



**July 2014 Newsletter
North Alabama Chapter
of the
American Wine Society (AWS)**



Monthly Tasting

**Theme: Wines of World Cup Winners
July 27, 2014, 3:00 pm**



Come join us and participate in our July AWS Wine tasting: Wines of World Cup Winners! This tasting is limited to 36, so get your checks in ASAP.

Fútbol fever is spreading across the globe this summer. At this month's tasting, we will celebrate the competition of the 2014 World Cup through a blind tasting that will test your knowledge of both wine and fútbol. Learn interesting



DIRECTOR'S SECTION (Jay Wilson, Director)

North Alabama American Wine Society Celebrates its 20th Anniversary

In July 1994, 24 wine lovers from the Madison County Alabama area formally established the North Alabama American Wine Society (NAAWS). In the months leading up to this date, there were a number of wine tastings and even a wine dinner. At each of these events, discussions on the advantages of formally joining the American Wine Society (AWS) were raised. In the end, the advantages of AWS won out and the rest is history. Of the original 24 members, Marj McCulley, Karl Starkloff and Judy Starkloff are still very active in NAAWS. Two charter members, Dick and Susan Marsden moved out of Alabama, but remained active in AWS, supporting the AWS Educational Foundation and starting another AWS affiliated chapter.

In the years that followed the initial formation, NAAWS has grown to over 70 active members. It is recognized as one of the most active Chapters in AWS, with over 200 tastings conducted. The NAAWS web-site continues to update members with a wealth of information including an archive of newsletters, recipes and Chapter information. NAAWS is proud to have four certified wine judges within its current ranks along with several past and current AWS Regional Vice Presidents, and AWS Educational Foundation Officers. NAAWS has also been very active in their support of the AWSEF scholarship program by donating \$16,000 since 2009.

The North Alabama Chapter has made great strides in the last 20 years and will continue to promote the goals of AWS for many years to come. Congratulations to all the past and current members for their support, interest and demonstrated commitment to wine knowledge and enjoyment.



EDUCATION SECTION (Edwin Núñez, Education Chair)

Before starting on this month's topic, I would like to thank Kristen Lindelow for writing the wine education article for the June Newsletter while I was on travel. It was very interesting and well done, proving that our NAAWS chapter has a lot of talent among its members.



Brazil... A Winemaker?

Introduction

Brazil is a country bigger than the United States with plenty of natural resources. The Amazon forest is well-known for its astonishing biological diversity and its impact on global climate. Brazil also has a peculiar event in its early history. In 1808, King Joao VI of Portugal, fleeing Napoleon invasion, moved his *entire court* to Rio de Janeiro. This movement of an entire court to such a distant location is unique in the history of the world.

Characteristics of the Brazilian Wine Production

Although we will taste wines from countries that have sponsored or won the World Cup, this article will focus on one: Brazil. Probably none of us has tasted a Brazil-

ian wine, yet this country is emerging as a new wine producer in South America. Did you know Brazil produces around 3.5 hectoliters of wine per year? It is actually the fifth largest producer of wines in the southern hemisphere, behind Argentina, Australia, South Africa and Chile. Its production is about 45% of Chile's. The industry has shown an ever increasing sophistication in its wines and a steady growth in quantity and quality. For many years most of its wine was consumed domestically. Interest in exporting developed after seeing the success of Argentina and Chile. In the past couple of decades, the industry has invested heavily in modern equipment and techniques. In the US, you may find Brazilian wines mostly in large city wine stores or in the wine list of Brazilian *churrascarias* (steak houses).

As the map here shows, most of Brazilian wine production happens in the country's south. Weather conditions are more favorable to the vines there. The main wine regions are: Vale do Sao Francisco (in the north), Planalto Catarinense, Campos do Cima de Serra, Serra Gaúcha, Serra do Sudeste and Campanha.



Vale dos Vinhedos resembles the Piedmont countryside.

Of these, Serra Gaúcha is by far the largest, producing about 85% of the total. Most favored by tourists and wine lovers is the Vale dos Vinhedos (Valley of the Vineyards) region in Serra Gaúcha. It has a close resemblance to the Italian Piedmont vineyards. This is easy to understand since the winemakers there are for the most part descendants of the Italian immigrants that settled there in the late 19th century. If you pay attention to the conversation of some older people, you may be surprised to hear them switch between Portuguese and a rare Venetian dialect.



Perhaps the best known Brazilian wine style is their sparkling white wine in both its dry and sweet styles. It closely resembles the Prosecco style. The city of Bento Goncalves is known as its sparkling wine capital. American and hybrid grapes are used for table wines while the classic *Vitis vinifera* grapes are used for the higher quality wines called Vinhos Finos.

Amongst the white grapes you will find Glera (known previously as Prosecco), Muscat, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, Gewürztraminer, Riesling Italico, Chenin Blanc and Malvasia. Their most important red grapes are: Cabernet

Sauvignon, Merlot, Tannat, Cabernet Franc, Pinot Noir, Touriga Nacional, Teroldego and Ancellota (a varietal of the Emilia Romagna from Italy).

Bear in mind that another world event is coming to Brazil in a couple of years: the 2016 Olympics. This will bring renewed attention on Brazilian wines. Who knows? You may even taste a Brazilian wine this month... As with all things modern, the 2014 FIFA World Cup competition in Brazil has an official series of wines. They are called "Faces" and were made by the Lidio Carraro winery. But don't be discouraged if you don't find that label at your local wine store. *Fútbol* can be enjoyed with any wine.



NAAWS Facebook Page

Our Chapter has a Facebook page! Join us at "American Wine Society – North Alabama Chapter." We'll post pictures of tastings and other things our members are doing, and we'll share info about wine-related events in our area.



Chapter Web Site <http://www.naaws-hsv.com> **(Chip Boling, Webmaster)**

When you have time, check out the AWS web sites for both the National (www.americanwinesociety.org) and our local chapter (www.naaws-hsv.com).

Chapter 2014 Board of Directors

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- Webmaster – **Chip Boling**, webmaster@naaws-hsv.com

2014 - 2015 Programs **(Bob Garay, Programs Chair)**

You can talk to me during the tasting or contact me at garayrahsv@gmail.com

Openings for 2015 hosting are still available, so please consider a date and a theme.

Below is the calendar for the remainder of 2014, and for 2015:

2014			
June	22	Summer Wines: <i>Grilling and Chilling</i>	The Wine Cellar /Programs
July	27	Wines of World Cup Winners	Lindelov/Coddington's
Aug	24	At the Auction Celebrating our Members	Wilson's
Sep	28	National Tasting	Scott's
Oct	TBA	Annual Dinner	Programs
Nov	16	Sparkling Wines	Collier's
Dec	N/A	No Tasting	N/A

2015

Jan	25	France's Beaujolais Region: this ain't Nouveau	Nunez's
Feb	22	Vertical of Date Night Cabernet	Young's
Mar	29	TBA	Open
Apr	26	TBA	Open
May	17	TBA	Open
Jun	28	TBA	Collier's

Grillin' and Chillin' Tasting Notes



The *Grillin' and Chillin'* tasting was hosted by Bob and Beth Garay at the Wine Cellar in Huntsville. The aperitif was a White Wine Sangria (as seen above), which proved to be a big hit. The recipe follows:

Ingredients:

2 (750 ml. bottles) dry white wine (*Pinot Gris, Chablis, Chardonnay, Riesling, or Sauvignon Blanc*), chilled*

[Note: we used the *Marques de Caceres White Rioja*]

1 cup fruit brandy [Note: we used the *Peach Brandy*]

Fruit juice of your choice [Note: we used *nectarines, peaches, plums, oranges, and strawberries*]

Granulated sugar Simple Syrup to taste (optional if not using fruit juice)

Fresh fruit [Note: we used *nectarines, peaches, plums, oranges, and strawberries*], sliced**

2 cups club soda, 7-Up, seltzer water, lemon-lime soda, or sparkling water (optional)

Ice cubes

Mint sprigs, for garnish

** Any other seasonal fruit that tempts you may be added (*berries, melon, grapes, guavas, mangos, apples, etc.*). Fruit juices may also be added.

Preparation: 6

1) In a clean vessel, large enough to accommodate the wine, brandy, and fruit (*pickle jar, sun tea jars, etc.*), combine the wine, fruit brandy, and fruit juices. Pour in the sugar or simple syrup, stir or shake the pitcher thoroughly to mix. Add the cut up fruits of your choice.

2) Add ice. Allow the mixture to sit for at least 1 hour before serving to allow the fruits flavors to come through

3) Serve the Sangria over ice in large wine glasses. Fill serving glass half full with ice. Pour the sangria over the ice. Add a few slices of the marinated fruit along with some fresh berries. Garnish each glass with a mint sprig and serve immediately.

The wines were served in three flights: patio whites; rosés, and reds to pair with grilled meats. Three whites were tasted: 1) *Marques de Caceres White Rioja* (\$10.99); 2) *Colterenzio Pinot Grigio* (\$16.99); and 3) *Girardin Pouilly Fuisse* (\$23.99). While everyone seemed to love the White Rioja in the Sangria, the informal consensus favorite of the whites was the Pinot Grigio.

For the rosés, two were tasted: 1) *Miraval Rosé*, (\$23.99), a typical French style Rosé blend of Cinsault, Grenache, Syrah and Rolle from Provence; and 2) *Marques de Caceres Rosé* (\$10.99), a blend of Tempranillo and Garnacha. Consensus was about evenly split on these; the former being a great sipping wine, the latter proving a better pairing with food and a great value.

Finally, we tasted: 1) the *Bocelli Sangiovese* (\$16.99), 100% Noble Sangiovese, from the same Tuscan vineyard of the family of the famous Andrea Bocelli; and 2) we ended with the *Sivas-Sonoma Cabernet* (\$15.99), 100% Sonoma Cab.

The overall favorite for sipping on the patio was the Miraval Rosé followed closely by the Pinot Grigio. All of the wines were available for purchase, and the Wine Rep, Lisa Adams from *International Wines & Craft Beer*, was present to explain and help pour the wines.

Food pairing included: pulled pork on Hawaiian rolls, smoked ribs with corn salad (thanks to the Colli-er's), southern slaw, potato salad, assorted cheese and meats, marinated grilled salmon, key lime cheese-cake and assorted fruit pies.

If you attended and like this type of tasting please let the NAAWS Board know and we will work another none-home sponsored tasting into next yet



We're holding a raffle at every tasting

We hold a raffle at each monthly tasting to help increase our annual contribution to the AWS Educational Foundation (AWSEF). The purpose of this fund is to assist graduate students in continuing their studies that support the American wine industry. We all enjoy the fruits (well, wines) of their labors! Just bring your raffle item(s) to the tasting each month and we'll raffle them off.

Tickets are \$1 each or 6 tickets for \$5!! Remember, all money we raise through the raffle goes towards the AWSEF fund. Thank you!

June Raffle

(Stephen R. Peirce, Secretary)

We raised \$61 for the AWS Education Fund which is a very good amount for this month's raffle activity. Ten (\$10) in tickets were donated to the hosts Bob and Beth Garay. We all had a great time and I want to thank all who participated in this raffle and again special thanks to those members who donated wine for the raffle.

Chapter AWS Educational Foundation (AWSEF)

<http://www.awsef.org>

For the June 2014 tasting, \$123 was raised for the chapter education fund. The balance in the chapter's AWSEF fund is \$1584.

Our chapter is committed to supporting the AWSEF. As most of you are aware, we add \$2 to every tasting and this money is designated for the AWSEF. At almost every tasting we hold a raffle of items donated by the members.

The AWSEF scholarship award amount is \$3,500; our chapter's has started raising money for our 6th scholarship.