

Terry's Tastings – It's All About Taste

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving. For my first column of the season, I have chosen some hidden gems, little known wines outside their own regions, which are worth the effort to seek out. These wines are delicious and food-friendly and with a little research you can find where they are available. I will discuss two white wines and two red wines from four different countries and then give some tasting and food pairing notes.

Moschofilero is an aromatic white wine grape of Greek origin with a pink-purple skin. This grape is grown throughout much of Greece, but primarily on the Peloponesian Peninsula in the southwestern corner of Greece and is traditionally used to make a dry, bold wine. It ripens late in the season and extremely hot weather can sometimes cause problems affecting quality.

Ehrenfelser is a white wine grape of German origin which is a cross between Riesling and Silvaner. It is now grown extensively in the Okanagan Valley. The name is derived from the ruins of Burg Ehrenfels, a medieval castle on the Rhine River. The grapes ripen earlier and tend to produce higher yields than Riesling, and produce well in vineyards where Riesling doesn't do well.

Durif is a red wine grape grown primarily in Australia, California, France, and Israel. It is also known in the U.S. and Israel as Petite Sirah. It is a cross between Syrah and Peloursin discovered by the French botanist Francois Durif and named after him. The Petite in the name Petite Sirah refers to the size of the berries which are small and grow in tightly packed clusters. These grapes produce dark, tannic wines with a spicy, plummy flavour and have an ageing potential of 20 years or more.

Tannat was historically grown in southwestern France and is now grown extensively in South America, especially in Argentina and Uruguay. The wine is noted for its high tannin levels and usually has a deep dark colour and a high level of alcohol. It is often blended with other grapes and aged for 20 months or more in oak to soften the tannins and make it more approachable.

Wines of the week:

Boutari Moschofilero 2011 – Greece \$17.85

Yellow-green in colour with aromas and flavours of citrus, apple, and pear, this wine is a great match for seafood and poultry.

Lake Breeze Ehrenfelser 2013 – Okanagan Valley \$22.65

This wine is straw-coloured and off-dry with aromas and flavours of citrus and tropical fruit, and will pair well with shellfish and Asian food.

Nugan Estate Durif 2009 – Australia

\$24.75

Dark ruby-red with aromas of smoke and dark fruit, and flavours of black cherry and plum with a hint of spice, this wine is a perfect match for lamb, grilled meats, and aged cheese.

Finca Las Moras Tannat 2012 – Argentina

\$12.45

Bright purple in colour with earthy, dark fruit aromas and flavours of black cherry and black currant, this young, tannic wine is great with grilled steak, prime rib, and dark chocolate.

Until next time! Please send comments and questions to Terry Tait terry@liquoronmcleod.com