorgensen, our winemaker of how we used a new winemaking technique:

In 2012 O'Brien Estate utilized the ancient technology of concrete in a modern style of winemaking. We used a 158 gallon concrete egg, produced by the French company Nomblot, to ferment and age a portion (19%) of our Fascination Sauvignon Blanc production.

The concrete egg has many interesting attributes that directly affect the resulting wine. It is designed using Pythagoras's golden ratio and made simply of sand, stone and water. The natural concrete construction provides a porous, micro-aerative environment similar to that found in a traditional barrel, but without the associated oak aromas and flavors. It also has the benefit of extra mass to provide a more stable temperature during fermentation, thereby helping to avoid thermal shock "*choque-thermique*" of the yeast. In addition, the characteristic egg shape provides an endless energetic and cosmic vortex of movement inside that keeps the texturally rich lees in suspension throughout aging resulting in a mouth feel of utmost depth and volume that blends effortlessly with the pure fruit forwardness of the aromatics.

We at O'Brien Estate appreciate all of the subtle differences, characteristics and layers obtained with dynamic winemaking and we hope that you do too! We hope you enjoy this limited production wine – only 600 cases made.

Our Flirtation Rosé is now also available. This rosé is made from Merlot and also aged in neutral oak. Absolutely delicious on a hot summer day!

## **Our Upcoming Member Trip to Ireland**

We announced we will be going to Ireland in late April 2014 to celebrate the 1,000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Brian Boru on the battlefield at Clontarf (just outside Dublin). The surname O'Brien means Son of Brian (as O'Connor means son of Connor, etc.). Brian Boru was the first High King of Ireland, uniting the various individual kingdoms into a united country. Our ancestral great (23 times) grandfather was killed on the battlefield defending Ireland against the Viking invaders in 1014, an important date in Irish history

We, and our children, Emily and Mason, went last summer to check out Ireland and to plan the tour – and we had a blast! It will even be better with a horde of wine club members on buses (drinking) and taking over villages (drinking) and going out to eat together (more drinking).

Following this letter is an itinerary of events. We are planning an 8 day trip, starting in the Western part of Ireland, where Brian Boru was born, and tracing his footsteps across Ireland to Dublin and his grave in Armaugh. Please book as early as possible, as we have only 25 hotel rooms reserved, so this is first come, first served basis. The accommodations will be in 4 star hotels; the price per person (double occupancy) is \$1,190.

### **Upcoming Events**

Our wine club member event calendar for 2013/2014 is below. If you happen to be in Napa Valley during one of our Wine Club Pickup Parties, please come by and join the fun. During the summer, we encourage you to come visit us for Date Night at the Drive-in and sit on the back lawn to watch the sunset over the Mayacamas Mountains. A wonderful sight to see!

July 27, 2013 (Sat.)	Date Night at the Drive-In
September 7, 2013 (Sat.)	Wine Club Pickup Party
September 28, 2013 (Sat.)	A Night of Unrestrained Reserve
November 16, 2013 (Sat.)	Wine Club Pickup Party
February 14, 2014 (Fri.)	Valentine's Day Dinner
February 22, 2014 (Sat.)	Wine Club Pickup Party
March 17, 2014 (Mon.)	St. Patrick's Day Party
May 17, 2014 (Sat.)	Wine Club Pickup Party
July 26, 2014 (Sat.)	Date Night at the Drive-In
September 27, 2014 (Sat.)	A Night of Unrestrained Reserve

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## Recipe

We always like to provide a seasonal recipe to pair with our wines. In January, we had a wonderful wine dinner at the **Luca and Leonardo Ristorante** in The Woodlands, TX. This is a beautiful restaurant, right on the waterway, with a gorgeous private dining room for 50 people. The restaurant is owned by Bill and Claudia Trainor, who provided an exceptional dining experience for our wine club members and guests. We were impressed with the delicious lobster salad and asked them to share their recipe with our members to be paired with our Sauvignon Blanc.

### LOBSTER SALAD

#### INGREDIENTS:

2 pieces Lobster tail  
1 pinch Salt  
1 oz Lemon juice  
1 oz Balsamic vinegar  
6 oz Extra virgin olive oil  
4 oz Corn kernels  
4 pieces Asparagus  
4 oz Canola oil  
4 oz Mixed greens salad  
  
4 oz Shaved fennel bulb  
1 Tbsp Grated parmesan cheese

#### PROCEDURE:

Cook the lobster tails in a pot with boiling water for 10 minutes, transfer to a bowl with cold water to stop the cooking process.

Peel the tails and sliced them in 6 pieces.

Put it in the middle of a plate and season with the lemon juice, vinegar, salt, pepper and the olive oil.

Cut the asparagus in ¼ inch pieces and sauté with the corn in canola oil, put salt and pepper and place them over the lobster.

Dress the mixed greens and fennel with more lemon, vinegar and olive oil .

Drizzle some more olive oil over the salad

## Tasting Notes and Wine Advocate Reviews

### **2012 Fascination:**

The delicate light golden-green straw appearance of the 2012 Fascination is followed by intricately delineated and multilayered aromatics that dynamically weave between the minerality of wet slate and the richness and complexity of tropical fruits. On the pallet, the flavors develop and expand with depth and roundness that culminate in a long and refreshing finish. – David Yorgensen

### **2012 Flirtation:**

The brilliant pinkish-red ruby 2012 Flirtation provides an aromatically transcendent journey through a wildflower meadow in spring, combined with the hedonistically divine pleasure of eating fresh, ripe, wild-crafted raspberries. The profusion of aromas and flavors are complimented on the palate with a deftly balanced texture and the lasting memory of the experience. - David Yorgensen

### **2007 Seduction Bordeaux Blend 94 points**

“The 2007 Seduction exhibits more graphite, licorice, black currant, and blackberry, with some floral underpinnings. I don’t like it better or worse than the 2008. Slightly more restrained, this gorgeous, medium to full-bodied wine is another impressive example of Napa viticulture at an attractive price point.”- Robert Parker

### **2010 Seduction Bordeaux Blend 94 points**

“The 2010 Red Blend Seduction is one of the darker, richer wines in this range. Here, too, the tannins are quite silky and polished, making the wine quite enjoyable even at this early stage. Violets, mocha and cloves are layered into the rich, sumptuous finish. The appropriately named Seduction is indeed very hard to resist. I imagine it will be even better in another year or two, once some of the baby fat drops off. The blend is Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Anticipated maturity: 2015-2025.” - Antonio Galloni

### **2010 Chardonnay Reserve 93 points**

“The 2010 Chardonnay Reserve is another striking wine from O’Brien. The sur-lie aging in French oak gives the wine notable breadth and volume, but without masking varietal character. The 2010 Reserve is gorgeous in the way it captures the exuberance of California Chardonnay, but with much more nuance and transparency than is common within this style. Almonds, floral infused honey and nectarines all come alive on the creamy, textured

finish. The 2010 is rich, bold and beautiful. I would prefer to enjoy this striking Chardonnay in its exuberant youth. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2016." - Antonio Galloni

**2009 Devotion Cabernet Franc 92 points**

“A gorgeous wine laced with hints of espresso, bitter chocolate, grilled herbs and dark red fruit. The wine possesses dazzling inner perfume and fabulous persistence all the way through to the finish. Sheer silky tannins convey an impression of elegance. Anticipated maturity: 2014-2024”. - Antonio Galloni

**2010 Devotion Cabernet Franc 92 points**

“The 2010 Cabernet Franc Devotion is another wine that stands out for its textural depth, finesse and sheer polish. There is plenty of varietal character in the glass, something I can’t always say about Napa Valley Cabernet Francs. Grilled herbs, mocha, plums, espresso and cloves are some of the many nuances that all meld together in this deep, fleshy wine. Layers of fruit continue to resonate on what seems like an eternal finish. The ripeness and softness of the tannin suggests the Devotion will drink well pretty much right out of the gate. Anticipated maturity: 2015-2025.” - Antonio Galloni

**2010 Romance of the Heart Bordeaux Blend 93 points**

The juiciest of dark raspberries, cloves, mint and freshly cut roses flow from the 2010 Red Blend Romance of the Heart. This supple, inviting wine possesses gorgeous depth and richness, all in a silky style that makes it approachable today. The 2010 firms up with time in the glass, but it remains quite polished and approachable for the year. Sweet herbal notes from the Cabernet Franc appear on the finish, adding further complexity and character. The Red Blend is Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Anticipated maturity: 2013-2020.

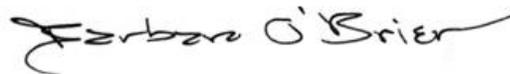
**2010 Merlot (not yet rated by Wine Advocate)**

“Deep and dark ruby/plum in color, the 2010 Merlot is big, dark and intense with mouth filling fruit of blackberry, black cherry and cassis. Aromatics of sweet cherry liquor, caramel, toffee, coffee, and forest floor that lead to a profile of cedar, earth, black cherry and crème de cassis that is both exotic and elegant. The abundant fine grained tannins and youthful acids provide ample structure to this wine.” – David Yorgensen

From our family to yours we wish you health and happiness!



Bart O'Brien



Barb O'Brien