

375+ WINES REVIEWED

WORLD'S BEST WINE BEACHES

MODERN MOSEL

BASIC BATCH COCKTAILS

WINE ENTHUSIAST®

JUNE 2019

THE CALIFORNIA ISSUE

The State's Signature
White Wines

Exciting Grapes
On the Rise

How to Pair
Sonoma Sparklers

The Magic of
Monterey

Winemag.com

WINE ENTHUSIAST

THE CALIFORNIA ISSUE

June 2019

- Features**
- 43 CALIFORNIA'S BLANC SLATE**
 BY VIRGINIE BOONE, JIM GORDON
 AND MATT KETTMANN
 The Sunshine State still thrills with Chardonnay,
 Pinot Gris/Grigio and Sauvignon Blanc.
- 51 SUN, SAND, GLASS IN HAND**
 BY LAUREN MOWERY
 These idyllic locations prove that great wine and
 beautiful beaches can coexist.
- 58 NEW BLOOD IN OLD MONTEREY**
 BY MATT KETTMANN
 Meet the progressive winemakers who are
 reinvigorating California's storied region.
- 66 MODERN MOSEL**
 BY ANNA LEE C. IJIMA
 An ancient wine region embraces a diverse and
 dynamic present.
- 74 BASIC BATCH**
 BY KARA NEWMAN
 Cocktails for a crowd are the secret to effortless
 summer entertaining.
- 82 SONOMA SPARKLES**
 BY VIRGINIE BOONE
 Local bubbly inspires California chefs
 to create lavish seafood-centric dishes.



51
 Sipping seaside
 at Ku De Ta in
 Bali, Indonesia



82
 Meals that sparkle





WINE ENTHUSIAST

Departments

WINEMAG.COM

10 Online Exclusives

OUT & ABOUT

12 Women of the Vine & Spirits; ProWein; Wine Paris; Naples Winter Wine Festival

THE CRUSH

- 17 Taking root in California
- 20 Where to wine in LA
- 22 A pork recipe that will stick around
- 24 Q+A: Comedian Amy Poehler
- 26 France on the move
- 28 Multi-yeast beers rising
- 30 How to pair eggplant
- 32 Sips and sports in Columbus, Ohio
- 34 Aligoté on the go
- 36 Showing off shochu
- 38 Cocktail for a hot day

Columns

EDITORS' LETTER

8 Wild, Wild West
BY ADAM STRUM AND SUSAN KOSTRZEWA

VIEWPOINT

40 Seeing the Light
BY ANNE KREBIEHL, MW

LAST DROP

128 The Amaro Mystery Tour
BY KARA NEWMAN

Buying Guide

- 92 California
- 110 New York
- 112 Uruguay
- 115 Australia
- 117 Provence
- 119 Languedoc
- 120 Franciacorta
- 122 Germany
- 123 Greece
- 124 Spirits
- 125 Beer



24

Actress Amy Poehler



17

California's up-and-comers



36

Shochu's perfect pairs



32

Middle West Spirits in Columbus, Ohio



MONTEREY WINE COUNTY™

MontereyWines.org

facebook.com/MontereyWines

@MontereyWines

PLAN YOUR TRIP AT SEEMONTEREY.COM/WINES



/ central coast

MONTEREY COUNTY

85

wineries

CLINT EASTWOOD

former mayor of Carmel

46,000

cultivated acres

home of the
"BLUE GRAND CANYON"

one of the world's deepest marine canyons

Map art courtesy of Wine Institute



BLOOD

in Old Monterey

These progressive winemakers are reinvigorating California's storied Central Coast region.

BY MATT
KETTMANN

PHOTOS BY
MICHAEL
HOUSEWRIGHT

Monterey County is a historic and well-established viticultural region. Grapes sourced throughout the county serve as the backbone for many popular Central Coast cuvées, and the region is home to prestigious subappellations like Arroyo Seco and Santa Lucia Highlands that are world-renowned for quality. It's largely a land of tradition, ruled by generational families and corporate concerns that make it hard for new blood to establish itself.

But the Monterey winescape is changing. There's an electricity buzzing across the county, as a growing contingent of adventurous vintners settles into urban wineries in Salinas and Marina, and established brands enlist the next generation of winemakers. Many have taken a renewed look at the Carmel Valley, while others discover forgotten vinelands that are also influenced by the Monterey Bay, like those in the adjacent San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties.

Unbound by the shackles of convention and attuned to the desires of millennial consumers, this emerging vanguard produces racy, exciting and even avant-garde bottlings, often at stunningly fair prices. Its efforts have reinvigorated respect for this geographically blessed cross section of California, where a diverse array of microclimates and soil types can produce a brilliant rainbow of wine styles.

WINEMAG.COM | 59





Russell Joyce,
Ian Brand and
Denis Hoey

Exploring the Region

Russell Joyce—Joyce Vineyards

A race-car driver turned dentist, Francis Joyce planted Joyce Vineyards on a steep Carmel Valley slope in 1986, but the brand didn't hit its stride until his son, Russell, took over about seven years ago.

"I was able to piece together a lot of good advice, but I also had a bit of pride and wanted to prove I could do it on my own," says Russell. "I went through a lot of experimental stages. Then I just started to pay attention to what I like to drink. I like tension and energy."

Russell now co-owns the winery, where he produces 12 wines, with an annual production around 10,000 cases. The grapes come from more than 10 vineyard sites that span from his estate property to the Gabilan Mountains.

The Submarine Canyon Pinot Noir and Chardonnay are the workhorses, but he also produces single-vineyard expressions of those grapes as well as thrilling Albariño, Riesling, Gamay Noir and cool-climate Syrah from the Santa Lucia Highlands.

To him, the shifting vibe is palpable. "You feel everyone starting to hone their craft and capture the energy of Monterey," he says.

Ian Brand—Le P'tit Paysan / I. Brand & Family / La Marea

It can take an outsider to rediscover why something so often overlooked is indeed special. That's what Brand, an East Coast transplant, has done for underappreciated vineyards across the greater Monterey Bay area. He decided to focus his winemaking there in 2008, after stints at Bonny Doon Vineyard and Big Basin Vineyards.

"We were looking for a place where we could survive as a small winery—that's getting more and more difficult in California," says Brand. "We saw grapes that were undervalued, compared to quality. We saw a lot of great wine-growing soils, like granite and calcareous rock. And we saw the cool coastal climate and that long, temperate season we think is special."

He now makes about 19 wines across his three brands, from the value-priced, "village-level" wines of Le P'tit Paysan to the Iberian-themed bottlings of La Marea and single-vineyard expressions of I. Brand & Family. Brand champions old vineyards like Enz Vineyard in San Benito County and Massa Vineyard

(formerly Durney Vineyard) in Carmel Valley, and he serves as a mentor of sorts to this current generation of winemaking talent, a nod to his stint in the Peace Corps.

"In just our 11 years, we've accumulated a ton of experience," he says. "We feel strongly about sharing that experience and helping to create a group behind us that will push us and push the region."

Denis Hoey—Odonata Wines

After graduating from University of California, Santa Cruz, in 2004, the Sacramento-raised Hoey readied to become a firefighter. But then he met Jeff Emery of Santa Cruz Mountain Vineyard and ended up taking a position at the winery instead.

"I threw everything out and said, 'This is what I want to do with the rest of my life,'" says Hoey.

He worked there for a decade, while simultaneously building his own brand, Odonata Wines, which he started in 2005.

The big leap came in 2014, when Hoey parted ways with Santa Cruz Mountain Vineyard to concentrate on Odonata. That same year, he bought the old Marilyn Remark Winery just southeast of Salinas, where he now runs the bustling Odonata South tasting room and recently planted a quarter acre of Viognier.

Today, there are as many as 28 wines produced each vintage from Odonata, from regional standards like Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon to nontraditional bottlings like sparkling Sangiovese, and continues to maintain a focus on Syrah and Grenache from the Santa Lucia Highlands.

While Odonata's annual production is about 6,500 cases, almost 90% of it is sold direct to consumers.

"We're trying to keep it interesting for my wine club," he says. "We're not afraid to take risks and play around with whole cluster, carbonic maceration and that kind of fun stuff."

He's excited for the forthcoming wines of his assistant winemaker, Francisco Banuelos, and hopes his own two sons will continue the legacy.

"In the next five years, there's going to be another generation of winemakers 10 years younger than me and Russell [Joyce] and Ian [Brand]," says Hoey.



Garrett Bowlus,
Scott Caraccioli
and Garrett
Boekenooen



Building Family Legacies Garrett Bowlus—Albatross Ridge Vineyard

Amazement abounds at Albatross Ridge Vineyard, which sits at heights of 850 to 1,250 feet atop a wind-whipped crest above the Carmel Valley. The views are jaw-dropping, but growing conditions are harsh, and the 25 acres of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay vines planted here struggle to survive.

Bowlus and his family bought the property in 2007, and it wasn't until after planting vines a year later while searching for a business name that they learned just how serendipitous the purchase had been: Bowlus's great-grandfather, William Hawley Bowlus, had flown a glider called the Albatross off these same ridges in the 1930s.

"There have been lean times, in terms of the low yields, and the [2017 Soberanes wildfires] and all the crap that goes with starting a business that relies on Mother Nature," says Bowlus. "But because of that history, we've just got to keep riding this out."

They now produce roughly 3,000 cases of wine annually across seven different bottlings that are as incredibly unique as their story. Bowlus plans to add another 11 or so acres of vines soon, encouraged by neighbors who are also planting. He may even propose the creation of a new Carmel Coast appellation, or American Viticultural Area (AVA).

"Everyone has always been friendly, but in the last five years, everybody has gotten so much closer," he says of the current group of winemakers. "Everyone is working together more, and we're able to make good wine from awesome sites."

Scott Caraccioli—Caraccioli Cellars

Though they've farmed the Salinas Valley for decades, the Caracciolis didn't make their grapevine gamble until 2006, when Gary Caraccioli was able to persuade his brother and uncle to expand the family's agricultural pursuits to wine production.

Soon after, Caraccioli met Michel Salgues, longtime winemaker for Roederer Estate. Sparks ignited, and the idea to focus the brand on sparkling wine was solidified.

They began to plant the 124-acre Escolle Vineyard on the cold northern end of the Santa Lucia Highlands, believing the site could produce phenomenal bubbly. Their efforts would ultimately result in the winery becoming

the first in the region to develop a completely on-site and in-house sparkling wine program, from vine to finished bottle.

In 2009, Gary's son, Scott, began an apprenticeship under Salgues, who passed away eight years later. Since then, Scott's grown production to about 5,000 cases and expanded the brand's offerings into still wines that include Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, a ripping rosé and a small planting of cool-climate Syrah.

Yet, he adheres proudly to the dream of crafting predominantly "clean, precise, complex" sparkling wine.

"We have the raw materials to produce something really special, but the process is dependent on having the ability to execute that vision," says Scott, who learned the exacting methods necessary from Salgues.

"Having total control over our grapes gives us the ability and the responsibility," he says. "If we screw up, it starts there. You can't make good bubbles from bad grapes. There's no way. They're too transparent. You're not going to be able to hide anything."

Garrett Boekenooen— Boekenooen Vineyards & Winery

A fifth-generation cattle rancher, Boekenooen hails from one of the longtime families that own so much of the Salinas Valley, where they settled in 1872. In charge of his family's nearly 200 acres of vineyards, which include 125 acres in the Santa Lucia Highlands and around 30 acres in the Carmel Valley, Boekenooen thinks with a progressive vision.

In 2011, he planted a block of Pinot Noir that he decided not to irrigate. The result was low-yielding clusters with tiny berries that produce powerful, fruit-forward flavors.

"No one really was doing a dryland Pinot Noir," says Boekenooen, whose annual bottling "sells like hotcakes."

In the Carmel Valley, the family's Bell Ranch produces Cabernet Sauvignon, Petite Sirah, Syrah, Zinfandel and Viognier. In 2017, at a ranch two miles to the south, Boekenooen planted an eight-acre vineyard of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Grenache. The plot sits 1,000 feet higher than Bell Ranch and out of the frost zone. His goal is high-elevation Cab.

"Is it Napa Valley Cabernet? Of course not," he says. "But it has its own niche from this magical spot."

Rejuvenating Historic Properties

David Baird—Folktale Winery & Vineyards

After studies at Cal Poly and work at wineries from Justin Vineyards & Winery in Paso Robles to Fess Parker Winery & Vineyard in Los Olivos, Baird returned to his hometown of Carmel with hopes to start a family there. Trouble was, he didn't have any real job prospects. Then he met Gregory Ahn, the wine industry entrepreneur who co-founded Cannonball Wines and ALC/VOL (Alcohol by Volume).

"As a young winemaker, you have to have someone that believes in you and gives you that shot and puts all of their faith in you," says Baird. "Greg saw that in me from Day One. Without a winery or a site, he said, 'You're my guy. Let's do this.'"

In 2015, Ahn bought the old Chateau Julien Wine Estate in Carmel Valley and relaunched it as Folktale. Baird has been sprucing up the place ever since.

He overhauled the equipment and now produces about 25 wines each vintage. They range from classic varieties to carbonic nouveau-style Sangiovese; orange wines from Viognier, Chardonnay and Riesling; and pétillant-naturels galore. He's keen to use all native yeasts, has increased whole-cluster fermentation and experimented with concrete tanks.

"We're always going to be true to who we are and what Monterey County is, but we're going to have this edgy side too," says Baird. "We're having fun, and we will have some badass wines for you to taste."

Matt Piagari—Joullian Vineyards

A Midwestern sense is at the core of Joullian Vineyards, which began in Carmel Valley in 1982. Founders Ed Joullian and Richard L. "Dick" Sias were from Oklahoma City, and its recently retired winemaker, Ridge Watson, brother of famed golfer Tom Watson, hails from Kansas City, Missouri. In fact, about one-third of the brand's wines are still sold in those markets.

While the Joullians sold in 2015, the winery maintains its Midwest roots thanks to current owners Tom and Jane Lerum. Jane grew up in Oklahoma, and the husband-and-wife team currently lives in Oklahoma City.

Today's difference, though, is that the Lerums are in their 20s, and their new winemaker, Matt Piagari, isn't yet 40.

"Everything is getting younger," says Piagari. "That's shifting us to new ideas."

Piagari's first harvest after he graduated

from Cal Poly was in 2007, as an intern at Donati Family Vineyards in Templeton. He went on to work for J. Lohr Vineyards & Wines in Paso Robles and then with Watson during the wildfire-tainted season of 2016. In that fateful year, they worked with Enological Technical Services (ETS) Laboratories in St. Helena to combat and mitigate smoke taint. From then on, he was given freedom to manage the operation.

Piagari has since torn out 10 acres of the 40-acre vineyard and has spent a lot of time learning how to manage the rest.

"I've never seen anything like it," he says. "The entire thing is on native rootstocks."

He's exploring varieties like Pinot Noir that are new to the brand and pushing into the \$100 realm with a special Cabernet Sauvignon.

For him, the Carmel Valley is best described as "a pretty exciting place to be. There really are no rules."

Sam L. Smith—Morgan Winery

Smith didn't know much about wine until a college year abroad in Bordeaux, where he sipped a 1989 Château Margaux.

"It was perfect, and it just dawned on me that there was something going on there," says Smith.

Following college, he worked for smaller wineries in Santa Barbara and Oregon's Willamette Valley, as well as a big operation in Australia. Then, he settled in at Margerum Wine Company in Santa Barbara.

"We'd sit down for lunch every day, and everyone knew what was going on with everyone," he says. "It was such a family-oriented environment. Bringing people together, to me, is one of the most important things about wine."

After a harvest with Rhône-based producer Domaine François Villard in 2015, Smith took a winemaking job at Morgan Winery, a pioneering property in the Santa Lucia Highlands that now produces about 35,000 cases per year.

"In ultrapremium fine wine, at a certain price point, it's not the larger differences that really distinguish the good wine from the best wine," says Smith of upholding founder Dan Lee's philosophy. "It's the subtleties, the really small details that divide the good wines from the legendary wines."

He also produces about 500 cases of his own brand, Samuel Louis Smith, focused on Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Syrah from cool, high-elevation sites.

"It's a really interesting cross-section of the Central Coast," he says.




Visiting Monterey?
 For a list of the city's best wine spots, visit winemag.com/montereyguide



David Baird,
Matt Piagari
and Sam L.
Smith