

MEMBER NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2017

Greetings from Napa Valley! Summer is almost over and the eclipse of the sun is starting. What a moment! I hope each and every one of you has had a fantastic summer. Like much of life, it only started a few days ago and now it is almost over. Definitely have to pay attention to the moments that make up our life as they go by.

Barb and I flew to Washington D.C recently to meet my brother Dr. Christopher O'Brien and my sister Carlotta Tighe and her 3 children, as well as our children Emily (27) and Mason (25). This was a solemn occasion as my parents were being interred in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors (my father served in the Navy during WWII and my mother was secretary to Senator Russell of Georgia - they had a Capitol Hill romance). The internment ceremony was elaborate and moving. Picture a black caisson drawn by 6 horses carrying the urns to the gravesite, accompanied by a 30 piece military band to play at the gravesite. A 21 gun salute was given followed by the playing of Taps by a lone bugler. It was a drizzly day and the perfect goodbye to my wonderful parents. Arlington Cemetery is a humbling place - you are surrounded by the graves of thousands of military heroes who died in combat preserving American freedom.

After Washington DC, we then went north to Maine with our daughter to stay with a great friend in York Beach, Maine. A wonderful classic summer beach town with lovely views, a lighthouse, salt water taffy, and absolutely delicious lobster rolls.

Now back in Napa Valley, Barb and I will be off to Copenhagen to meet 44 O'Brien Estate members for our epic 12 day Baltic Sea Cruise starting September 12. After the cruise, Emily and Mason will meet us in Amsterdam and then we travel to London to see our niece Allison and her new baby. A week after we are back, "A Night of Unrestrained Reserve" with our theme "From Russia with Love" to celebrate our adventures in St. Petersburg, Russia. Quite a fall planned!

And who is running the winery while we are away? Our great team of people! Our winemaking crew of David Yorgensen, Mark Davis, and Charley Johnson are taking care of the grapes and upcoming harvest at this critical time. Laura, Megan and Hilda are taking care of operations, while Steve, Luis, Julio, Jason and Siobhan are providing hospitality for members and guests.

The grapes are ripening nicely thus far. This is looking to be a classic Napa Valley year with bountiful harvests and the delicious flavors of sun, water, and soil captured in the grapes. We have our fingers crossed once more for another very good year.

Thank you for being part of our family. We hope to see you in Napa Valley soon. Best to you and yours,



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. Our October *Night of Unrestrained Reserve* dinner sold out immediately.

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. *NOTE: These dates are subject to change - please check our website for updates!*

Sunday, September 10 1 – 4 pm

Sunday, November 5 1 – 4 pm

UPCOMING MEMBER TRIPS!

For more information, check our website www.obrienestate.com/Members/CruisesandTrips

September 12-24, 2017 “Viking Homelands” Cruise from Copenhagen to Amsterdam (Oceania)
Underway now!

May 19-27, 2018

****NEW DATE****

Join Barb & Bart to explore your Irish roots on this immersive tour of medieval Ireland by bus. This journey, organized by the non-profit O'Brien Clan Foundation, takes you throughout the picturesque Irish countryside as you retrace the history of Brian Boru, the last high-king of Ireland. Our third tour is being led by PBS news anchor (former CNN Anchor), Miles O'Brien. The Foundation, chaired by Bart, raises money for the Trinity College (Dublin) Underprivileged Student Program.

August 9-16, 2018

“Alaska: The Last Frontier” Cruise, round-trip from Seattle on Oceania
Explore the wilds of Alaska with Barb and Bart next summer! O'Brien Estate and Food & Wine Trails have teamed up once again for a very special wine-themed cruise to appeal to your sense of adventure. Be prepared to feel worlds away as we sail the lush valleys of Alaska's Inside Passage, witness spectacular wildlife, calving glaciers and quaint seaside towns, while enjoying award-winning O'Brien Estate wines throughout the cruise.

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 across the country to see our members in Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, Charleston, Cleveland, Chicago, Ft. Lauderdale, Destin & Miami, Louisville, Dallas & San Antonio, Phoenix, Los Angeles, and Honolulu.

Please contact Steve Distler at 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

Modern winemaking is teeming with new and innovative technologies, fancy stainless steel and computer controlled equipment, and an advanced academic understanding of the process based on a plethora of research. Meanwhile, historically, winemaking is also full of tradition, passion, superstition, and camaraderie. One tradition, in particular, and very dear to my heart is the Harvest Beard, and harvest is close.

The Harvest Beard begins when the first fruit is harvested. From this point forward the male winemaker is no longer allowed to shave until the final fermentation is finished (female winemakers have their own tradition, but I cannot speak to that). This is symbolic of the long days, hard work, and commitment necessary during harvest to get the job done.

I often get looks of horror from unsuspecting cellar staff or interns as I tell them that they are not allowed to shave until harvest is over, but generally by the end they understand and embrace all that comes from the beard. We are all haggard and tired from the long days and we all are letting many things go by the way side in the name of those extra minutes of sleep before the next day starts. It becomes an indication that everyone is working hard, together, for the greater good of the wine; we are all on the same page.

Eventually harvest is finished and the experience can be summed up by the growth of the beard. Partners and spouses can stop asking, "When are you going to shave that thing", and life can presume to go back to normal, but in the meantime, I am getting ready to commit to the 2017 harvest and grow a beard.

Cheers,

David Yorgensen, Consulting Winemaker

TASTING NOTES - CURRENT VINTAGES

2014 MERLOT **NEW RELEASE**

Our 2014 Estate Merlot is a rich, dark, and concentrated; loaded with plum, blackberry, and huckleberry aromas. The mouthfeel is supple and balanced, with lingering flavors of dark fruit and nuances of mocha and spice. ~ Mark Davis, Winemaker

2014 ROMANCE OF THE HEART, BORDEAUX-STYLE BLEND

Expressively focused on a dense core of assorted cherries, the 2014 Romance of the Heart displays loads of red cherries, black cherries, cherries jubilee and chocolate covered cherry aromas and flavors that dominate the senses. This wine is full flavored, delicious, and enjoyable. While cherries may be at the forefront, blackcurrant, plum and spice notes add complexity and interest to the full-bodied and well-structured mouthfeel and finish. ~ David Yorgensen, Winemaker

"A delicious, seductive style of wine, with a dense ruby/purple color, some notes of vanillin, licorice, forest floor, blackcurrants and cherries, loads of spice, some background wood and a full-bodied, luscious mouthfeel, this is a beauty" 93 Points ~ Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate

2014 SEDUCTION, BORDEAUX-STYLE BLEND

Dense, opaque and concentrated the 2014 Seduction tantalizes the senses with the complex interplay of rich dark berries, cherries, blackcurrants and sweet, toasty oak savors that unite with hints of graphite and earth in an intricate assembly across the palate. Densely structured, distinguished and full-bodied on the palate, this wine is packed with flavor and a fantastic texture that lasts and lasts. ~ David Yorgensen, Winemaker

"Juicy blackberry and blackcurrant fruit, licorice, spice as well as touches of oak and graphite are all present in this full-bodied, impressively endowed blend." 94 Points ~ Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate

2014 CABERNET SAUVIGNON **NEW RELEASE**

The 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon is a big and bold wine. Inky purple in color, this wine is packed with blackberry, dark cherry, cassis, and subtle oak aromatics. Although it is big on flavors, the mouthfeel is soft and balanced. Full bodied and rich, yet enlaced with supple tannins that finish in a velvety touch. ~ Mark Davis, Winemaker

"Notes of chocolaty, dense cassis fruit, some spice box and licorice all jump from the glass of this inky purple-colored wine. The tannins are sweet and soft, and the wine full-bodied, round and layered. This is impressive wine to drink." 94 Points ~ Robert Parker, The Wine Advocate

2016 FASCINATION, SAUVIGNON BLANC

Vibrant and determined the 2016 Sauvignon Blanc focuses on intense citrus, nectarine and mineral aromas that are fresh, zesty and lively. Clean, pure and penetrating on the palate, the flavors are generous, intellectual and refreshing. ~ David Yorgensen, Winemaker

2015 CHARDONNAY

The 2015 Estate Chardonnay embraces the nose with pear, spice, apricot and vanilla aromatics. The mouthfeel is crisp yet round, finishing long on the palate with hints of lemon zest and a subtle oak. ~ Mark Davis, Winemaker

2012 REFLECTION DESSERT WINE (375 ML)

Our 2012 Late Harvest dessert wine, Reflection, is the perfect pairing for after dinner. Boysenberry jam, blackberry pie, and hints of licorice greet you from the glass. The mouthfeel is delicate and silky, with hints of sweetness and a finish that is soft and dense with candied dark fruit. ~ Mark Davis, Winemaker

TASTING NOTES - 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.” **92 Points** ~ Robert Parker, *The Wine Advocate*

2014 RESERVE CABERNET FRANC – ONLY 100 CASES PRODUCED

“This wine displays beautifully sweet cranberry, boysenberry, and mulberry fruits as well as notes of forest floor and flowers. Dense ruby/purple, it cuts a medium to full-bodied impression across the palate. Pure and nicely touched by oak, with a terrific finish, this is top-flight Cabernet Franc.” **93 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*

TRI-TIP AND SOUTHWEST SALAD WITH AVOCADO DRESSING

Our summer recipes are from our Tasting Room Manager and resident Grill Master, Luis Pettinato, and our Estate Sommelier, Jason Craig. Their recipes combine fresh ingredients from summer's bounty. Our 2013 Reserve Chardonnay and 2014 Merlot are the perfect accompaniments to this refreshing summer meal.

Southwest Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Ripe Avocado, sliced
- 1 ear Roasted Corn, cut off cob
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- 1 basket cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 1 jicama (or cucumber), peeled and chopped
- 1 bunch green onions, chopped

PREPARATION

Mix together all ingredients. Dress with Avocado dressing.

Creamy Avocado Dressing

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Jalapeno, remove seeds and slice length-wise in half
- 1 Ripe Avocado
- 1 lemon, squeezed juice
- 1 TB Apple Cider Vinegar
- ¼ Cup Olive Oil
- Cilantro, handful of leaves
- 8 oz Greek Yogurt
- Salt & Pepper

PREPARATION

In a food processor, combine avocado, vinegar, lemon juice, and jalapeno. Add cilantro and dash of salt and pepper.

Run on until mixture is smooth and creamy. Add olive oil slower while on low.

Remove from food processor and stir in yogurt. Adjust salt and pepper to taste.

Tri-Tip Roast

MARINADE INGREDIENTS

- 1 whole large yellow Onion
- 1 cup dried onion or 1/4 cup Onion Powder
- 1 entire peeled Garlic head, to taste
- 1 cup Worcestershire Sauce
- 2 cup Soy Sauce (original)
- 1 cup Coriander Seeds
- 1/2 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Juice of 1 Large Orange
- 2 TB Chili Powder
- Fresh Cracked Black Pepper
- Optional to make spicier: 2 TB. Cayenne (or Thai) Pepper and 1/4 cup Tabasco

PREPARATION

Place ingredients in a blender or Vita-Mix. Puree on the highest speed.

Add **4 ounces of O'Brien Estate Merlot** and gently stir in with a spoon (do not use blender after adding the wine). Pour half of the marinade into your marinating container.

Place **tri-tip beef roast, approximately 3 pounds**, into container and slowly pour the remaining half of the marinade over the meat. Refrigerate for 8-16 hours, turning the meat every 4 hours.

One hour before grilling, remove the marinating meat from refrigerator and let come to room temperature. After 30 minutes, remove the meat from the marinade and lightly coat the entire meat with a seasoning of sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Grill over Mesquite, being careful not to have the flames char the meat, about 8-10 min/side for Medium Rare. After each side is seared, rub/melt half cube of butter on each side. Remove from Grill and LET REST for at least 5 minutes. Slice and garnish with sea salt and black pepper

Serve with seasoned and grilled red potatoes and summer squash.