

# MEMBER NEWSLETTER

MAY 2014

We came, we saw, we conquered! We have just returned from our epic Wine Club Member trip to Ireland! Barb and I, along with 42 wine club members, travelled by motor coach across Ireland to retrace the footsteps of the most famous leader in Irish history, Brian Boru, the High King of Ireland. O'Brien means "descendant of Brian Boru." which makes Brian Boru my 77<sup>th</sup> great-great grandfather. We were there to commemorate the 1,000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Clontarf and Brian Boru's death on April 23, 1014. He led his army to defeat the Viking invaders but died a heroic death at age 73 immediately following the victory. He was assassinated in his tent right after the battle, poor fellow, but his legacy lived on.

This was our second wine club member trip, and again we were so delighted with the way it all came together. By the first evening in Ireland, we felt like we had known everyone for years. It was great way for our wine club members to connect with one another. Our wine club members are wonderful people and we feel honored to have spent time with them.

Our Irish journey began in Galway, then on to Killaloe, Dublin and Armagh and places in between. We explored historical sites including Bunratty and Dromoland castles, ancient monasteries in ruins, a site of religious visitation, and historic farms where Irish tenants were evicted by English landlords. At night we would enjoy conversation over a pint of Guinness in the traditional Irish restaurants and pubs. Great fun! Another highlight of our trip was attending the O'Brien Clan Banquet at the Clontarf Hotel. Our distinguished guest of honor was Conor O'Brien, The O'Brien, Lord Inchiquin, the male heir to the royal O'Brien lineage.

Before meeting our wine club members in Ireland, Barb and I arrived 10 days early to make sure all the preparations were in place, and then went to Munich for a bit of vacation time. We spent 2 days in Munich at a lovely hotel, visited the Residence Palace and watched the Glockenspiel in the Town Hall. Then, we traveled with a German couple and their adorable 5 year old daughter who we met at the winery. They invited us to join them on a trip to the castle region of Bavaria where King Ludwig II built a magnificent castle in the late 1800's called Schloss Neuschwanstein. We learned that it was the original inspiration for Walt Disney Sleeping Beauty's castle. It was springtime in Germany; however, it snowed during the night and we awoke to a magical winter wonderland!

From Munich we took a train to Zurich. Zurich is so picturesque- every corner you turn is another photograph. All the Easter decorations just added to the beauty of the city. One night we had dinner in a restaurant built in 1257, and enjoyed conversing with the Swiss locals.

As I write, we just finished our trip and said goodbye to our 42 members and friends. Great friendships were formed during this trip between many members. We all had a spectacular time learning about Irish history and the O'Brien Clan in particular.

Our next wine club trip will be a Mediterranean cruise in October 2015, visiting Greece, Sicily, and several ports in Italy. We will be sending out information about the cruise early this summer. We hope you can join us!

Bhaile sábháilte! ("Safe home")



Bart O'Brien



Barb O'Brien

## WINERY NEWS

### Welcome Laura and Steve!

We are excited to announce two new members to our O'Brien Estate team. Laura Lambert has joined us as our new Wine Club and Business Manager and Steve Distler is our new Director of Sales and Marketing. Laura is a longtime friend, and has known Barb since their single days in San Francisco. Laura was a senior VP at Bank of America in SF before moving to Napa to start a winery consulting business.

Steve Distler is a native of New York City with 10 years of experience in the food and wine industry. After moving on from his success as a Napa restaurant owner (you may have seen his photo in a Wine Spectator article), Steve is returning to his original passion- wine.

We are so excited to have Laura and Steve on board. We know you will enjoy meeting them on your next visit to the winery.

### New Bottling Line

With the desperate urging and pleading of our winemaker, David Yorgensen, we finally replaced our 30 year old bottling line with a new state-of-the-art GAI bottling line from Italy. The new line bottles 40 bottles per minute as opposed to 15. It will minimize bottle-to-bottle variation and ensure the quality of the unbelievably spectacular 2102 vintage. This is part of our never ending pursuit to achieve the ultimate in wine quality.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Date Night at the Drive-In: Saturday, July 19th

July 19<sup>th</sup> is our upcoming Date Night at the Drive-In party where we recreate a 1950's drive-in movie theater at the winery. We will have a classic car show upon arrival, and a gourmet drive-in food & wine party on our back lawn. After dark, this year we show a film but without the soundtrack, because we would rather have a 50's dance party than listen to the movie! Prizes will be given for the best costume, best Twist dancers, and best Swing dancers. Of course, our Creekside pathway will be lit with candles for romantic walks through the vineyard. Tickets are available on our website at [obrienestate.com/Tickets](http://obrienestate.com/Tickets).

### Napa Valley Film Festival: Nov. 12 -16, 2014

The Napa Valley Film Festival has become the destination event, rivaling Sundance! O'Brien Estate is once again a proud patron sponsor of this extraordinary 5 day event Those who attended last year at the Movie Mogul or Patron Level had the chance to rub shoulders with movie producers, actors, Indie filmmakers, and Hollywood celebrities like Colin Farrell. The entire Napa Valley was abuzz with great movies, fabulous parties and special food and wine events held throughout the valley. It truly felt like being in Hollywood.

We loved the independently produced movies and the unique stories they told, and meeting the producers, directors, and actors in the Q&A sessions following the movies. We hosted a dinner at the winery for 18 actors, directors, and other Patrons with the up and coming chef, Tyler Stone. He put on a fantastic show and meal for us. If you are making travel plans to Napa in the late fall this year, we suggest you purchase the Festival passes in advance since they will sell out fast.

For more information or to purchase passes online and receive a 10% discount, visit [www.napavalleyfilmfest.org](http://www.napavalleyfilmfest.org), and enter the promotion code OBRIEN.

### Wine Club Recipe

In the spirit of our Wine Club trip to Ireland, we thought you might like to visit the Guinness website for some recipe ideas: <http://www.guinness.com/en-gb/food.html>. We had a fun tour of the factory.

### Upcoming Events

Our wine club member event calendar for 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.

May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Wine Club Pick Up Party and Paella Dinner
July 19 <sup>th</sup>	Date Night at the Drive-In
September 6 <sup>th</sup>	Wine Club Pickup Party
September 27 <sup>th</sup>	Night of Unrestrained Reserve
November 15 <sup>th</sup>	Wine Club Pickup Party

## TASTING NOTES FOR CURRENT RELEASES

*DAVID YORGENSEN, WINEMAKER*

**2011 Romance of the Heart, Bordeaux Styled Red Blend** - Instantly approachable, the bright, vivid and lively 2011 Romance of the Heart possesses aromas and flavors of red cherries, currents, raspberries and spice that adds weight and texture throughout.

**2011 Merlot** – With a dense purple hue the 2011 Merlot indulges the senses with rich, dark fruits, black cherry, plum, cassis, and forest floor that blends harmoniously with mocha-laced toasted oak. It has a lush, all-encompassing, mouth feel with smooth tannins to define the depth and breadth of this well balanced and easily drinkable offering.

**2011 Seduction, Bordeaux Styled Red Blend** – Complex and complete, the densely purple colored 2011 Seduction reveals a multifarious bouquet of dark fruits, mixed berry pie, bakers chocolate, spices and well integrated, mocha and toasted oak. On the palate it is equally intricate exposing a wealth of balanced tannin with lasting acidity.

**2011 Passion of the Soul, Cabernet Sauvignon** – Bold, dense and powerful, the 2011 Passion of the Soul is a big, ripe cabernet lovers cabernet sauvignon with a deep purple hue, rich, complex and intense aromatics of dark fruit, graphite and fine oak, and a densely structured mouth feel that is long and lingering.

**2011 Devotion, Cabernet Franc** – Dark, dense and expressively perfumed, the 2011 Devotion is a deep and brooding wine that interweaves floral elegance with rich dark fruits. It has a big, round, fine-grained, mouth feel, palate presence and finish.

**2012 Estate Chardonnay** – A brilliant, lightly golden hued wine that opens with toasty oak aromas, backed by strong pear laced with vanilla, spice, and a hint of fresh flowers. The texture is rich and full, coating the entire palate and finishing with a flavor reminiscent of tart, spiced pear. This wine is aged in 35% new French oak barrels, surlies for 10 months with a monthly bâtonnage.

**2013 Fascination, Sauvignon Blanc** – Bright and brilliant, the 2013 Fascination, Sauvignon Blanc displays a crisp, light golden color. Initial aromas of wet stone, grapefruit, and lemon peel soon transform, as the wine travels across the palate, revealing subtle tropical, pineapple notes that effortlessly intermingles with the original mineral and citrus character in a curiously rich and round, yet endlessly refreshing wine.

**2013 Flirtation, Rosé** – Floral and pretty, the hot pink 2013 Flirtation rosé of merlot offers up aromas of wildflowers and fresh strawberries that are enhanced on the pallet with a supple presentation of classic, strawberry shortcake, with a clean and round finish.

## Seafood Paella Recipe

*Clyde Hinshelwood is a former co-worker and longtime friend of Bart O'Brien. Although his main profession is with IBM, cooking has always been a passion for Clyde. His knowledge in culinary arts further developed when he moved to Spain in 2008 and lived in Madrid for 3 years. While there, he learned a few Spanish techniques from an array of excellent Spanish cooks. Clyde wishes to share his paella recipe with you for your enjoyment, and for the sake of spreading the goodness of Spanish cooking. Clyde will be our chef for our Wine Club pick up party on May 17<sup>th</sup>.*

### Ingredients

- 6 oz. shrimp, peeled (reserve the shells for broth) and patted dry
- 1 small bottle clam juice
- Pinch saffron threads
- Kosher salt
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 6 oz. dry scallops, patted dry
- 4 oz. calamari, cut in rings (optional), patted dry
- ½ onion, grated on the largest holes of a box grater
- 6 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 tomato, halved and grated on a box grater (discard the skin)
- ½ teaspoon pimenton (paprika)
- 1 ½ cups Bomba rice
- 8 small clams or mussels (or both), scrubbed
- 2 lemons, cut in wedges

### Instructions

This recipe will take about 30 minutes to prepare and 20 to 30 minutes to cook. The recipe serves four.

In a medium saucepan, bring 4 1/2 cups of salted water to a boil. Add the shrimp shells and clam juice and simmer, covered, for about 10 minutes. Strain the broth, and return it to the saucepan. Toast the saffron gently in a dry skillet or toaster oven (just until aromatic, 1 to 2 minutes; don't let them burn). Crumble the threads in a mortar or between your fingers, and add to the broth. Taste for salt; it should be well-seasoned. Let it sit off the heat.

In a 16-inch paella pan, heat the oil just until it's hot. Sauté the shrimp, scallops, and calamari (if using) until just cooked through, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Reduce the heat to medium and sauté the onion and garlic until the onion softens, about 5 min. Add the tomato and pimenton, season with salt, and cook, stirring often, until the mixture has darkened to a deep burgundy and is thick like a compote, for about 15 to 20 min. If it starts to stick to the pan or burn, add a little water.

Bring the broth back to a simmer. Add the rice to the pan with the sauce ("sofrito"), and cook for 1 to 2 min. Raise the heat to medium-high. Pour in 4 1/2 cups of the broth (reserve the rest) and stir or shake the pan to evenly distribute the rice. Arrange the clams (if using) in the pan, submerging them as much as possible below the level of the liquid. From this point on, do not stir the rice. Simmer vigorously, moving the pan over one and two burners to distribute the heat and to cook the rice as evenly as possible. When the rice is at the same level as the liquid, after 8 to 10 min. reduce the heat to medium low. Arrange the mussels in the pan.

Continue to simmer more gently, rotating the pan as necessary, until the liquid has been absorbed, about 10 min. more. Taste a grain just below the top layer of rice; it should be al dente, with a tiny white dot in the center. (If the rice is not done but all the liquid has been absorbed, add a bit of broth and cook a few minutes more.) Arrange the shrimp, scallops, and calamari in the pan, and add any juices to the rice.

Increase the heat to medium-high and, rotating the pan, cook for about 2 min., until the bottom layer of rice starts to caramelize, creating the socarrat. The rice will crackle, but if it starts to smell burned, remove the pan from the heat immediately.

Remove the pan from the heat. Cover loosely with foil or a clean kitchen towel and let the paella rest for 5 min. to even the cooking and let the flavors meld. Set the paella pan in the center of a round or square table. Remove the foil and invite people to eat directly from the pan, starting at the perimeter, working toward the center, and squeezing lemon over their section.