



Basic Juice Article
A Pretty Great State (of Wine)

by: *Beau Jarvis*

I have this fantastic recurring dream: I'm shopping at the corner market. I buy some cheese, a baguette and pick out a nice bottle of wine. I skip home, smiling, anticipating my afternoon snack. Then, I open my eyes, see that it's 3:31 A.M., and realize I still live in Utah. Damn. It's incredibly easy to become frustrated by our state's liquor laws. However, I am grateful for the expansive wine selection in the state wine store (255 S. 300 E.). No, every wine under the sun isn't available, and they don't sell baguettes. Nevertheless the store offers wine lovers real diversity (And hey, I'm for *any* increased diversity in Utah.). The other day I took an unscientific 'wine diversity' survey while shopping in the wine store. Of course there was a generous selection of wine from all the usual places like France, Germany, Italy and California. However, I also found wine from locales that I normally associate with nude sunbathing, tequila and precision wristwatches rather than wine. There were several Greek wines, two Mexican wines and a lonely bottle from Switzerland. Quite frankly I was astounded. I compared this 'wine diversity quotient' to one of my favorite wine shops in New York City. The last time I was in that big city shop, there were three Greek wines, zero Mexican wines and *zwei* Swiss wines. So our humble wine store stacks up quite nicely, thank you.

Wine drinkers statewide should all thank [insert Higher Power of choice] that

somehow, some way, many great wines are locally available. Not only is the wine selection sizeable, but also, prices are quite reasonable. This is impressive considering the state is actually a wine monopoly. And how many monopolies can you name that offer fair prices? The answer would be approximately zero.

Now it wouldn't do any of us any good to have a stellar wine selection if the wine store didn't employ knowledgeable people. Fortunately the state wine store has a great staff that will gladly guide you in your quest for wine diversity. In fact, I'm fairly certain that the wine store crew craves curious customer questions. As an added bonus, there is nary a scent of wine snobbery in the store.

So, in celebration of our state's great, diverse wine selection, I propose we designate June as 'Utah Wine Diversity Month.' Get yourself down to the wine store and try wine from all over the planet. I suggest sampling one wine from a different country each week.

To prove that I'm serious about all of this, let me share my June wine itinerary with you along with anticipated food pairings. Week one: I will rent *The Sound of Music*, make *Schnitzel* and try an Austrian Grüner Veltliner (nicknamed Groo-Vee by umlaut challenged wine drinkers everywhere). This white wine is often described as, "A dry Riesling with a lime twist." Week two: I'll be drinking an inky blend of Cabernet grapes from upstate New York's wine wizard, Dr. Konstantin Frank. A few

sips of this wine, plus a nice New York steak off the grill, will put me in an upstate frame of mind. I'll begin planning a tour of Niagara Falls aboard my all-time favorite boat, *The Maid of the Mist*. Week three: I kickoff my 'There is more to New Zealand than Hobbits' campaign by opening a bottle of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc. The Kiwis' signature wine is a very aromatic, racy white with intense gooseberry aroma (although I must admit, I've yet to sniff an actual gooseberry). Kiwi Sauvignon Blanc is perfect with shellfish. I think oysters on the half-shell will be in order. Week four: I'm thinking of making a small economic contribution to Greece's Olympic Games

efforts by purchasing a bottle of Santorini. This white wine from the beautiful Greek island of the same name possesses a split personality. It seems to be at once both racy and silky-smooth. I'm hopeful Santorini will be tasty enough to cover any mistakes I make on my first attempt at homemade *Spanakopita*.

Go ahead; pick a country, a color or a price range. Then put your trust in the capable hands of the folks at the state wine store. I'm confident they will help you find yummy wine from around the globe. Welcome more wine diversity into your life. You'll be glad you did. Cheers!

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