

# MEMBER NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2014

## **O'Brien Estate Winter Update**

Being in a major earthquake is an unforgettable experience. Barb and I were awoken at 3:20 am on August 24th by violent shaking in our upstairs bedroom. Picture being in a room where the walls were jerking back and forth for 20 seconds, and hearing a roaring sound like a locomotive. Everything not screwed to the walls such as bureaus, TV sets, and china cabinets is crashing to the floor. Of course, the power is out so being in pitch darkness doesn't help. Once a flashlight is found, and you gather your wits, you are happy to be safe and wonder how your neighbors fared.

Fortunately, our home suffered only minor damage and glass breakage; we lost our wedding crystal, our TV, and a few other treasures. In the winery, empty barrels were tossed from their racks. We lost a barrel of wine and about 10 cases of library wine. It took three full days for our dedicated crew to carefully remove and restack the barrels, like a game of pick-up-sticks. Both of our neighboring wineries - Laird and Trefethen - suffered major damage as did several historic buildings in downtown Napa. But earthquakes are not new to California, or to us – we were in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake when Barb was 8 months pregnant with our daughter Emily, as well as 3 other earthquakes before that. Just part of life in California.

Shaken but undeterred, Napa Valley has recovered quickly. Almost all of the downtown businesses have re-opened and the wineries - even the damaged ones - had a magnificent harvest. 2014 was another stellar vintage. We had a heat wave at the beginning of October that finished the ripening process before the rains came. This was our second largest harvest ever and is of wonderful quality. David Yorgensen and Mark Davis, our winemakers, have been working non-stop on crushing, fermenting, pumping over, pressing, and barreling down the wine. We are in awe of them and appreciate their hard work and dedication.

Now we are in the holiday season once more. Time again for friends and family; warm fires and candlelit dinners; all made better by the addition of wine. We hope you have a wonderful holiday season and have a prosperous New Year. Let's have a toast to that!

## **Member Hosted Events**

We have had a great deal of fun over the last few months with wine dinners hosted in our member's homes, bringing Napa Valley to their friends and introducing them to O'Brien Estate. Typically, these dinners are catered for a group of 12 to 18 and we will provide the wine, poetry, and stories to create an entertaining

evening. Please let us know if you might be interested in hosting an event like this in your home or at your club (if they allow you to bring in your own wine).

## Napa Valley Film Festival

O'Brien Estate is a proud patron-level supporter of the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Napa Valley Film Festival November 12-16. 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 visit Napa Valley in November 2015, we suggest you time your visit with the Film Festival as this is a great event. Purchase passes online at [napavalleyfilmfest.org/passes-tickets](http://napavalleyfilmfest.org/passes-tickets) and receive a 10% discount using promotional code obrien.

## 2015 Event Calendar

Our wine club member event calendar for 2015 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. Details to follow.

Saturday, February 14	Valentine's Evening Party
Saturday, February 21	Member Pickup Party
Tuesday, March 17	St. Patrick's Day Party
Saturday, May 16	Member Pickup Party
Saturday, July 18	Summer Dance Party
Saturday, September 19	Member Pickup Party
Saturday, September 26	A Night of Unrestrained Reserve
Saturday, November 21	Member Pickup Party

## Member Mediterranean Cruise

Our next member trip will be an Oceania Mediterranean cruise in October 2015, visiting Greece, Sicily, several ports in Italy, France and Barcelona (view entire itinerary online at [www.foodandwinetrails.com/OBrien2015](http://www.foodandwinetrails.com/OBrien2015)). Food and Wine Trails specializes in creating travel adventures for high end wineries with large memberships. This is all they do and they have been doing it for 20 years, so they understand how to create great food and wine experiences.

We are looking forward to joining our adventurous members on this cruise, as these member events are the most fun vacations we have had. The excitement of being in a foreign country, while becoming friends with our members, is truly a wonderful experience! Check the brochure, as great early booking discounts are being offered including **Free Airfare** from 27 major U.S. airports!

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

## TASTING NOTES

### DAVID YORGENSEN – WINEMAKER

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

**2012 Romance of the Heart** – Exploding with aromas of red raspberry, cherry pie and red plum; the mouthfeel is supple with balanced tannins and the evolving presence of red fruits and cedar spice.

**2011 Estate Merlot** – A dense purple hue that 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 wine.

**2012 Estate Merlot** – A truly focused with aromas of black cherry, boysenberry and espresso. The structured mouthfeel is velvety on the palate with lasting flavors of spicy dark fruits.

**2012 Merlot Reserve** – This vintage bombards the senses with dark fruit and a softness you swear you can smell. Upon tasting, the mouth is overwhelmed with dark fruit, rich earth, subtle oak and polished tannins; A fabulously balanced expression of pure Merlot.

**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 tannins 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, with a densely structured mouth feel that is long and lingering.

**2011 Devotion** – Dark, dense and expressively perfumed; 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 Unrestrained Reserve** – A bold display of what a wine can achieve; rich in flavors, color and complexity. The nose is ever-changing and enticing with rich dark fruits, dense structure, and a balanced mouthfeel. Perfection in a glass!

**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 Chardonnay** – This vintage exemplifies aromatics and flavors of rich pear that blend effortlessly with bright stone fruits. In a wine that is exquisitely balanced, yet still very playful and lively on the palate. Vanilla laced pear notes linger on the lengthy balanced finish.

**2013 Fascination Sauvignon Blanc** – Bright and brilliant, displaying 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.



Silverado Resort Executive Chef, Jeff Jake, prepared this delicious fall inspired soup as the first course at our recent Night of Unrestrained Reserve wine club dinner. The aromas and flavors pair beautifully with our Reserve Chardonnay. He placed a pinch of the chanterelles in the middle of each bowl and poured the soup around them from individual pitchers... an impressive presentation.

## **SUGAR PIE PUMPKIN VELOUTÉ**

### **Ingredients**

- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 medium Spanish onion, diced
- 2 carrots, peeled and shredded
- 2 cups fresh roasted sugar pie pumpkin meat,
- 4 ea fresh sage leaves
- 3 cups vegetable stock or filtered water
- 1 cup cream
- 1 teaspoon marash pepper (a smoky Turkish pepper or smoked paprika)
- Grated fresh nutmeg approximately 1/2 teaspoon
- 2 teaspoon aged sherry vinegar
- Salt and freshly ground white pepper

### **Instructions**

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Cut whole pumpkin in half. Discard seeds or reserve for another use.
3. Place pumpkin on a baking sheet, drizzle flesh side with olive oil, and season with salt and pepper.
4. Roast flesh side down in oven with 1/4 inch water until tender approximately 30 to 40 minutes. Let cool slightly and scoop out pumpkin meat.
5. In a stockpot over medium heat, melt butter and sauté onion until translucent. Add carrot, roasted pumpkin sauté 5 minutes and add stock. Simmer 10-15 minutes
6. Puree the mixture in a vita prep blender to create a smooth textured puree.
7. Return the puree to the stockpot and bring to simmer.
8. Add the cream and simmer for 5 more minutes, lowering the heat if necessary so it does not boil. Add marash pepper and nutmeg.
9. Add water to soup if the puree is too thick at this point.
10. Strain thru a fine mesh sieve or chinois
11. Season with salt and white pepper to taste. Add sherry vinegar...and serve.
12. Suggested garnish, crème fraiche and sauté crisp chanterelle mushrooms.