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"Juicy Tales by Jo Diaz"



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[Cabernet Sauvignon](#), [France](#), [French Wine](#), [Syrah](#), [Wine](#)

Wine For “Happy New Year” ~ The “After Bubbles” Thirst for “What’s Next?”

[Photo: sapannpix]

Surely, the wine on New Years Eve and New Years Day don’t only include bubbles, right? Sometimes it’s great fun to be out on New Years Eve and last long enough to segue into “what’s next?”

In large events with crowds, we don’t really have to think about what’s next. We we’re living it and drinking whatever’s handy. Eventually, we go from bubbles into another phase. For some of us, it’s red wine. That’s what this one is all about...

What Red wines are the final destination after glitzy Champagne, we’re headed to glamorous Reds.

Sometimes it’s fun to have a party with friends.

- Menus of foods: gathering, prep, cooking, and serving
- You get to hang out with people you’re closer to.



There’s a deeper level of intimacy. You’re paying attention to your wine’s flavors, while still learning more about the people you’re with. Stories are being shared, and you might even be discussing the wines along with the weather and sports.

[PHOTO: hkt83000]

Then, there are those times, when just being at home – you, the couple – is the most intriguing.

The home date is alluring: cooking together, sharing more intimate interests; wining and dining to explore mutual dreams, perhaps fulfilled in the coming year? Nothing else matters...

[PHOTO: hkt83000]

It’s the party folks and the lovers, to whom I’m addressing right here. Over the last few months, I’ve enjoyed the following wines, and they’re definitely worthy of your enjoyment, too, if you’re thinking about having a tasty adventure with red wine on New Year’s Eve.

THE REDS & PREFACE

[PHOTO: Jo Diaz] ~ Each wine is a sample from the wine company named.

- **HEART ~ THE WINERY:** This information came from the wineries’ notes
- **SCIENCE ~ WINEMAKING:** Also from the winery
- **SOUL ~ Jo’s Musings**

Eponymous Cabernet Sauvignon 2014

HEART

Robert L. Pepi knows what it’s like not to own his own name. When his family sold the renowned Robert Pepi Winery in 1994, the label lived on. But, Bob Pepi himself cannot put it on a wine label. Therefore, the first wine that Bob has made for himself since the sale of the family name has a label that reflects both his belief that “wine should be fun” and explains his predicament. Eponymous is “one for whom or which something is or is believed to be named.” Bob Pepi has given it his own playful definition, “a play on words by one who is unable to use his family name on his own bottle of wine.” Vineyards are in both the Napa and Sonoma valleys:



- Napa Valley: Eastern Hills north of the city, 300 feet above the Silverado Trail.
- Sonoma Valley: Just over the peak of Mount Veeder on the Sonoma side of the Mayacamas Range that separates Napa Valley from Sonoma Valley.



SCIENCE/GROWING WINEMAKING

This wine was made from Cabernet Sauvignon grapes from two distinctly different sites. Over 75 percent of the blend is from Mt. Veeder – a core vineyard that winemaker Bob Pepi has been utilizing for more than seven years – and one from the bench lands below Atlas Peak Appellation. The wonderful 2014 harvest was marked by a long growing season that started in early Spring, allowing long hang-times that, along with the moderate heat, aided in even maturation. The result was good, ripe fruit at moderate sugar levels. After picking, hand-harvested fruit was fermented with utmost care and the resulting wine was aged 20 months in 70 percent new oak (90 percent French and 10 percent American), with frequent racking the first year.

SOUL

This is a very complex and special wine; one that's indeed shared with aficionados, on occasions like New Year's Eve.

Eponymous Cabernet is alluring in its aromas, delightful in its sumptuous flavors, and is stunning in its long and linger finish of black currant and tobacco.

Equating it to Pierre-Auguste Renoir's *Bal du moulin de la Galette*: It's an example of a captivating, social occasion, with its depth of colors, and strength of purpose: Pierre-Auguste Renoir's *Bal du moulin de la Galette* comes to mind (Dance at Le Moulin de la Galette).

[*Bal du moulin de la Galette* is found in the collection at Musée d'Orsay, Paris]

[SHIRVINGTON Cabernet Sauvignon](#), McLaren Vale, Australia ~ 2104

HEART

Shirvington was founded in 1996, by Paul and Lynne Shirvington (with sons Tony and Mark), with the planting of Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon vines in their first vineyard, Redwind. The 16 hectares [39.5369 acres] of red clay and limestone soil are located in Willunga, just south of McLaren Vale, that was chosen by the Shirvingtons for the area's ability to consistently produce outstanding table wines of great character and quality. Further purchases in 1997 and 2001 saw the development of two new vineyards, Kurrawyba and Manjalda, in McLaren Flat and McLaren Vale itself.

SCIENCE/GROWING WINEMAKING

The Estate-grown grapes for this 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon come from the Redwind Vineyard that the Shirvingtons planted on red and black clay over limestone soil in 1996. Sustainable farming practices are used in all Shirvington vineyards. The wine was 100 percent barrel-fermented, and aged for 19 months in 100 percent French oak (33 percent was new oak, 11 percent was 1-year-old oak, and 56 percent was 2-year-old oak).

[PHOTO byrdyak]



This highly acclaimed Shirvington Cabernet Sauvignon comes from the most important wine-producing area in the Fleurieu appellation, and is highly regarded throughout the world for its ability to craft fine wines, including this Cabernet Sauvignon. It's a favorite region for growing Cab, because the climate is Mediterranean.

This Shirvington 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon is known for its ranges of classic, deep ruby colors... think deep and elegant, black fruit, that reminding us of plush, black velvet. Its totem is the black panther, against vanilla notes emerging from its oak barrel's aging process. Smooth and steady...

Department 66 “Others” Red Wine, Côtes Catalanes IGP, Roussillon

Maury France ~ 2014



In the southwest corner of France lies Department 66. Having moved to this location, Dave Phinney continues his illustrious wine career, naming his new Brand Department 66, in honor of the location, the inspiration for his now “namesake” winery and vineyards in the town of Maury, France.

HEART

FROM DAVE PHINNEY: In March of 2008, I took a friend up on an offer to visit Maury, France. She and her husband had recently purchased vineyards in the area and thought I may have an interest in the town and its wines. We flew from San Francisco to Barcelona and made the two-hour drive up to Maury that night. When we arrived it was pitch black...I had no idea what the morning light would bring.

When I awoke, what I saw was insane. I looked out my bedroom window and saw one of the steepest, oldest vineyards I had ever laid eyes on. I was in – hook, line and sinker. It was a challenge to be polite and get through breakfast. If this is what I could see from my bedroom, what else was out there? The answer was perhaps the most amazing confluence of vineyards I’ve ever been exposed to. I spent the next two days driving around with my jaw agape, stunned by the raw beauty of this truly unique place. I called my wife and told her not to tell anyone where I was and what I was doing. She told me not to do anything stupid. I left that first visit committed to purchasing just under forty acres of amazing old vine Grenache. The only stupid thing I did was not buy more. Since then, I’ve returned at least once a month during the regular season, and every seven to ten days during harvest.



SCIENCE/GROWING WINEMAKING

Deep in the Southwest corner of France lies Department 66, which serves as the inspiration and namesake for our winery and vineyards in the town of Maury. Roughly two hours east of Barcelona, Spain, and thirty minutes inland from the ancient Roman port city of Perpignan, old vine Grenache thrives along with Syrah and Carignan in the “Cotes Catalanes;” a sub-appellation of the Roussillon.

We own and maintain 300 acres (120 hectares) of vineyards among the Pyrénées-Orientales mountain range, which were planted more than 60 years ago. The terroir is dominated by black schist, with small deposits of granite and limestone in red, rocky soils known as angle.

This “Other” Red Wines is a blend of Grenache, Carignan, Syrah, and Mourvèdre. Very much a Rhône-style blend, its deep ruby color congers up flavors of each variety: Grenache brings in the lavender, Carignan has the baking spices, Syrah’s saddle leather introduces hints of earthiness, and Mourvedre finishes off the trailing spices on the finish.

This is a rich, French wine; there’s no doubt about that. It’s extremely well made, as I’ve found with any of David Phinney’s wines, because he’s committed to wines that are approachable, lively, and very easy to enjoy. This Department 66 “Others” Red Wine is no exception. Perfectly well balanced in acidity, the depth of the wine’s structure leaves you with a long, smooth finish. This is ONE tasty wine.

The image below speaks to the location’s terroir, in general. [PHOTO: Richard Semik ~ Vineyard of Maury in Languedoc-Roussillon, France]

[PHOTO:
Richard
Semik]

[Department
66 “D66”
Grenache,](#)
Côtes
Catalanes
IGP

Maury
France ~ 2014

HEART –

FROM
DAVE



PHINNEY: In the spring of 2009, we began construction on a winery and now have over three hundred acres of vineyards. We have a home there and an amazing group of friends. My wife and kids love it almost as much as I do. Someone once commented on how nice it was to have a second home in France and I said, it’s not my second home, it’s my other home. We have found a place and a group of people that are unmatched. I am so lucky to have been introduced to this amazing area and so proud to share its wines with you.

SCIENCE/GROWING WINEMAKING

A saturated cardinal hue belted in garnet is revealed in the glass. The nose brims with an impeccable oak profile with shaded oak tree accents. A mineral cast of alluvial soil can be detected as well, which frames a vibrant perfume of red berry fruits, cassis, cardamom, and exotic spices. The entry bursts with a vibrant blueberry and cassis concentrate that is rounded out with the richness of a crème brûlée, or crema catalana. The mid palate has vibrant acidity with distinctive mineral notes of garrigue, stone, and schist. Closing

with purpose, the wine boasts silky tannins and a lengthy finish of sublime

SOUL

I loved this wine. I huge Grenache fan, and the 2014 D66 Grenache delivered all that I love about Grenache: It's very aromatic on the nose and delectable on the palate — the nose draws you in, the palate holds you there with raspberry and black tea flavors. Always look for the hint of lavender, like this one has, and you know you've arrived to Grenacheland. Because it's coming from Maury, expect to find minerality... It's just part and parcel of Maury...

These are my four red wines, heading into what to do after the bubble have you light and lively, and wanting to get down with some red. These reds will more than do the trick. New Year's magic, in bottles.

May the magic of the New Year be all yours to enjoy!



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