

## MEMBER NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2017

### O'BRIEN ESTATE SPRING UPDATE

It is hard to believe that it was 18 years ago when we came across the opportunity to purchase the Costello winery and vineyards, one of the oldest wineries in Napa Valley (#39 after Prohibition circa 1979).

This was the start of O'Brien Estate. Like much of life, it involved a dream and a series of unlikely circumstances. The dream started on our 3rd date 15 years earlier when Barb said "I dream of owning land in Napa Valley".

Now it is spring once more in the vineyard. The seasonality of the vineyard reflects the seasonality of our own lives. We begin each year anew, but with the accumulated growth and experience of previous years giving us a good starting point. Each year we make plans, dream our dreams, and enjoy the day to day experience of living. Before we know it, it is harvest once more, a time to celebrate and rejoice in the joy of life.

We begin each year – and each day – with gratitude that the series of unlikely circumstances that led to us living our dream in Napa Valley continues. Most of all, we thank you as our loyal members in your continued support. Please come back to see us in Napa – we would love to spend time with you and a glass of wine.

With our gratitude and best wishes for a fabulous 2017!



Paul O'Brien      Barbara O'Brien

## 2017 MEMBER EVENTS & TRIPS

### 2017 MEMBER DINNERS

We hope you can join us and connect with other members at our intimate winery dinners. Please make sure to reserve your place(s) as soon as you finalize your travel plans as these events always fill up quickly.

Friday, March 17	St. Patrick's Day, 5-7:30 **FREE for Members**
Saturday, October 7	Night of Unrestrained Reserve, releasing our 2015 Unrestrained Reserve

### 2017 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 connect with other 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. *NOTE: These dates are subject to change - please check our website for updates!*

Sunday, February 19	2 – 5 pm
Sunday, May 14	2 – 5 pm
Sunday, September 10	2 – 5 pm
Sunday, November 5	2 – 5 pm

### UPCOMING MEMBER TRIPS!

**September 12-24, 2017** “Viking Homelands” Cruise from Copenhagen to Amsterdam (Oceania). This will be our 4th member cruise and the most epic yet! Join us on an adventure of meeting new friends and sharing spectacular scenery and wines.

**October 10-18, 2017** Irish pilgrimage organized by the non-profit O'Brien Clan Foundation, led by PBS news anchor (former CNN Anchor), Miles O'Brien. The Foundation raises money for the Trinity College (Dublin) Underprivileged Student Program by conducting immersive tours of medieval and Famine era Ireland by bus for Irish Americans who want to know their roots. Bart is Chairman of the Foundation.

*For more information, check our website [www.obrienestate.com/Members/CruisesandTrips](http://www.obrienestate.com/Members/CruisesandTrips)*

### O'BRIEN ESTATE HITS THE ROAD

We continue partnering with our members for private evenings and dinners featuring our wines. This year, we are travelling to see our members in Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, Charleston, Chicago, Ft. Lauderdale & Miami, Louisville, Little Rock, Dallas & San Antonio, Los Angeles, and Honolulu.

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, at your home, favorite restaurant, or private club.



O'BRIEN ESTATE

NAPA VALLEY

## THOUGHTS FROM OUR WINEMAKER

It always surprises me how quickly the vineyard and winemaking cycles move. Harvest 2016 started in August and concluded in November followed by the much-needed rest in December.

It is now February. The winter rains are replenishing the vineyards, and a new cycle, or vintage is beginning. In the vineyard, it is time to prune the vines and prepare them for the 2017 vintage.

Pruning can be considered the starting point of the cycle, and requires a very high level of skill from the vineyard worker. Pruning is when the vines are trimmed of the previous year's growth in an attempt to create vine structure, and balance the number and position of the remaining buds of each individual vine. It is important to create a structure that, through the growing season, will allow for proper grape cluster positioning and permit good light penetration and air movement. While it can be argued that the buds that are preserved for the new growing season were actually produced the season before and that creation could be considered the start of the new cycle, it is easier to think of pruning as the start.

In the winery, the 2016 wines are being racked for the first time and the 2015 wines are being prepared for the late spring bottling season. Individual lots are being blended together to create each of the distinctive wines produced at O'Brien Estate.

The 2015 wines will soon be bottled and ready for release. The wines will then be in the hands of our members, who ultimately decide when to complete the cycle and enjoy the wine. So, go ahead and open that bottle of wine and complete the cycle!

Cheers!

*David Yorgensen, Winemaker*

## TASTING NOTES

### OUR ESTATE RED WINES

#### 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. ~ David Yorgensen, Winemaker

*"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."* ~ Robert Parker

**93 Points**, *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. ~ David Yorgensen, Winemaker

*"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."* ~ Robert Parker

**94 Points**, *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. ~ David Yorgensen, Winemaker

*"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."* ~ Robert Parker

**95 Points**, *The Wine Advocate*

#### 2012 PASSION OF THE SOUL, CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Dark, deep and muscular with brooding aromatics of black currant, dark chocolate and ripe plum. Rich and dense with dark fruits wrapped in a veil of smooth tannins; an iron fist in a velvet glove.

*"A rich, broad, open-ended, opulent style that can be drunk now, or cellared for 10-15 years."*

*~ Robert Parker*

**91 Points** *The Wine Advocate*



O'BRIEN ESTATE

NAPA VALLEY

## TASTING NOTES

### OUR ESTATE RESERVE WINES

#### **2014 RESERVE MERLOT – ONLY 100 CASES PRODUCED**

*“A much more serious wine, with lots of chocolate, coffee bean, blackcurrant and black cherry, a nice whiff of vanilla cuts across the palate as well. This is full-bodied, opulent and stunning Merlot.” ~ Robert Parker*

**92 Points**, *The Wine Advocate*

#### **2014 RESERVE CABERNET SAUVIGNON – ONLY 230 CASES PRODUCED**

Stylish and classy, the 2014 O'Brien Estate Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve is a dark, juicy, high-density wine that exhibits an abundance of black cherry, ripe plum, black current and blackberry fruits that blend on the palate with mocha infused toasty oak, and sweet tannins that are supple, polished and full bodied. ~ David Yorgensen, Winemaker

**90+ Points**, *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.” ~ Robert Parker*

**95 Points**, *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. ~ David Yorgensen, Winemaker

## CHOCOLATE LAVA CAKE

Our beautifully balanced Seduction Cabernet Sauvignon blend, with flavors of blueberry, black currant, and vanilla, pairs well with this dessert for a flavorful combination to enjoy on a cold, winter evening. Chef, Jeffrey Jake, from Silverado Resort, shares his recipe from the delicious dessert he created for our members at our 2016 Night of Unrestrained Reserve dinner. Enjoy!

**BAKE TIME**        **15 MIN**, in Pre-heated 315 oven

**SERVES**            **6-8**, in 4 OZ aluminum baking cups

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 Whole Eggs (room temp)
- 4 Egg Yolks (room temp)
- 5 OZ Unsalted Butter
- 8 OZ Extra-Bittersweet Chocolate
- ½ Cup + 2 Tbsp Powdered Sugar
- 3 Tbsp Cake Flower

### PREPARATION

Whip yolks and whole eggs to stiff peaks. Melt the butter and chocolate together; first add butter and then add chocolate on top. Once melted, temper the egg mix with a little of the warm chocolate, and then incorporate and whisk in the rest.

Sift the flour and sugar together and then gently fold into chocolate mix, until just incorporated. Portion into lightly greased aluminum cups on sheet pan with a baking rack and bake in pre-heated oven for 15 minutes.

Remove and cool briefly before unmolding onto a dessert plate. Serve with a couple dollops of Hazelnut Sabayon.

## HAZELNUT SABAYON

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 c. heavy cream
- 2 lg. egg yolks
- 3 T sugar
- 1-1/2 tsp. hazelnut oil

Whip the cream to medium peaks in a non-reactive bowl and set aside. In a standing mixer the bowl, add the egg yolks and sugar. Heat about 2" water in a sauce pan over medium heat and when hot, place the mixer bowl over. Whip the egg and sugar until a ribbon effect is achieved, about 2-3 minutes. Attach the bowl to the mixer and beat on high until the mixture cools completely, about 5 minutes. Feel the bottom of the bowl occasionally to test temperature. When the mixture is completely cool, drizzle in the hazelnut oil. Remove the bowl from the mixer and incorporate about 1/4 of the whipped cream, then carefully fold in the rest of the whipped cream. Plate as soon as possible (can leave in fridge temporarily).