



VINEYARDS IN THE SPRING

Many people assume Spring is a relaxed time in the vineyard- the rains of the season do the irrigating for you and there are no grapes to harvest. In fact, Spring is an extremely busy time for most vineyards (and backyard grape growing enthusiasts alike).

Most of the springtime work focuses on pruning and shaping the vines and amending the soil. Highly skilled

workers move tirelessly from one vine to another, trimming off suckers (sterile shoots or shoots that are growing against where the vine is being trained). This work allows the limited resources of the plant to be focused into the most promising vines and buds. In late Spring in cooler growing regions, some of the leaves may be hand-plucked from the vines to allow more sunlight to penetrate. Timing on these activities is critical- too soon and the work will need to be repeated, too late and the workers risk damaging the buds and impacting the future harvest.

Spring is also the time to focus on the soil. From planning how to manage pests to providing extra nutrients to moving protective soil from the base that was placed there before winter, these tasks literally strengthen the foundation of the plant- its root system. One of our favorite winemakers, Alex Dale of



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VINEYARDS IN THE SPRING +

South Africa's Radford Dale vineyards, focuses on minimal intervention winemaking. Here is their take on naturally managing pests and supporting the environment as a whole:

“A vineyard should always form part of the ecosystem (as opposed to the vast monocultures that have trademarked commercial farming for decades). That's why we promote beneficial microorganisms and, in so doing, decrease the effect of nasty ones.

We stop the buck. Nicely. By combining tried and tested, traditional methods with new innovations, we've reduced bird and animal

crop damage to almost nothing. Where the local wildlife (mostly buck) have been guilty of “sampling” the grapes, we've placed dog fur (from grooming salons) on poles and wires in the vineyards. The smell of the fur scares the buck away and prevents any damage to the vines and grapes.

We're for the birds. Rodents have a habit of digging their burrows under the roots of vines and can cause a lot of damage. Instead of using poison, we decided to install perching posts for birds of prey (especially jackal buzzards, fish eagles and owls). This gives them an ideal vantage point to watch over the vineyards and keep them rodent-free.”

BRUNCH IS BETTER WITH BUBBLY (AND WINE)



Our favorite food option at a brunch is a charcuterie board. Overflowing with options, we head straight for the shaved ham. Pinot Noir is the perfect option for pairing. Light bodied with a delicate sweetness and smoky, fruity notes, Pinot balances ham's salty, slightly smoky taste without being overpowering.

If breakfast is more your brunch jam, make sure

extra crispy bacon is on the menu. Crisp, light and oaky, a California Chardonnay cuts through the fatty, salty, smoky flavors of bacon. It even has a mild smokiness of its own! If buttery Chards aren't your favorite, check out Chardonnay from South Africa, which is never oaky or buttery because it is aged in stainless steel barrels.



Is there anyone who doesn't love a great bagel? Full of carbs and chewy goodness, bagels are always a crowd pleaser. Now pair them with a sparkling wine and you are in for a real treat.

If you want to beef up your bagel offerings, add smoked salmon to your bagels and schmear. Pair with Sauv Blanc and you may have discovered the ultimate brunch bestie. The crisp, refreshing acidity of a Sauvignon Blanc balances the salty, fishy flavors and its delicacy won't overpower them.



If your brunch includes a sweet section like waffles or pancakes, you are going to want to have a few

choice Rosés on hand. Their sweetness creates a delish balance and when you add citrus or raspberries to this pretty-in-pink wine, the acidity cuts through the sweets' richness.

The quiche is the holy grail of brunch foods and the best wine to pair with one is a light and fruity, easy-drinking Red, like Vino Rosso, which is a lively contrast to the rich, creamy flavors of quiche. Especially ones with cheese, mushrooms or chicken.





EXPERIENCE AN ANCIENT ART: KVEVRI

At Splash, we are ALWAYS on the hunt for new and exciting wines. Well, the wines of Georgia aren't exactly new to the world or Splash (we started importing Mildiani Family wines several years ago), but we are thrilled to start carrying a premium, kvevri-aged wine from Mildiani called Qvevri Mildiani Saperavi.

8,000 years! That's how long the country of Georgia has been continually perfecting the art of winemaking. Unfamiliar with Georgian wines? Well, you won't be for long. Georgia is experiencing a boom in both the production and exporting of wine post their 2008 war with Russia. During this period of regrowth, Georgia went from having 80 registered wineries in 2006 to almost 1,000 by 2018.

With 430 indigenous grape varieties, there is something for everyone when it comes to sampling Georgian wines. While most of the wines imported to the US are dry reds, about 70% of the 90 million bottles produced annually in Georgia are sweet to semi-sweet reds, which are meant to be consumed young and are brimming with dark forest fruit and spice notes with a clean (never jammy) finish.

Perhaps most famous for their use of kvevri or qvevri (pronounced "kway-vree"; lemon shaped clay pots up to 6 ft tall that are buried in the ground up to their necks and used for fermenting and aging wine), this ancient tradition was almost wiped out in the 20th century as Soviet tastes

deemed these practices outdated, preferring the speed and efficiency of steel barrel production, and ultimately banning small, family winemaking.

In secret kvevris kept in basements, families kept tradition alive and as the demand for low-intervention yet budget-friendly wine increases, so has the interest in this ancient art. Winemaking at its most simple, grapes are added to the kvevri and when the initial alcohol fermentation is complete, the kvevri is sealed, with the ground maintaining constant temperature, and not opened again until Spring, when the wine is removed. And while this process may sound straightforward, there is a true art to creating the perfect conditions to craft this beautiful and unique wine. Georgian wine, almost more than anywhere else in the world, is deeply connected to nature, family, and tradition and is well-worth seeking out.





MEET THE TEAM

ASHLEY, CUSTOMER SERVICE REP

TELL US A LITTLE MORE ABOUT YOURSELF OUTSIDE OF THE OFFICE...

“Outside of the office, you can find me with my dog Rider Joe, he goes everywhere with me. Neither of us are fond of

the cold weather but when the sunshine is out, we are outside exploring. I also enjoy painting and other artsy things and the local thrift store is my favorite place to find knick-knacks and clothes. I also enjoy a good movie/snack day with my best friend, and I have two little brothers that have me wrapped around their pinkies, so I try to go out and spoil them as much as I can. ”

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE WINE WE HAVE AT SPLASH?

“It’s hard to pick a favorite when we are working with such a large selection of amazing wines, but I would have to say my current favorite is the Secret Vines Chardonnay.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT WORKING IN THE WINE INDUSTRY?

“Since I have been introduced to the wine industry, I would have to say my favorite part is learning about all of the different wines from

around the world and the process by which they are made. Winemaking is a genuinely fascinating process from the vineyard they grow out of to all the people that work so hard and take pride in producing the final product.”

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST THING YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM IT?

“The biggest thing I have learned from watching the wine process is that every winery is different and there are so many different approaches to the winemaking process and a story that comes with each vineyard and the bottles they produce.

BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE, WHAT PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OUR SPLASH WINOS?

“I think my best piece of advice to give would be to always keep an open mind about every bottle and take every opinion with a grain of salt. It is so easy to take what you see of a bottle and expect it to be the best or the worst but the amazing thing about wine is you can’t assume anything based on looks or things like price, only after you take that first sip can you form a true judgment.”

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD TO PAIR WINE WITH THAT YOU USUALLY WOULD BE EMBARRASSED TO SHARE?

“It is odd but Rainbow Sour Belts and a good Rosé are always a go-to for me.”

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE?

“My favorite movie of all time is the Goonies. I could watch that movie every day of my life and never get tired of it!”

WHAT IS YOUR GO-TO KARAOKE SONG?

“I have to admit I have never done Karaoke but if I did, I’m sure my go-to would be I love rock and roll, or “Girls Just Wanna Have Fun”.

TRENDS IN THE WINE INDUSTRY

What's happening in the wine world in 2023? Here are some of the top trends we are seeing in the industry:

1. Caring about the “who and how” of winemaking. Long gone are the passive consumers who uncork a bottle without thinking about whether the grapes were ethically harvested or the environmental impact of the winemaking process from start to shipping. With our world more technologically connected than ever before, many winemakers are opening up their practices to savvy consumers who want to know the carbon footprint created by their favorite libation. With global warming at the forefront of many wine drinkers' minds, many winemakers are turning to more green practices, like going pesticide-free, using recycled rainwater and switching from heavy glass bottles to more environmentally friendly PET and Tetrapak packaging.



2. Lower alcohol options. This is a big trend we are seeing in 2023. Many consumers want to have a glass or 2 with lunch or at a business meeting and choose a lower alcohol option. Some consumers are leaning into the “damp” trend (i.e. they aren't doing a “dry” month and cutting alcohol completely, but they are lowering their consumption).

3. Wines from weird places. Ok, not weird per say, but consumers are shifting away from buying solely from well-known growing regions. You don't have to get your Red wines from Bordeaux to know they'll be spectacular. New

World growing regions like Chile, Argentina and South Africa not only produce exceptional quality wines (often using imported vines and techniques from Old World regions), they do so at an incredible value.



4. Rosé for days. The Rosé trend continues into 2023 and we, for one, are not mad about that! Rosé is a fun drink and after 3 years of weird pandemic life, we embrace having fun and being more lighthearted.

5. Wine cocktails for the win! Consumers love the convenience of a pre-mixed cocktail and the wine industry has taken notice. Splash Wines worked tirelessly last year to create our own line of amazing wine-based cocktails called “Splash of...” which range from mouthwatering Margaritas to a Spring-ready Peach Bellini that is just waiting to grace your brunch table.



6. Alternative packaging advances. Glass is super heavy! So heavy that the bulk of the carbon footprint of shipping wine to your door is because of the sheer weight of the bottles. Splash has been an industry leader in alternative packaging. We have tested and launched some of our favorite wines in: PET bottles (we know, they feel weirdly light, but we promise the wine inside is still the same amazing Splash wine you love); in Tetrapaks (think a giant juice box, but with incredible wine); and bag-in-box packaging (which may look like your grandma's boxed wine, but the technology to keep the wine fresh has come SOOOOOO far in the last decade).



SPOTLIGHT ON: LA CAVE DU CARDINAL

As a Wino, you are probably very familiar with Chateau Franc-Cardinal (CFC) Bordeaux, a Splash staff and customer favorite wine. CFC Bordeaux is crafted by Sophie Holzberg, a longtime Imeson family partner and friend, who has made quite the name for herself as a winemaker and now as a négociant (a French wine procurer and trader). Her newest acquisition is La Cave du Cardinal a luxury 50% Syrah, 50% Grenache blend from the Languedoc region of France. The best part? Our lifelong friendship with

Sophie has led to Splash being the only American importer, giving you exclusive access. Get your glasses ready!

Important La Cave du Cardinal Stats:

TERROIR: Gravel and clay from the Villafranchian (Late Pliocene geologic era). Quaternary soil with small silica quartz gravel from the Massif Central mixed with sand and red clay. Located at an altitude of 260 feet, surrounded by “garrigue”; soft-leaved scrubland on limestone soils and pine forests, this naturally drained soil offers the best conditions to grow excellent Syrah and Grenache.

TASTING NOTES: Beautiful deep garnet red color. The bouquet has intense perfumes of ripe fruits, blackcurrant and mild spices. The fine and concise tannins bring out the mineral and fruity taste. Gilbert & Gaillard reviewed the 2019 vintage and scored it 90/100, describing the wine as, “Deep ruby red color with purple highlights. Engaging nose of black and red fruits, touches of violet and pepper. Silky and velvety on the palate,

without aggressiveness. A wine of character, giving pride of place to the fruit over very soft tannins”.

CULTIVATION: The approximately 20 year-old Raissac vines are thoughtfully and traditionally cultivated, marrying respect for nature and the desire to reach the highest grape quality. The vines are trellised to favor sun, ventilation and reduce moisture. The production is limited to an average of 55 hectoliters per hectare with a density of 4444 vines per hectare. The soils are respected with limited weeding in order to preserve the soil balance and micro-life. The Château de Raissac is certified at the highest level (level 3) of the High Environmental Value certification.

HARVEST TIME: The grapes are picked at maturity to guarantee their aromatic potential and the quality of the tannins. Much of the vineyard is machine picked; this allows a quicker reactivity to the grape maturity. Another advantage is the possibility of harvesting at night to keep the necessary coolness of the grapes: a method established at Raissac for all whites, rosés and some red wines. Healthy grapes, thanks to our dry climate and our controlled, limited production, do not require the manual picking which remains necessary in other regions.

Add a bottle (or 12) to your next Splash shipment!





BINGEABLE BOTTLES (AND SHOWS)

Is there anything better than kicking back on the sofa with an amazing bottle of wine and a snack to watch a binge-worthy show? Here is what our staff is watching (and drinking) during their time off.



HUNTER, CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER

“I have been watching The Mandalorian and drinking Chateau Franc-Cardinal Bordeaux. I snack on pretzels and cream cheese.”

ALEX, CUSTOMER SERVICE

“I am currently binge-watching Torchwood while drinking Cottet Dubreuil Champagne and eating homemade blackberry and raspberry dark chocolate bark my roommate and I have been making almost every week :)”



KADY, OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

“I am currently binge-watching Sons of Anarchy and drinking our Vigilant Malbec and eating some Cheez-Its.”



COURTNEY, WINE SUPPLIER LIAISON

“I am binge watching Drive to Survive on Netflix. My guilty pleasure snack is chicken nuggets and I pair them with Biale Royal Punisher’s Petit Syrah.”

GARRETT AND BAILEY IMESON, CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER AND MARKETING MANAGER

“We get our two tiny humans (Oliver, 7 and Sawyer, 3) to bed and have an hour or so to squeeze in whatever show everyone seems to



be talking about (sometimes we are a few months behind). We are currently bingeing

Only Murders in the Building. Our favorite snack is a big, freshly popped bowl of buttery popcorn and we love Oregon Pinots, particularly Carhill Cellars and Sylvanus Estate.”

JUST A SPLASH

~~SPLASH DOGS~~ CHILDREN

THEO RUIZ

Throughout each issue of the “Just a Splash” newsletter, we have introduced the dogs that roam the office on a daily basis. While each of those pups has been recognized, we thought we would switch things up and introduce the newest human addition to the Splash family, Theo Ruiz. He is Jamey (Creative Director) and Jon (Marketing Manager) Ruiz’s



first child that they welcomed into this world on December 16th, 2022. “It’s been quite the last five months. It’s been amazing watching him grow and start to learn different things. While changing his diapers hasn’t always been the most pleasant, you get used to it”, says Jon. Theo is now sleeping in his crib in his own room, and for the most part, is sleeping throughout the night. “Both of us are working from home right now, so it has been nice having the two of us there to be with him during the day. BUT, naps don’t always go so well”, says Jamey. “Pretty soon he will be crawling and moving all around the house. He’s a smiley kid who loves being outside and around his family and friends.” We can’t wait to watch him grow!



AGE: 5 Months (Born 12/16/22)

BEST FRIEND: Mom and Dad (obviously) and his pups, Willow and Charlee!

FAVORITE TREAT: He is now on solid foods. He’s a big fan of squash, oatmeal, and teething crackers.

BEST TRICK: He rolls around, laughs, farts like crazy, and is now grabbing for items and food.

FAVORITE THING TO DO AT WORK: Not nap, so mom and dad can’t work.

FAVORITE TOY: Loves his crinkle bags and teething toys.



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