

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2014

O'Brien Estate Fall Update

This has been a glorious growing season! Our winemaker, David Yorgensen, says "the good weather, balanced canopies with equally matched, developing clusters and the potential for an earlier than normal harvest are all leading up to another one of Napa Valley's exceptional vintages!" We are always excited to see what Mother Nature delivers in the form of wonderful fruit in our vineyard. The excitement of harvest and crush when the smell of fermenting grapes and fresh oak fills the air of Napa Valley is everyone's favorite time of the year here.

We hope you have a chance to come visit O'Brien Estate sometime in the fall. Please let us know in advance so we can make this a special experience for you and your guests.

A Night of Unrestrained Reserve – *We'll be Counting Stars*

September 27th is our "Night of Unrestrained Reserve" where we will be serving an elegant 4 course dinner, prepared by Executive Chef Jeff Jake. This is where we pair our finest reserve and library wines. The evening will start with wine in the vineyard while we watch the sun set. Barb and Bart will host 34 guests for this very intimate affair. After a sumptuous meal, we will be kicking up our heels, dancing unrestrained in the cellar, or strolling through the vineyard, counting the stars. Tickets are available on our website at obrienestate.com/Tickets.

Napa Valley Film Festival

O'Brien Estate is a proud patron-level supporter of the 4th annual Napa Valley Film Festival November 12-16, 2014. This is a great event where you can watch independent and Hollywood feature film screenings and have a Q&A session with the actors and directors following the showings. This five day event features 12 Screening Venues, 125 Films, 300 Filmmakers, 50 Chefs, 150 Wineries. We will be hosting a Patron Dinner at the winery and pouring wine at one of the festival parties. If you are making travel plans to Napa in the late fall this year, we suggest you look into attending this event and purchasing the Festival passes in advance. As Wine Club Members, you can receive 10% off the pass price using our promo code OBRIEN, and discounts with the Hotel Yountville and the Napa Valley Marriott Hotel & Spa. Contact us for the hotel promo codes.

Upcoming Events

Our wine club member event calendar 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.

Saturday, September 6	Wine Club Pickup Party
Saturday, September 27	Night of Unrestrained Reserve
Saturday, November 15	Wine Club Pickup Party
Saturday, February 14	Valentine's Evening Party

Cruise the Mediterranean with Bart and Barb O'Brien

Our next wine club trip will be an eight-night Mediterranean cruise on Oceania Cruises' *Riviera* in October 2015. We'll visit ports of call in Greece, Sicily, Italy, France and Spain. Onboard the ship we will host private parties, special wine tastings, and multi-course winemakers dinner.

Please read the enclosed brochure for a description of this exciting trip. We look forward to sharing this experience with our fun-loving, adventurous club members, and expect this trip to be just as memorable as our past ones. The excitement of being in a foreign country and spending time with our members is truly a wonderful experience for us! This incredible package includes **FREE round-trip economy airfare** from 27 major US gateway cities and all of the onboard wine events. Members who book early will get free pre-paid gratuities (worth \$240 for staterooms and \$352 for suites) and \$100 credit to spend on the ship.

For more information, about this incredible vacation opportunity, please contact our exclusive travel partner, Food & Wine Trails, at **800-367-5348** or visit www.foodandwinetrails.com/obrien2015. So come join us for some fabulous foods and wonderful wines on what promises to be our best Wine Club Member trip yet!

From our family to yours, we wish you health and happiness! Thank you for being members of the O'Brien Estate Wine Club. We hope you enjoy our wines in good company.



Bart O'Brien



Barb O'Brien



O'BRIEN ESTATE

NAPA VALLEY

TASTING NOTES

DAVID YORGENSEN – WINEMAKER

2011 Romance of the Heart – Instantly approachable, the bright, vivid and lively 2011 Romance of the Heart possesses aromas and flavors of red cherries, currents, raspberries and spice that gain weight and texture throughout the lingering finish.

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

2011 Seduction – 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 laden toasty oak. On the palate it is equally intricate exposing a wealth of balanced tannin and acidity that last.

2011 Passion of the Soul – 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 – Dark, dense and expressively perfumed, the 2011 Devotion is a deep and brooding wine that interweaves floral elegance with rich dark fruits and a big, round, fine-grained, mouth coating, palate presence and finish.

2012 Estate Chardonnay – A brilliant, lightly golden hued wine opens with fresh pear aromatics laced with vanilla, subtle toasty oak, spice, and a hint of fresh flowers. Rich and full, the spiced pear flavors linger enticingly.

2012 Attraction Chardonnay – A shimmering, straw-colored wine, featuring rich, round and flavorful pear and stone fruits that blend together for a spicy, full bodied, lingering finish.

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, to reveal subtle, tropical, pineapple notes that effortlessly intermingle with the original mineral and citrus character in a curiously rich and round, yet endlessly refreshing wine.



O'BRIEN ESTATE

NAPA VALLEY

New York Strip, Radicchio, Juniper Berry & Blackberry Jus

Chef Elizabeth Binder, originally from South Africa, is our longtime friend and was recently a *Top Chef* finalist. Lizzie offers the following original recipe for our Wine Club Members, saying:

*"Blackberries are just coming into season. You need a little bit of patience, but it's a beautiful combination of flavors and will pair beautifully with **Unrestrained Reserve**. Delicious! Just lovely!"*

Serves 8

Ingredients:

8 prime New York strip steaks (1 ½ inches thick, about 14 to 16 ounces each; thickness is more important than weight)
2 sticks unsalted butter
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
8 teaspoons kosher salt & 8 teaspoons cracked black pepper (or Juniper rub - *recipe below*)
4 heads radicchio - cut into wedges, drizzle with EVOO (Extra Virgin Olive Oil), season and grill
2 bunches dandelion greens - toss with grilled radicchio to wilt
1 punnet blackberries (small container of 1-2 cups)
1 qt blackberry jus (*recipe below*)
Juniper rub (*recipe below*)

Method:

Melt the butter over medium-high heat and skim the milk solids from the surface to clarify. Set aside to cool. Remove the steaks from the refrigerator about 30 to 40 minutes before cooking. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and allow the steaks to come to room temperature. Before grilling, shape the steaks by gently pushing the sides into the center to create height.

Mix the oil and 1/2 cup of clarified butter on a large serving plate. Put the steaks into the oil-butter mix to coat each side, then lift the steaks to allow the excess oil to drip off. (Make sure that the steaks don't have too much oil-butter mix on them, as this will create flare-ups on the grill.) Coat each side of the steaks with 1 teaspoon of salt and 1 teaspoon of black pepper / or Juniper rub (*see below*) or rub of your choice.

Place the meat on the hottest part of the grill. If at any time the grill flares up, move the steaks to the outside edge, returning them to the center when the flame dies down. Do not slide the steaks across the grill; gently pick them up with tongs. The key is not to flip them around. Ultimately you want to turn a New York strip steak only three times, cooking each side twice for 3 minutes at a time (for a total cooking time of 12 minutes), to get a rare steak with adequate char.

Telling when a steak is done is not an exact science. One technique is to cut a small slit in the steak to see the color of the meat. A professional presses the meat and compares its firmness to the softer, fleshy part at the base of his or her own thumb; if it's the same density, the meat is rare. The firmer center of the palm is like the feel of a well-done steak. (It takes practice.)

An instant-read meat thermometer is most accurate of all; insert it into the center of the steak. Rare is 110 to 115 degrees; medium-rare, 120 degrees; medium, 125 to 130 degrees; medium-well, 130 to 135 degrees; and well, 140 degrees. (Err on the low side, since steaks will continue to cook when removed from the grill.) Allow the meat to rest for 4 - 5 minutes before serving, to allow the juices to emerge from the center.

Dress chicories (radicchio) with pan juices from cooking beef. Assemble on plate with roasted/grilled beef, fresh blackberries and blackberry sauce. Finish beef with a sprinkle of smoked sea salt/juniper rub and serve.

Juniper rub

3 tablespoons juniper berries
3 teaspoons black peppercorns
6 bay leaves - chopped
2 tablespoons kosher salt

In a spice grinder - grind the peppercorns, juniper berries and chopped bay leaf to a fine grind. Mix with salt. Sprinkle rub lightly over meat before grilling.

Juniper & Blackberry Jus (makes 1 QT +)

Part 1:

veal or beef bones
bacon scrap
2 onions - rough dice
2 celery sticks - rough dice
2 carrots - peel and rough dice
1 bunch thyme
parsley stalks
4 qt meat stock

Roast bones to a deep golden brown

In a large pot, caramelize vegetables, add bones, herb, bacon scrap - cover with the meat stock. Bring to boil and simmer to reduce by half – skim and strain.

Part 2:

1 btl Chambord blackberry liqueur
1 btl cabernet sauvignon
Handful black peppercorns
Handful juniper berries
1 bay leaf
1 pound blackberries (4 pints)

Reduce blackberry liqueur and red wine to au sec. Add 2 Qt strained reinforced stock, and all remaining ingredients. Bring to boil, simmer to reduce to sauce consistency (skim). Strain and then strain again through fine mesh strainer.