



Everett's Wines, Spirits & Beer

Monthly Newsletter February 2008, Issue #4

Hello everyone! How are those New Year's resolutions going? (I think I heard the groans from here!) Well, if those have got you down, allow me to cheer you up with a little bit of news for the near future.

Our Spring wine tasting is currently scheduled for April 23. While this may seem a good couple months away yet, we have been busy trying and selecting wines for the event. We already have a good number selected and we're sure you'll be in for a treat.

In late January I had the opportunity to attend a large wine tasting in Chicago. My father and I went with the idea of selecting 7 or 8 wines for the tasting. Turns out we could have selected about 25, but unfortunately we just won't have the time. This is a good sign though, as it is good to see the new vintages soon to be hitting shelves are of good quality and value! We will probably be attending more events before our tasting, and the April newsletter will give you a rundown of some of the many things we have found, as well as what you can look forward to tasting on the 23rd.

Next month is a St. Paddy's day extravaganza! I have all sorts of topics planned including: a special on Irish whiskies, a breakdown of Irish beer styles, one of my favorite stew recipes (made with Guinness), and a Do's and Don'ts guide to traveling to Ireland. (Ireland has been one of my favorite places in Europe yet!)

One last thing, a coupon for newsletter subscribers only! (Please only 1 coupon per customer and please write your email on back the of the coupon.)

Burgess Cabernet Sauvignon
\$21.98/Btl **\$245/Case + 1.5 Liter**
of Burgess Cabernet
Free!! A \$50 Value

Case Price Reflects a Discount of \$18.76. No further discounts apply. Offer only good on Burgess Cabernet Sauvignon and only for Everett's Newsletter Subscribers. Please Provide your Email at the time of redemption.

Coupon Valid until 2/20/08 or while supplies last.

Have something you'd like us to cover in a news letter? Contact us! Everettsnewsletter@hotmail.com. You can also get more info on wine, spirits and beer at Bryan's personal blog: www.wineandspiritsknowledge.com!

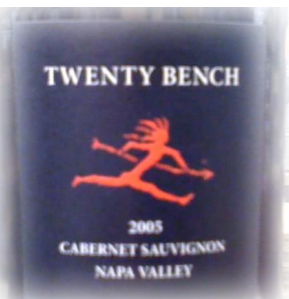
Wine

In January, I said I would write a continuation of the piece about value wines (good quality at less than \$25) that can also age well with proper cellaring. This month I found a couple more tasty wines at good prices that you should be able to stow away for a good number of years.

Masi Campofiorin 2004 (\$16, 10-15yrs)- Masi Campofiorin is a red Italian wine made in a "ripasso" style. Ripasso means that the once the grapes are crushed and the juice is fermented, the skins and seeds that are left over are pressed again. The resulting juice is then fermented and blended into the wine. **This secondary pressing produces juice with a very strong tannin and acid structure, thus lending a strong age-worthy backbone to the finished wine.** Because of this process, the Masi



Campofiorin will be drinkable now **until about 2019**. It is a rich and concentrated wine with very firm tannin and tight structure now. In time it will become softer and will open up with more complex flavors. At \$16 and 10-15 years of bottle life ahead of it, this is an impressive value!



20 Bench Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2005 (\$20, 7-8 years)- The 20 Bench cabernet sauvignon has very concentrated dark fruits from a slightly riper than average crop. Firm tannin, good acidity and oak aging insure that this wine will be drinkable until 2013.

By now you're probably thinking to yourself, "What? No whites?" Well, most whites you come across are meant to be consumed within a couple years of bottling. However, if you are a Riesling lover, will be happy to know that **many Rieslings age very gracefully!** Riesling ages due to its sugar and acid levels. A young Riesling will taste fresh and vibrant with peach, apricot, and green apple flavors. As it ages, the color turns golden and the wine takes on flavors of honey, over-ripe stone fruits and sometimes nuts. **It is not uncommon for the most basic Rieslings (\$8-\$15) to age for a good 20 years. Higher quality Rieslings will have no problem aging 50, 100, or 150 years!**

Spirits

Psst...Hey Kid, You Ever Hear Of Al Capone?

In the December newsletter I wrote a bit about **rye whiskey** and its recent rise in popularity.

Deservingly so, and **Templeton Rye is a shining example of what can be done with this type of whiskey.** Rye whiskey usually has a less sweet nature than its bourbon cousin because rye grain does not have the naturally high sugar that corn does. **(That's the core difference between rye and bourbon. Bourbon has to be at least 51% corn and can be finished with wheat or rye, wheat adding to the sweetness and rye giving spice.)**



Templeton Rye, however, **has a nice sweetness as well as a spice character.** The nose of the whiskey bursts out of the glass with **caramel and vanilla**. On the palate, your first sip might feel a little light, but **each successive sip is cumulative** and by about your third or fourth you will be savoring each round and rich sip.

You may be wondering about the title of this piece. Well, the legend behind Templeton (which is made in Iowa) is that it was **Al Capone's favorite** and he made it the core of his bootlegging operations and put it in all of his speakeasies. Curious? You can read the whole story and more at Templeton's website:

<http://www.templetonrye.com>.

Beer



I had something else entirely planned for this month's beer section, but we didn't get the product in time for me to take pictures for the write-up. So instead, I thought I'd feature something our manager, Matt, sent me.

Valentines Day is all about the sweet stuff, and, in the beer world, you can't get any sweeter than Lambic! Lambic is a beer brewed in Belgium. **This beer is special** because they don't brew it using a specific laboratory strain of yeast, carefully inoculated into the brew to start the fermentation process. Instead, the beer sits in open top vats and they let wild airborne yeasts find their own way into the beer!

If you don't flavor Lambic, you have a beer called **Gueuze** (pronounced **Geez**). **Gueuze is a very potent and acquired taste.** We have actually had customers return perfectly good gueuze because they thought it was beer that had gone bad. Turns out, that how gueuze is supposed to taste.

When gueuze is flavored it's a whole other story. Gueuze can be flavored with **cherry, blackberry, peach, pear, and many other fruits.** The resulting brew is smooth, sweet, and very tasty. These beers make a perfect sweet treat for the beer drinker on Valentines day.

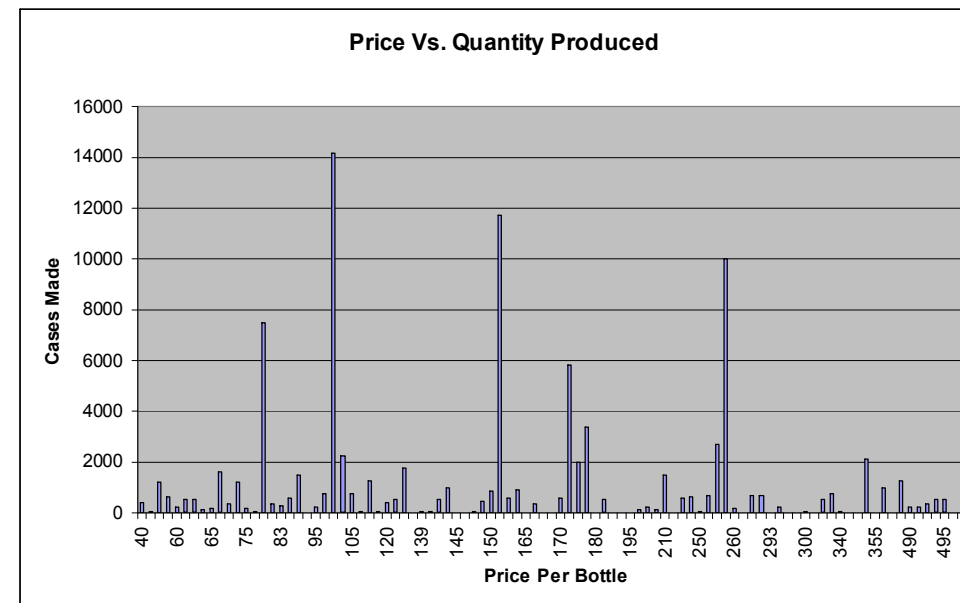
Oh, one other thing: If you want to try something fun, pour a little bit (and I mean a little as a little goes a long way!) over some vanilla ice cream and add a whole new dimension to dessert! I find the **framboise lambic** works very well for this. Beer and ice cream you say? Yep, don't knock it 'til you try it!



Extra

In January I talked about the price of wine and how it is not always indicative of quality. I sometimes get asked, "Why does this wine cost so much?" My knee jerk response used to be, "Well this was a small production wine, thus they had to charge more." In some cases this is true, and it makes sense; produce less, charge more to break even and, hopefully, profit. But, like comparing quality and price, this is not always the case.

Using the Spectator's Top 100 issue again, when charting the top scoring wines of 2007 with their price relative to their cases produced, you end up with the chart below:



As you can see, case productions are all over the map in relation to the prices charged per bottle. There were 10,000 cases made of a \$260 bottle of wine, but then there were less than 1,000 cases made (and in some instances less than 50 cases made) of several wines priced below \$65.

So if quantity produced may not directly influence how much a particular wine costs, then what does?

Well, the producers making thousands and thousands of cases also have thousands and thousands more dollars wrapped up in expenses. Bigger

production requires bigger tanks, machines, buildings, more barrels, more labor, and more than likely more marketing to move all of said cases!

On the other hand, the producer making less than 500 cases probably has a pretty small operation, less overhead, and isn't paying for advertising. Thus, they have the advantage of pricing their wines much more affordably.

Smaller production is also theorized to create better quality wines. I tend to agree with this. All of the wines in the chart above scored above 95 points. Five of the wines used for the chart scored 99 points, two of which had production of less than 15 cases, and one had a production of 10,000 cases! That's quite a range!

The thing to remember here is that while 10,000 cases may seem like a mass production, it's really small potatoes when compared to wineries producing 200k, 500k, or even close to a million cases. You're probably not going to see too many wineries with production quantities that high getting those high scores. This is because to get that much juice for that many cases requires the blending of many vineyard sites, possibly from many diverse growing conditions, and possibly still different varietals altogether. All of this blending tends to homogenize the final product and, while it may create consistency for the producer, creates a boring experience for the consumer.

With all that said, What are your thoughts? I would like to add a reader comment section to the newsletter. If you have any questions, comments, or just something you'd like to discuss about wines, spirits and beers then drop and email to: everettsnewsletter@hotmail.com!

Have something you'd like us to cover in a news letter? Contact us! Everettsnewsletter@hotmail.com. You can also get more info on wine, spirits and beer at Bryan's personal blog: www.wineandspiritsknowledge.com!