



# The Wine Press



Newsletter of the Orange County Wine Society, Inc.

Volume 45, Issue 3, March 2021

## President's Message

February has flown by despite most of us still being locked down from the COVID pandemic. The OCWS has been doing their best to keep our social connections by hosting not one, not two, not three, but FOUR different seminar tracks with our Sunday Winter Seminars, our Monday night Varietal Hours, our monthly Friday night Webinars, and the Winemakers' Group seminars. We have several new and free "zoominars" coming up this month, so be sure to check out the Events page on our OCWS.org website, and the "Save the Date Calendar" at the end of this newsletter.

We also plan to start more of our Wine Education Webinars this month with our certified Sommelier, starting on March 24 (see page 4).

As I mentioned in my last month's President's Message, after suspending OCWS membership renewal fees for the past 12 months, we will resume asking for annual membership fees next month. Your renewal will be two years since your last fee, so if you renewed last time on April 1, 2019, we will request you renew on April 1, 2021. If your renewal was May 1, 2019, we will re-

quest you renew on May 1, 2021. We appreciate all of you for helping to maintain the Orange County Wine Society during one of the most trying years of our lives.

Update on our 2021 Commercial Wine Competition, Home Wine Competition, and our Courtyard at the OC Fair—the OC Fair & Event Center (OCFEC) is still waiting for finalization of direction from both the State and the Orange County Health Department. We are making preparations for all of these activities, but we haven't received the final "go-ahead" from the OCFEC. I will keep you all informed as we get updates.

The Los Angeles County Fair has been canceled for 2021, so we hope we do not suffer the same fate.

Hopefully, many of you have received your COVID vaccinations or have plans to do so in the near future. This will be the key to OCWS conducting more activities in conjunction with the OC Fair, and we all want to get back to work. (And by that, I really mean PLAY!)

I wish everyone a healthy and happy March!

- Kevin Donnelly, President

## Membership Update



The Orange County Wine Society extends an extremely warm welcome to its newest members! Membership for the following new members was approved by the Board of Directors in February 2021:

**Nancy and Bob Sassaman**

As of February 1, the OCWS had 1,133 members.

- Mel Jay, Membership Chair

## Upcoming Events:

- March 12 ..... 6  
*Cannonball Wine Company*
- April 9 ..... 7  
*Russian River Vineyards*
- May 14..... 7  
*Mystery Winery/Winemaker*

## Special Points of Interest:

- Membership Update ..... 1
- Wine Truths/Falsehoods.... 2
- OCWS Varietal Hour ..... 3
- Calling on Volunteers ..... 3
- Ondine Chattan ..... 4
- Wine Education Webinars . 4
- "Best of" Recipe & Wine Pairings ..... 5
- Winemakers Newsroom ..... 6
- Wine in Space ..... 8
- Save the Date Calendar ..... 9



**Kevin Donnelly**  
**President**  
 Kevindonnelly@ocws.org



**Sara Yeoman**  
**Vice President**  
 Sara@ocws.org



**Mel Jay**  
**Treasurer**  
 Mel@ocws.org



**George Cravens**  
**Secretary**  
 George@ocws.org



**Carolyn Christian**  
**Director**  
 Carolyn@ocws.org



**Fred Heinecke**  
**Director**  
 Fred@ocws.org



**Leslie Hodowanec**  
**Director**  
 Les@ocws.org



**Linda Mihalik**  
**Director**  
 Linda@ocws.org



**Rich Skoczylas**  
**Director**  
 Rich@ocws.org

## 10 Wine Truths, or Falsehoods?

As you may have guessed by now, I enjoy reading about wine, fact or fiction. Here are 10 what are labeled as wine truths that I thought worthy of sharing. Published on *BLOGYOURWINE.com* on October 15, 2012:

1. Meals served without wine are rarely worth eating.
2. There are 2 types of people in this world; those who like wine and those who aren't allowed in my house.
3. 99.932% of the world's problems can be solved after drinking a glass (or three) of wine.
4. If your computer doesn't boot up as fast as it once did, you can pour a little wine into any one of its USB ports and it will run 10x faster. Don't try this same trick with beer. It will make your computer fat and ugly.
5. Wine is "win" with an "e" in it.
6. You shouldn't discriminate against which grapes your wine is made from because wine doesn't discriminate against who drinks it. (Apart from Muscadine, because that grape hates you, and you should hate it right back!) Not sure most of us would agree since this particular grape is heart-friendly, low-calorie, and a fiber-rich fruit.
7. Wine must only be consumed on days of the week with an "a" in them.
8. In a recent survey, oak trees said that they don't mind being chopped down, so long as they are being made into wine barrels.
9. There should also be a bottle of sparkling wine in your fridge. Always. Don't question it. Just do it!
10. Wine is the most nutritional beverage on the planet. It also makes you more attractive to the opposite sex, smarter, funnier and a kick\*\*\* dancer.

- **Linda Mihalik, Editor**

*The Orange County Wine Society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California with its principal place of business in Costa Mesa, California.*

PO Box 11059, Costa Mesa, CA 92627  
 Phone: 714.708.1636 ■ Fax: 714.546.5002  
 Website: OCWS.org ■ OCWS Facebook ■ Twitter:  
 @OCWineSociety

OCWS Website Administrator: Wendy Taylor  
 OCWS Photographer: Jim Burk



## The OCWS Varietal Hour



Thank you to everyone who has made the OCWS Varietal Hour such a great success after only one month! Our weekly OCWS Varietal Hour continues every Monday at 7 pm. Come join your OCWS friends and make

new friends as you share a wine from the weekly theme. This free event is in a Zoom meeting format, with all participants visible on the screen. Sign-up today on the OCWS website.

A special thank you to the OCWS members who have volunteered their time to serve as hosts for the events: Don Phillips, Linda Mihalik, Ken Knapp, Dawn Iglesias, Rochelle Randel, Sara Yeoman, Fred and Cheryl Heinecke. If you are interested in hosting one of the future Varietal Hours, please contact Carolyn at [Carolyn@ocws.org](mailto:Carolyn@ocws.org) or George at [George@ocws.org](mailto:George@ocws.org).

Below is a listing of **upcoming Varietal Hour themes**:

- Monday, March 1 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Sam & Kim Clark—Varietal: Viognier
- Monday, March 8 (7-8 pm) Host: Rich Skoczylas—Varietal: Dessert Wines
- Monday, March 15 (7-8 pm) Host: Jim Burk—Varietal: Cabernet Sauvignon
- Monday, March 22 (7-8 pm) Host: Ed Reyes—Varietal: Rhone White Varietals (Rousanne, Marsanne, Viognier, Grenache Blanc, Picpoul Blanc, Muscat Blanc, etc.)

- Monday, March 29 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Dawn Iglesias & Ken Knapp—Varietal: Spanish Varietals (Tempranillo, Grenache, Rioja, Malvasia, Graciano, Cargnan, Palomino, etc.)
- Monday, April 5 (7-8 pm) Host: Kevin Donnelly—Varietal: Sangiovese
- Monday, April 12 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Don & Elee Phillips—Varietal: Pinot Grigio
- Monday, April 19 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Sara Yeoman & Carolyn Christian—Varietal: Wine Cocktails (watch for recipes or bring your own)
- Monday, April 26 (7-8 pm) Host: Mel Jay—Varietal: Italian Red Varietals (Sangiovese, Nebbiolo, Barbera, Dolcetto, Primitivo, Montepulciano, Aglianico, etc.)
- Monday, May 3 (7-8 pm) Host: Ken Knapp—Varietal: Italian White Varietals (Moscato, Pinot Grigio, Vermentino, Greco, Arneis, Trebbiano, Cortese, etc.)
- Monday, May 10 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Sam & Kim Clark—Varietal: Fortified Wines (Port, Sherry, Madeira, Marsala, Vermouth, Fortified Dessert Wines, etc.)
- Monday, May 17 (7-8 pm) Host: Mel Jay—Varietal: Syrah / Petite Sirah
- Monday, May 24 (7-8 pm) Host: Fran Gitsham—Varietal: Riesling
- Monday, May 31 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Don & Elee Phillips—Varietal: Rosé

- **George Cravens & Carolyn Christian, Directors**

## 2021 Commercial Wine Competition Volunteers Needed

*We  
Need  
Your  
Help!*

The Commercial Wine Competition Committee is continuing to move forward with the planning of the 2021 Commercial Wine Competition. It is scheduled for the weekend of June 5-6, 2021. Of course, our volunteers are critical to its success!

We understand there is still uncertainty with the COVID-19 pandemic and we are working with the OC Fair and Event Center Administration, taking the necessary steps to prioritize the safety of all of our members. We want you to know that concern for our volunteers is at the forefront. We are developing plans to adhere to and follow all guidelines, rules and regulations as set forth by the national, state, and local government and health departments. Since we are in the early planning stages for the event, there will be many questions you may have – we only ask that you be flexible, as nothing has been etched in stone at this point in time.

This event offers many opportunities: meet the winemakers and winery principals, increase your wine knowledge, enjoy getting to know your fellow OCWS members, and experience

some great California wines. There are many tasks where volunteer help is needed: stewarding, glass washing and drying, verification of scores and computer input. **No training is necessary** as newer volunteers will be teamed with experienced competition volunteers.

**All** volunteer sign-ups are now done *online*! The volunteer site identifies bagging nights, stewarding days, and other work tasks with dates and times. In order to qualify for stewarding, you will need to sign up for two additional work parties. We offer bagging, hotel setup, and moving of wine to and from the competition site. In addition, volunteers can elect to work the sorting and medal mailing crews in late June.

An email announcement will be sent late March notifying members when sign-ups begin. Please make sure your email address is up to date in the [ocws.org](http://ocws.org) website as we will be using your email to send you confirmations. If you have questions about volunteering, please email us at [Robyn@ocws.org](mailto:Robyn@ocws.org). We look forward to your participation in this very important event!

- **Robyn & Dean Strom, Volunteer Coordinators  
Commercial Wine Competition Committee**

## Ondine Chattan—A Life of Passion



The OCWS is greatly honored to have Ondine Chattan, Head Winemaker of Share a Splash Wine Company's Cannonball and Angels & Cowboys labels as our winery program presenter on March 12<sup>th</sup>. We are extremely proud to truly consider Ondine a member of our family, as she is a veteran judge for the OC Fair Commercial Wine Competition and year after year continues to grace us with her expertise, passion, and enthusiasm for her love of wine.

As one of North Coast's top winemaking talents, she worked for famed wineries like Ridge Vineyards, Cline Cellars, and spent decades running famed Healdsburg winery Geyser Peak. Ondine is a passionate Sonoma County winemaker with experience ranging from cult boutique producers to notable household brands. Her love of the diversity of Sonoma and California at large fuels her enthusiasm for making a range of varietals from Sauvignon Blanc to Cabernet.

It takes just reading Ondine's biography in her own words on the Share a Splash website to know just how incredibly large her heart and passion are for wine and life itself wherein she begins with "Looking back, I acknowledge that I never dreamed I would become a winemaker. But happily, and unexpectedly through serendipity and an introductory lecture on Viticulture, I was enlightened and once I comprehended the magnitude of the discovery, I felt I had been initiated into a secret society and I became filled with a purpose and wonder-

ment that set me off and running down the most amazing path." Her biography in her own passionate words is an informative and delightfully insightful read and can be found at <https://www.shareasplash.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Ondine-Chattan-Biography.pdf>.

A perfect example of Ondine's passion clearly showed when asked by Wine Warehouse in May of 2020 "Where do you draw inspiration from?" and she answered in part - "I am reminded daily that wine itself is a living, ever-changing product. Being part of that entire lifecycle and driving significant portions of it is very fulfilling and romantic. Ultimately our brands are a deep reflection of the vision of all those who participate in making them, an amalgam of people, places, and time."

The OCWS members attending the presentation will be given the unique opportunity to hear from the winemaker herself about her 2020 Angels & Cowboys Rose, 2018 Angels & Cowboys Proprietary Red, 2019 Cannonball California Sauvignon Blanc and 2018 Cannonball California Cabernet Sauvignon, and we are thrilled and greatly appreciative that Share a Splash will be offering a 20% discount on all wines to OCWS members. Using the discount code of OC20 at checkout, the wines can be purchased on their website at [www.shareasplash.com](http://www.shareasplash.com).

If space is still available and you haven't already reserved a spot for what is surely to be a fabulous wine experience, you can register under the Events tab at [www.ocws.org](http://www.ocws.org).

- Fran Gitsham, Contributing Writer

## OCWS Wine Education Webinars

In case you missed it in last month's newsletter, we are excited to announce the return of the Wine Education Series this March. While we cannot hold wine education classes in person, we can help you travel the globe in search of great wines! We are partnering with Certified Sommelier Spreti Valente, who has over 15 years of experience in the industry. She will provide an in-depth look at the history, climate, and general wine information on a variety of regions.

Each class will feature wines for purchase ahead of the class, and wines available for purchase after the class, all at a discount to our OCWS members. The cost of the class is \$20 per logon – you can join us alone or make it a fun date-night with your significant other! Build your wine knowledge and travel the globe virtually.

- Carolyn Christian, Wine Education Chair

- **Wines of Mexico - Wed, March 24 @ 6:00 – 7:30 pm**
  - **Seminar Wines (free shipping – total cost savings on wines \$36):**
    - Magoni - Chardonnay Vermentino White Blend - \$19.00
    - Bruma Rosé - Rosé of Sangiovese - \$25.00
    - Corona del Valle - Tempranillo - \$39.00
    - Solar Fortun - "O Positivo" Red Blend - \$38.00
  - Additional wine discounts to be made available for attendees to purchase after event
  - All wines must be purchased no later than March 17, 2021. Details to follow
- **Wines of California Central Coast - Wed, April 21, 2021 6:00 – 7:30 pm**
  - **Wines: TBD**

## “Best of” Recipe & Wine Pairings—March 2021

The four weeks prior to writing this column just seemed to get away from me and, to be honest, I didn't prepare as well as I should have. So, in my haste to write this article, it dawned on me that I have a simple “best of” recipe that is often requested when I attend a gathering. I have made this salad on an exceptionally large scale for up to 200 people at OCWS events with the Cooks Caucus including a few barbecues, the Home Wine Competition and a home wine competition wrap up event, and I have made it as small as a half recipe when dining with just a few friends. It can be easily tailored to serve any number of people. I have shared the recipe with anyone who has asked for it over the years and it is so simple, that if it wasn't so good, I'd almost be embarrassed to share it with you.

Those of you that know me well know that I am not known for my culinary talents. Although I can cook and bake well from recipes, I do not have that innate sense of what flavors go with what that true chefs have. Although I have a good palate and genuinely appreciate the creations of others, I am merely a cook and, much in the style of Sandra Lee from the original Cooking Network, I create semi-homemade dishes.



This particular salad came from my frugal upbringing in that I just could not allow myself to continue to expend the money on the exorbitant cost of the original salad from a local

restaurant (shhhh.....Stonefire Grill) for the quantities that I wanted to serve, so I recreated what I thought was their recipe and, low and behold, it has been a winner ever since. I keep the canned and bottled ingredients on hand at all times and, becoming lazy in my later years, now buy the fresh ingredients already shred, if available.

I hope this finds its way onto your easy, to do list and that you enjoy it with whatever wine sounds good to you at the time.

### BBQ CHOPPED SALAD

Shredded lettuce - As much as you like, just pack the lettuce into the bowl as the base

Place equal lines on top of the lettuce in your desired amounts of:

Shredded Red Cabbage

Black Beans (canned, rinsed and drained well)

Corn (canned, rinsed and drained well)

Shredded Carrots

Scallions and Cilantro (diced and mixed together)

Shredded Cheese

Tortilla Chips (crumbled to use as topping)

\*BBQ Sauce

\*Ranch Dressing

(\*Use good name brands, as it does make a difference, serve separately and drizzle equally on the salad on individual portions)

**Additional Hints** (from years of trial and error):

- A protein such as chicken or thinly sliced beef can be added to serve as a main course
- Serve the crumbled tortilla chip topping on the side, so they don't get soggy on top of the salad
- Put squeeze containers of dressing and sauce on the table and allow guests to dress the salad to suit their tastes, also the salad doesn't get soggy by serving on the side
- Play with ingredients to suit your taste (suggest not deleting cilantro/scallions)
- It's easiest to dig down and serve the salad with tongs

- **Fran Gitsham, Contributing Writer**

*The Wine Press* is the official newsletter of the Orange County Wine Society, Inc. The newsletter is published monthly. *The Wine Press* welcomes input from the OCWS membership.

Forward comments, questions, and suggestions to  
WinePress@ocws.org

**Editor-in-Chief:** Linda Mihalik

**Contributing Writers:** Board of Directors, Bill Forsch, Fran Gitsham, Robyn & Dean Strom

**Contributing Editors:** John Goodnight, Ron Nickens, Rochelle Randel, Taren Weber

**Contributing Photographer:** Wendy Taylor

Copyright © 2021 Orange County Wine Society, Inc. and its licensors.  
All rights reserved.



## Winemakers Newsroom

As I pen this article in mid/late February for our March newsletter, the Winemakers' Group continues to be hindered by the pandemic. Yes, many are receiving vaccines, our Orange County numbers continue to improve, and generally, I hope and think everyone is more optimistic than we were several months ago.

The OCWS's main group and the OCWS's Winemakers' Group are mostly "social" animals; if we can't meet together, it isn't really much fun. Yes, we can Zoom to our hearts content – but we really miss getting together in our groups. Hopefully we will soon be able to do that.

We continue to conditionally prepare for the Home Wine Competition and await the OC Fair's decision on our ability to do that. We will also embrace the day when we can get back to having Quarterly Winemaker get-togethers and in person seminars to improve our winemaking skills. We try to develop ideas that can be shared now via video methods; but so much of our winemaker experience is actual seeing, smelling, and tasting – it won't be nearly as much fun until we can get back to that.

That said, I would encourage all to take the "long" approach. And be ready and prepared when we are allowed to meet in person again.

And to our winemakers – Dave Rutledge sent some links to several great sites that have free articles to review on a wide range of topics regarding winemaking. They are:

### Blending:

<https://winemakermag.com/article/97-blending-to-improve-wines>

### Making Fruit Wines:

<https://www.thebeveragepeople.com/how-to/wine/fruit-wines-at-home.html>

The **Beverage People website** has a lot of articles that are well done:

<https://www.thebeveragepeople.com/how-to/wine-making.html>



Enjoy those sites for additional information and education at your leisure.

Look for more information on our OCWS website at [ocws.org](http://ocws.org) and click on the Winemaker tab. My email contact is [Billforsch@ocws.org](mailto:Billforsch@ocws.org). Stay safe, cheers!

**- Bill Forsch, Winemakers' Group Chair**

## OCWS Winery Webinar Program—Cannonball Wine Company

**Friday, March 12, 2021 @ 6:30 pm**  
**Via Zoom Webinar Platform**

CANNONBALL  
HEALDSBURG, CALIFORNIA



Our March Winery Webinar introduces a relatively new winery to California. This is Cannonball that started in 2006. Although Cannonball is a newer entry, it was started by a dynamic team of wine industry veterans who were determined to rock the wine world. The vision was to make the best California Cabernet under \$20. Armed with a belief that wine should be fun, uninhibited and approachable, they set out to share a splash of Cannonball Cabernet in every glass.

ANGELS & COWBOYS



HEALDSBURG, CALIFORNIA

Leading as the Cannonball winemaker is veteran Ondine Chattan. Ondine is a passionate Sonoma County winemaker with experience ranging from cult boutique producers to notable household name brands. Her love of the diversity of Sonoma and California at large fuels her enthusiasm for making a range of varieties from Sauvignon Blanc to Cabernet. Ondine takes a hands-

on, multidisciplinary approach to winemaking.

Members have to sign up for this virtual webinar on our website to watch via Zoom. After you sign up to attend, you will receive a confirmation email by Thursday, Noon, March 11 with details to connect. If you cannot find your confirmation, contact [Rich@ocws.org](mailto:Rich@ocws.org).

Ondine will discuss four wines at this webinar. They are:

- 2020 Angels & Cowboys Rosé**
- 2018 Angels & Cowboys Proprietary Red**
- 2019 Cannonball California Sauvignon Blanc**
- 2018 Cannonball California Cabernet Sauvignon**

Our members have the option to purchase these wines at a 20% discount using Promotion Code "OC20." Log onto the Wine Society website to order these wines; tax and shipping will be added. Members may order these wines now through March 31. **NOTE:** you must sign up separately on the website to attend this webinar. Buying the wines does NOT sign you up for the webinar. **Sign-ups close 5:00 pm on Wednesday, March 10.**

**- Leslie Hodowanec, Director**

**- Rich Skoczylas, Director & Winery Program Chair**

# OCWS Winery Webinar Program—Russian River Vineyards

**Friday, April 9, 2021 @ 6:30 pm**  
**Via Zoom Webinar Platform**



Russian River Vineyards winemaker, Giovanni “Gio” Balistreri, will be our featured speaker. He comes from four generations of farmers, and he would not have it any other way. Gio is a farmer, first and foremost.

To produce great wine, Gio believes that you must first produce excellent fruit. And it is the essential character and flavor of that fruit, when it is harvested, that will determine its potential to become a superior wine. There is no shortcut. You must be there and manage the crop at every step.

The Russian River Valley is one of the world’s greatest wine-making regions where true devotees of great wine are familiar with the magic of this valley. So, just over a decade ago, he set out to make the most of an incredible environment to make great wine. The Russian River area enjoys warm summer days, which are important for sugar production in grapes, and cool night temperatures to preserve the acidity in the grapes. This provides a combination to achieve and maintain the delicate balance of sugar and acid. These



These

attributes, combined with rich and diverse soil conditions, make the Russian River Valley a winemaker’s dream for Gio to work his magic.

**Wine Ordering Offer:** You have the option to order the wines at a 30% discount; tax and shipping fee will be added. This wine sale period extends from March 1 to April 12. The information to order the wines for the event is located on the Wine Society website. The wines to order (\$100 for all three) for the webinar include:

**2019 Chardonnay / Bacigalupi Vineyard**  
**2017 Pinot Noir / Classic Cuvee**  
**2016 Red Blend / Confluence**

NOTE: you must sign up separately on the website to attend this webinar on Zoom. Buying the wines does NOT sign you up for the webinar.

Sign-ups close 5 pm on Wednesday, April 7. After you sign up to attend, you will receive a confirmation email by Thursday Noon, April 8 with details to connect. If you cannot find your confirmation, contact Rich@ocws.org.

**- Leslie Hodowanec, Director**  
**- Rich Skoczylas, Director & Winery Program Chair**

## Save the Date—Winery Webinar Program

**Friday, May 14, 2021 @ 6:30 pm**  
**Via Zoom Webinar Platform**

Our Winery Webinar series ends in May. Who will be our featured winemaker the evening of May 14th?

### **A few hints:**

Our winemaker for this evening is a great speaker!

This winemaker studied enology at UC Davis!

This winemaker produces balanced wines enjoyed in their youth, but will also age and become more complex with time!

Who is this winemaker you ask?

Does this winemaker come from Napa, Sonoma, Paso Robles or elsewhere?

Has this winemaker entered our Commercial Wine Competitions?

Will this winemaker be a woman or man?

Does this winemaker have a slight accent, if so, what nationality?

Does this winemaker make any sparkling wines, and if you think so, what types?

Has this winemaker presented or visited us previously?

Could this winemaker have a “relationship” with Hollywood?

Did this winemaker lose their winery in a recent fire?

Watch for the April edition of The Wine Press to find out who will be presenting and answers to the hints provided!

We are very excited in concluding our Winery Webinar series with this winemaker.



Hint: Winemaker's Winery

**- Leslie Hodowanec, Director**  
**- Rich Skoczylas, Director & Winery Program Chair**

## Wine in Space Today

In late January 2021, OCWS member, Ed Danoff, brought to our attention a most interesting article he came across featured in the *Smithsonian Magazine* on January 20, 2021 by Alex Fox and thought worthy of sharing and follow up. Thank you, Ed, for bringing this to our attention. Members keep these interesting stories coming—they will be most appreciated!

### Case of Bordeaux Wine Returns to Earth After a Year in Space



Last week, a dozen bottles of red wine from France's Bordeaux region returned to Earth after a year in orbit aboard the International Space Station (ISS), reports Marcia Dunn for the *Associated Press* (AP). The case of wine, along with 320 sections of grapevine called vine canes, splashed into the

Gulf of Mexico inside SpaceX's Dragon cargo capsule. Other experiments and gear weighing thousands of pounds also returned to Earth, including 3-D engineered heart tissues and live mice, reports Ryan W. Miller for USA Today.

As for the wine, it was sent to the ISS by Space Cargo Unlimited (SCU) as an experiment aimed at investigating "how space radiation and microgravity affect wine components during the aging process," according to a November 2019 statement from the company. The bottles went into space in December 2019 inside specially designed steel cylinders to prevent them from breaking.

## Wine in Space Yesterday

In 1969, a small vial of wine boldly went where no beverage had gone before. Buzz Aldrin, a religious man, held communion on the Moon, complete with a small wafer and a bit of fermented grape juice. But that wasn't the last time someone tried to send wine up among the stars. In the 1970s, NASA was trying to figure out how to make space flight more comfortable for its astronauts. One of their best ideas was to improve the quality of space food. Instead of dried chunks of inedible powder, they started adding frozen foods, wet-packed meals, and perishables to the menu. Soon, astronauts would enjoy delicacies like spaghetti and prime rib—and even a little alcohol.

Enter Charles Bourland, the man in charge of choosing wine for the Apollo program. Not only did he have to find something tasty, he needed a wine that could stand up to the rigors of space travel. Since NASA couldn't load a rocket with heavy, clunky bottles, Bourland needed to find a wine that wouldn't lose its flavor after repackaging. Working with researchers at

the University of California, Bourland finally decided upon sherry. Sherry, a fortified wine, is heated during processing. This stabilizes it, so it is unlikely to change after leaving the bottle. The sherry was poured into a special plastic bag with a built-in straw. All astronauts had to do was squeeze the pouch, and they could enjoy a nice sip of wine. Yet the plan didn't exactly pan out.

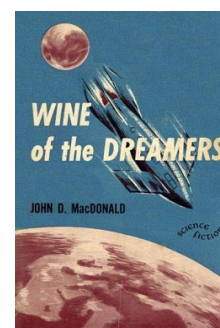
At the end of February, SCU will uncork a few bottles in France and invite expert wine tasters to sample the space-aged wine in hopes of learning more about how it may have changed during its year away from our planet, reports Jack Guy for CNN. After the human taste tests, months of chemical and biological analysis will follow, per the AP.

"Wine making and maturation is an extremely relevant multi-component biological process involving key elements such as yeast, bacteria, crystals, colloids, and polyphenols," the company said in its 2019 statement. "Very little is known about how the taste and chemical composition of wine is affected during the ageing process."

Meanwhile, the vine canes are going to be flown to France for analysis at the University of Bordeaux's wine institute where they will be studied and compared to control samples that remained here on Earth. The vine canes include 160 of Cabernet Sauvignon and 160 of Merlot, reports Chris Mercer for *Decanter*. "We'll do a whole genome sequencing of the plants, to provide a clear view of all the DNA changes that could have happened on the stay on the ISS," Nicolas Gaume, the company's CEO and cofounder, tells *Decanter*.

One of the hopes is that the unique stresses that space travel placed on the vines might fuel advances in agriculture. Gaume tells the AP that grapes and other crops will need to adapt to harsher conditions as climate change intensifies, and that the goal of his company's experiments is to help develop the robust and resilient plants necessary to meet those challenges.

the University of California, Bourland finally decided upon sherry. Sherry, a fortified wine, is heated during processing. This stabilizes it, so it is unlikely to change after leaving the bottle. The sherry was poured into a special plastic bag with a built-in straw. All astronauts had to do was squeeze the pouch, and they could enjoy a nice sip of wine. Yet the plan didn't exactly pan out.



When the public learned of the plan, teetotalers around the nation rose up in righteous anger, convincing NASA to pull the plug on the sherry experiment. It also turned out that wine, in zero-gravity, released an unpleasant odor, and it seemed unwise to add unnecessary nausea to the astronauts' many problems.

Another wine in space related story for your reading pleasure brought to you by Nolan Moore, August 14, 2014, *Listverse*





*The Wine Press*

Orange County Wine Society, Inc.  
PO Box 11059  
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

## OCWS Save the Date Calendar

### Winery Webinar Events:

- March 12 Cannonball Wine Company / Angels & Cowboys
- April 9 Russian River Vineyards
- May 14 Mystery Guest Winery

### OCWS Varietal Hour:

- March 1 Viognier
- March 8 Dessert Wines
- March 15 Cabernet Sauvignon
- March 22 Rhone White Varietals
- March 29 Spanish Varietals
  
- April 5 Sangiovese
- April 12 Pinot Grigio
- April 19 Wine Cocktails
- April 26 Italian Red Varietals
  
- May 3 Italian White Varietals
- May 10 Fortified Wines
- May 17 Syrah / Petite Sirah
- May 24 Riesling
- May 31 Rosé



[www.ocws.org](http://www.ocws.org)



### Wine Education Webinars:

- March 24 Wines of Mexico
- April 21 Wines of California Central Coast