

## MEMBER NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2016

Greetings from Napa Valley! As summer draws to an end, we are gearing up for harvest. Our crop looks very good so far. Plump clusters of grapes are ripening in the dappled sunlight under the leaf canopy gradually accumulating flavors and color. The cabernet grapes are always a surprising shade of blue resembling blueberries.

Many of the visitors we meet at O'Brien Estate tell us "you are living the dream!" We heartily agree with them – we feel so fortunate to be living the dream that started on our third date when we came to Napa Valley for the first time together. What has really made this dream possible is the wonderful team of people we have helping us run the winery. From David Yorgensen, our winemaker since 2005, and his winemaking team, Mark Davis and Charley Johnson, Steve Distler, our General Manager, and Laura Lambert, our Chief Operating Officer, to Megan Raphael, our Wine Club Coordinator, Julio Ferro, Luis Pettinato, Jason Craig, our Wine Ambassadors, and Hilda Morales, our Operations Assistant, we are grateful to each and every one for creating the wine and experiences that have led us to the top spot on Trip Advisor and enviable scores by the Wine Advocate, Robert Parker.

One of our goals is to remain exactly the same as you found us – a hidden gem in Napa Valley that evokes an earlier, quieter, authentic way to experience the relaxing grace of Napa Valley. Thank you for your support that has enabled us to create the dream that we can share with you.

We are looking forward to joining our members on the Danube Cruise in November. These member trips are one of the great experiences of our lives! We start each trip as virtual strangers – with only the love of O'Brien Estate wine being the common link between us – and end as close friends after 8 days together. The opportunity to get to know people over a glass of wine with great shared adventures creates magic! We hope you can join us on one of these member trips so you can share this human experience.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being members of O'Brien Estate!



Paul O'Brien      Barbara O'Brien

## 2016 MEMBER EVENTS & TRIPS

### 2016 MEMBER DINNERS

The last dinner of the year, our celebrated Night of Unrestrained Reserve, is already **\*\*SOLD OUT\*\***! This year's event celebrates the release of our 2014 Unrestrained Reserve, which guests will taste along with our finest reserve wines, paired with a four-course gourmet meal prepared by local Chef Jeffrey Jake from the Silverado Resort. Guests can mingle with other members as we dine under the stars by candlelight, followed by dancing in the winery to our vintage disco lights.

### 2016 WINE PICK-UP DAYS

If you live nearby or happen to be in town, please join us to pick up your quarterly wine allocation. Come enjoy a glass of wine and some small bites and visit with fellow wine club members. Be sure to RSVP to let us know you are coming, so we can have your wines packed for pick up, especially if you do not usually pick up your wines:

Sunday, September 18th	2 – 5 pm
Sunday, November 6th	2 – 5 pm

### UPCOMING MEMBER TRIPS!

November 6-13, 2016 Danube River Cruise (Uniworld) **\*\*SPACES STILL AVAILABLE\*\***  
September 12-24, 2017 "Viking Homelands" Cruise from Copenhagen to Amsterdam (Oceania)

*For more information, check our partner's site: [foodandwinetrails.com/obrien2016](http://foodandwinetrails.com/obrien2016)*

### A VIKING HOMELANDS CRUISE IN SEPTEMBER 2017!

Join our next adventure as we sail the shimmering waters of Scandinavia and the Baltic Sea on this 12-day cruise. We'll visit Helsinki, Berlin, Copenhagen and Bergen, and witness breathtaking scenery from your ship as she glides through magnificent Nordic fjords in the legendary homeland of the Vikings. We'll also enjoy overnights in cosmopolitan Stockholm and St. Petersburg, Russia and explore charming historic city centers in Tallinn and Gdansk. We sail from Copenhagen on September 12 and finish in Amsterdam on September 24 and of course our award-winning O'Brien Estate wines will be served during the cruise.

### IRELAND TOUR

Another Irish pilgrimage organized by the non-profit O'Brien Clan Foundation is scheduled for September 2017 and will be led by Miles O'Brien, former CNN anchor. This journey takes you throughout the picturesque Irish countryside as you retrace the history of Brian Boru, the last high-king of Ireland. We've enjoyed this wonderful trip for the past two years, but unfortunately it conflicts in 2017 with the cruise so we will have to miss it this year.

### O'BRIEN ESTATE HITS THE ROAD

We are partnering with our members to do private dinners featuring our wines. This year, we have already travelled to see our members in Boston, Carmel, Charleston, Chicago, Dallas, Honolulu, Key Largo, Philadelphia, and The Woodlands. Please contact Steve Distler at [steve@obrienestate.com](mailto:steve@obrienestate.com) for further details about scheduling one of these exclusive events in your hometown.



O'BRIEN ESTATE

NAPA VALLEY

## TASTING NOTES

### OUR ESTATE RESERVE WINES

#### **2013 RESERVE MERLOT – ONLY 100 CASES PRODUCED**

*“One of the most Titanic Merlots ever made in Northern California, the wine is rich, full, reveals graphite intermixed with chocolate, sweet black raspberry and black cherry fruit in abundance. It’s full-bodied, opulent, luxurious and even extravagant. This is over the top, but incredibly well-balanced and pure Merlot to drink over the next decade. Bravo!”*

**96 Points** ~ Robert Parker, *The Wine Advocate*

#### **2013 RESERVE CHARDONNAY – ONLY 140 CASES PRODUCED**

*“A killer Chardonnay...offering notes of poached pear, orange and tangerine oil, a full-bodied mouthfeel, great texture and purity, this is a super wine... beautifully obscured by the extravagant fruit. It is a compelling wine - light greenish gold in color, with magnificent depth of fragrance and flavor.”*

**95 Points** ~ Robert Parker, *The Wine Advocate*

### OUR ESTATE WHITE WINES

#### **2014 CHARDONNAY**

The 2014 Estate Chardonnay entices the nose with pear, spice, and hints of tropical fruit. The mouthfeel is crisp, rich and balanced with a delightful honeysuckle and subtle oak finish.

#### **2015 ATTRACTION, UN-OAKED CHARDONNAY**

Glistening with aromas of fresh pear, hints of orange peel, and Kumquat, the 2015 un-oaked Chardonnay has a lively mouthfeel with a balanced acidity and a lovely finish of fresh fruit.

#### **2015 FASCINATION SAUVIGNON BLANC**

Brilliant and crisp, the 2015 Sauvignon Blanc excites the senses with tropical notes of guava interlaced with lemon-lime and wet stone. The bright acidity is balanced and refreshing; the perfect poolside wine.

## TASTING NOTES

### OUR ESTATE RED WINES

#### 2013 ESTATE MERLOT

Dark and plush, the 2013 Estate Merlot has a focused core of blackberry and black cherry aromas. The finish lingers with cocoa, cassis, and dark fruit that combine with a big but velvety mouthfeel.

*“One of the sexiest and most delicious Merlots made in Northern California...the wine shows coffee, loads of mocha and black cherry fruit in an unctuous, fleshy, Pomerol style. This is complex, rich, juicy and succulent.” 93 Points ~ Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate*

#### 2013 ROMANCE OF THE HEART

Luscious and lively, the 2013 Romance of the Heart blend is opulent with aromas of black currant, boysenberry, and baker’s chocolate. A rich mouthfeel coats the palette and leaves a juicy, lingering fruit finish.

*“Beautiful sweet blackcurrant and blackberry fruit, licorice and spring flowers are present in this medium to full-bodied, juicy, sexy and lush wine. Sexy and complex already, lusty and crowd-pleasing.” 93 Points ~ Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate*

#### 2013 SEDUCTION

The 2013 Seduction red blend is complex and dynamic with a mosaic bouquet that entices the senses with interplays of blueberry, black currant, licorice, vanilla, caramel, and a subtle oak; it shows pure and balanced on the palette with a long and flavorful finish.

*“Blackberry and cassis, full body and a long, pure, rich finish. This is another beauty from O’Brien Estates and is slightly more dark-fruit oriented than the Romance of the Heart.” 94 Points ~ Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate*

#### 2013 PASSION OF THE SOUL, CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Rich and deep, the 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon Passion of the Soul is intense and concentrated with dark fruit and a sexy integrated oak. Polished, supple tannins team with a luscious black berry, graphite, and a dark chocolate finish.

*“Beautiful charcoal, graphite, blueberry and blackberry fruit, a dense purple color, medium to full body, a concentrated mouthfeel, supple texture and beautiful purity and length. This is a stunner and impressive. A rich, broad, open-ended, opulent style that can be drunk now, or cellared for 10-15 years.” 95 Points ~ Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate*



O'BRIEN ESTATE

NAPA VALLEY

## THOUGHTS FROM OUR WINEMAKER

It's hard to believe another harvest is upon us. This will be my twelfth harvest at O'Brien Estate. The O'Brien's, Bart and Barb have become like family and our desire to craft great wine together has only grown stronger.

It always amazes me how quickly the life cycle of a wine is completed and even though the basic process is the same every year, it never gets old or boring. There are always new challenges, ideas, techniques, and improvements to be made that keep it fresh and exciting.

Springtime brings new life to the vineyard and the complex undertaking of blending the various wines begins to take shape in the winery. Summertime brings bottling, our least favorite activity, but also one of the most important. Fall brings us the new harvest and all of the excitement to craft the new vintage wines. Finally winter brings some much-needed rest, for us and the wines, and time to reflect on the years' work.

For now, bottling has been completed and a group of new delicious wines are almost ready to ship out to our customers, harvest 2016 is on our doorstep, and it is every bit exciting as it was last year and the year before, and the year before that and the year before that, and the...

Cheers,

*David Yorgensen, Winemaker*

# SALMON BURGERS & AIOLI, CORN & ARUGULA SALAD PAIRED WITH OUR 2015 SAUVIGNON BLANC, FASCINATION

Our brilliant and crisp Sauvignon Blanc pairs beautifully with grilled fish, perfect for a warm summer evening. Charley Johnson, our Assistant Winemaker, shares his special recipe – a perfect, light summer dish, accompanied by a corn and arugula salad. Enjoy!

**COOK TIME**        35-45mins

**MAKES**            2 Servings

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 Skinless Salmon Fillets (finely chopped)
- 2 Potato Buns
- 2 Cloves Garlic (smashed until it resembles a paste)
- 1 Ear Of Corn
- 1 Lemon
- 1 Bunch Oregano (chopped)
- 2 Tablespoons Mayonnaise
- 2 Tablespoons Butter
- 1 Shallot (minced)
- ¼ Cup Panko Breadcrumbs
- 1oz Arugula

## PREPARATION

1. In a medium pan melt half the butter on medium-high until hot. Add the corn and half the shallot; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 2-4 minutes, or until the shallot is softened and the corn is lightly browned. Transfer to a large bowl. Wipe out the pan for reuse.
2. Mix the chopped salmon with the breadcrumbs, oregano, remaining shallot, half the garlic paste and a drizzle of olive oil; season with salt and pepper. Gently mix to combine. Form into two ½-inch-thick burgers.
3. Reusing pan, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the burgers; cook 3-4 minutes a side, or until browned and cooked through. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate. Wipe out the pan to reuse.
4. While the burgers cook, make the aioli and prepare the arugula garnish.
  - Aioli: in a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, remaining garlic paste, the juice of 1 lemon wedge and a drizzle of olive oil. Stir to combine and season with salt and pepper to taste.
  - Arugula Salad: to the bowl of cooked corn and shallot, add all but a pinch of the arugula, the juice of the remaining lemon wedges and a drizzle of olive oil; toss to combine and season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Reusing the pan, melt the remaining butter on medium until hot. Add the buns, cut sides down, and toast 30-60 seconds, or until lightly browned. Transfer to a clean, dry work surface. Spread a layer of the aioli onto the cut sides of the toasted buns.
6. To serve, place a cooked burger onto each bun bottom; season with salt and pepper. Top with the remaining arugula and the toasted bun tops, garnished with the corn/arugula salad on the side.