

All year: Mon-Sat 11-5, Sun 1-5 *plus...*

Jul/Aug: Mon-Sat 11-6:00

Sep/Oct: Fri-Sat 11-6:00

6130-122nd Ave.

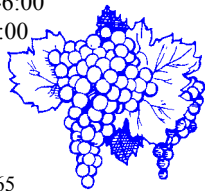
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# FENN Valley

VINEYARDS AND WINE CELLAR

January/February 2012

For those who may have forgotten...  
I-196 to exit 34 (between Holland & South Haven). East on M-89 at Exit 34 for 3½ mi to 62nd St. South (right) on 62nd 1 mi to 122nd Ave. Left on 122nd ¼ mi. Winery on right. *Follow the signs.*

<http://www.fennvalley.com>

## WINE & FOOD PAIRING WEEKENDS

With all of the interest in wine and food pairing that we hear from our fans and customers, we instituted the Wine & Food Pairing Weekends several years ago. During this event, we try to unravel some of the mysteries that seemingly surround a successful wine and food pairing, hopefully helping you understand why some wines pair better with certain foods than others. On top of that, we are giving you a sneak peek at some of the wines that will be released during the coming summer, including two red wines from the fabulous 2010 vintage.

This new event was an offshoot of the former Pre-Release event that had taken place every March since 1991. Like Pre-Release, our winemaker will select six new, unreleased wines to feature at this event (See page 3 for a list of the wines.). However, instead of simply letting you taste the wines with the usual bread and cheese, we serve each wine with a food sample that pairs well with the wine. Participants will receive information that explains why the food was chosen as a good pairing match, and as you taste the food and sample the wine, you will begin to understand the basis for good pairings.

Once you are seated, you will be given the six wines, one at a time, along with a food selection that pairs with the wine being served. Our winemaking staff will roam about the floor to answer any questions that you might have about the wines, the past vintage, or why the food

pairing was chosen. The wines that you will be tasting will not be released for several months and were either recently bottled or are tank & barrel samples.

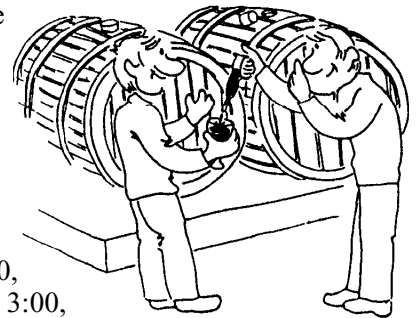
As we have done in the past with Pre-Release, **seating will be by reservation only.**

Our seatings are 1½ hour overlapping periods beginning at 12:00,

12:45, 1:30, 2:15, 3:00,

and 3:45 on Saturdays, and at

12:30, 1:15, 2:00, and 2:45 on Sundays. Walk-ins will be accepted as room permits with *(Continued page 2)*



## NEW RELEASES FOR 2012

We are very excited about the wines that are on tap to be released this summer. There will be two new wines added to our lineup and we plan to release several red wines from the outstanding 2010 vintage.

First and foremost, is the first-ever commercial release of a Sauvignon blanc. This wine is amazing - mineral, flinty, fruity, and loaded with grapefruit and ripe citrus character. It is very similar to a French Sancerre or a Sauvignon blanc from the Marlboro region of New Zealand. This is favorite of our winemaker and is scheduled to be released at our Fenn Valley Wine Festival on June 23.

Another new variety for Fenn Valley is Moscato, made from a Muscat grape that was developed at Cornell University in "upstate" New York. This sweet wine has the classic orange peel character that marks a wine made from the muscat grape. We originally planted this variety to use in our Lakeshore Demi-Sec wine,

but after tasting the wine this winter, we decided to bottle and release it as a varietal.

For you dry wine lovers, an old favorite is back – Gewürztraminer. This grape variety is very fickle and we only get a decent crop once every two or three years. If winters are too cold or if it rains too much in June when the grapes bloom, the crop can be adversely affected and there is not enough wine to offer as a varietal. We are pleased to announce that this year we should have about 100 cases of this wine available, and it too will be released at the Fenn Valley Wine Festival.

Finally, three red wines from the great 2010 vintage will make their appearances this summer as well. First out will be the Cabernet Sauvignon 2010 and the Cabernet Franc Reserve 2010, both of which are scheduled to be released just in time for the Fenn Valley Wine Fest. And later in the summer, we will release the Meritage 2010. All three of these are outstanding wines that captured the essence of that fantastic vintage.

*(Wine & Food Pairing continued)* reservations taking priority. In order that each party receives as much personal attention as possible, we limit the number of people at each seating. The most desirable seating times go quickly, so call early to make your reservation. For those of you who cannot join us on any of these weekends, the wines and some of the food samples will be available for tasting during the intervening weekdays, 11 to 5 PM. Should you want to experience these six wines in their finest splendor, we invite you to join us for our Pre-Release winemaker's dinner scheduled for March 24 (*See page 3 for menu and details*).

And, as we have done in the past, you will receive **up to 30% OFF** on the Pre-Release selections that you wish to purchase. If your selected wine(s) are bottled at the time of your visit you may take them with you; or for tank and barrel samples, a 50% deposit holds your selection at the special sale price until the wines are bottled and released for pickup.

Join us on one of the weekends to taste the wines, experience the wine and food pairings, and talk with the winemaking staff. Be among the first to see for yourself why we are so excited about the 2011 vintage.

Because the Wine & Food Pairing Weekends have become our most popular event, *reservations are required*. The atmosphere is *very relaxed* and you are invited to sit back and enjoy yourself during your hour and a half tasting experience. We try to make this event both fun and educational.

Bring a friend and make an afternoon of it. We'll be running the "Friends of Fenn Valley" program again, so if you bring a friend who is not already in our mailing list, *your friend gets a pair of Fenn Valley logo glasses and you get a \$10 gift certificate upon signing them up!*

## Warm Weather Woes

If you live in the upper Midwest, you know how mild the winter has been. Most of us love it – our heating bills are lower, there is less snow to shovel, and there are more sunny days. And, the grapevines love it, as the most challenging obstacle that we face every winter is grapevine survival during the coldest time of the year.

But, the unusually warm winter is presenting some unusual problems as well. One of the steps in the winemaking process involves chilling the wines to 30°F and holding them at that temperature for several weeks. We refer to this step as cold stabilization, and we do it to allow excess cream of tartar to precipitate out of the wine prior to bottling. If you have experienced small crystals adhering to a wine cork or if you have seen what looks like sugar or sand in the bottom of a wine bottle, you have seen cream of tartar. This harmless deposit is a cosmetic defect only, and we cold stabilize the wine to remove the excess cream of tartar before the wine is bottled.

Here in the upper Midwest where we experience ample cold during the winter months, we use the natural cold to chill our wines just prior to bottling. However, this winter has been unusually mild, and consequently we have had to supplement the natural cold that we would normally experience at this time of the year with refrigeration. This is not only costly, but it slows the winemaking process down. None of us that have to shovel snow are complaining too loudly, and the winter work in the vineyards is way ahead of schedule, but the lack of natural cold has slowed down our winemaking since we can only cold stabilize our wines one tank at a time.

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## Chili Cookoff 2012

On January 21, more than 520 people braved the cold, winter weather to join the festivities at the 13th annual Chili Cookoff. Our panel of professional chefs and instructors from the Secchia Institute for Culinary Education in Grand Rapids judged the 77 chilis that were registered for this fun-filled mid-winter event. A special congratulation to Sue Wakeland who won the grand prize with her entry in the "2 Legged" category. Sue was our grand prize winner last year as well - congratulations on a job well done!

A heads up for you prospective chili contestants... You may want to dust off your chili pot as next year we are going to up the anti by offering cash prizes for the top entries in each category and for the grand prize chili winner. Remember to put this event on your calendar for next year, it is always held on the next-to-last Saturday in January.



*More than 520 people gathered to enjoy the sounds of The Trace and sample the myriad of chilies entered in our 13th annual Chili Cookoff.*



*Sue Wakeland - our grand prize winner for the second year in a row.*

# Pre-Release Wine Dinner

Our annual Pre-Release winemaker's dinner will take place on March 24 at 6:00. We will feature all six of our Pre-Release wines in the setting of a gourmet meal that will give you the opportunity to experience these wines in the best setting – with food.

Due to the popularity of this dinner, *reservations are required*. The cost is only \$70 per person (\$5 less than our "regular" winemaker's dinners), which includes *everything*. Just as with a "regular" Pre-Release tasting, all of the Pre-Release wines may be reserved at a discount of 25-30%. The dinner begins at 6:00 with a tasting of our sparkling wines along with assorted cheeses. Following the welcoming reception, we'll be seated at 6:30 when our newest releases are unveiled. (*Note that there will be no cellar tour that evening*)

## **Chef Christine Ferris** March 24

**Brie and apple-chicken sausage tartlet**  
*Pinot Grigio 2011*

**Pepper crusted Crab cakes** - served with a ginger aioli  
*Dry Riesling 2011*

**Spinach Salad** - topped with bacon, goat cheese, spicy pecans and a creamy jalapeno jelly-balsamic dressing  
*Riesling 2011*

**Oven Poached Salmon** - served with Parmesan and celery root mashed potatoes, topped with a Cabernet reduction sauce  
*Cabernet Sauvignon 2010*

**Ribeye, portabella mushroom and new potato kebab** - on a bed of greens and topped with blue cheese butter  
*Meritage 2010*

**Almond Florentine Cookie Cup** - filled with caramel-banana gelato and topped with fresh strawberries  
*Vignoles Reserve 2011*

# Culinary Journey to Exotic Brazil

Each year we host a winemaker's dinner featuring the cuisine of some foreign land, and this year we have chosen Brazil as our destination. The dinner will be a five-course meal with representative foods from various regions throughout Brazil, which will be paired with a selection of Fenn Valley wines. Unlike the United States where there is little regional food diversity, Brazil has many foods that are unique to each of the 26 states and we will be sampling some of the more popular foods from the southeastern region of Brazil.

This year Chef Christine Ferris will be joined by the winemaker's wife, Celita, who is a native of Brazil. Celita has formal culinary training and has experience teaching professional chefs the art of Brazilian cooking. Her experience and expertise will lend an authentic flavor to this delightful culinary journey.

Like the United States, Brazil is a melting pot of various cultures, and many of their "traditional" foods have origins in Portugal, Africa, Japan, the Middle East, and western Europe. And, since most of the population resides on the east side of this vast country, much of the diet consists of seafood from the Atlantic Ocean.

While the menu is not fully developed, it will include a selection of appetizers (Kibe, Esfiha, Pastels), Bobo shrimp, Moqueca (seafood stew), Feijoada (bean stew with sausage and pork), and Bomboms and milk pudding for dessert.

Please see the Fenn Valley website ([www.fennvalley.com](http://www.fennvalley.com)) after March 1 for the complete menu. The cost will be \$75 pp (all inclusive) and reservations will be accepted after March 1. Recipes will be available for the various dishes served at this culinary expedition.

# Friends of Fenn Valley

Since many of our guests like to bring their friends and family to Fenn Valley, we have implemented a program that may reward you if your guest is a first time visitor. If your guest is not already on our mailing list and they sign up to receive our quarterly newsletter, your friend will receive a pair of Fenn Valley logo glasses and we will send you a \$10 gift certificate.

We call this our "Friends of Fenn Valley" program, and it is available to *anyone* on *any* visit to the winery. So, if you are showing off "your" winery to a friend, have them sign up for our quarterly newsletter and you will receive a \$10 gift certificate.

# Pre-Release Wines

For you Pre-Release fans, this year's six wines include: (*details of the event begin on page 1*)

- Pinot Grigio 2011.....dry white wine with peach & mango character.
- Dry Riesling 2011.....dry white wine with crisp, ripe apple flavors.
- Riesling 2011.....semi-dry floral white wine.
- Vignoles Reserve 2011.....Sweet white wine having a tropical fruit and pineapple character.
- Cabernet Sauvignon 2010.....dry red wine with a plum and berry character.
- Meritage 2010.....dry red with black fruit and light oak.

## UP & COMING AT FENN VALLEY

**B**e sure to mark your calendars as we plan for a busy spring and summer here at Fenn Valley. As usual, we have lots of fun and educational activities in store during the months ahead.

**February 4: GIRL'S AFTERNOON OUT.** Chef Christine Ferris will present a "Valentine Dinner Wine & Food Pairing". Details at [www.fennvalley.com](http://www.fennvalley.com). \$30/pp includes lunch, wine, tax, tip. 11-2 pm. *Reservations required.*

**March 24: PRE-RELEASE WINEMAKER'S DINNER.** Taste the Pre-Release wines the way they should be tasted - with food. A gourmet meal matched to the newest Pre-Release wines. Details to follow. *Reservations required (accepted Feb 1).*

**March 10,11, & 17, 18: WINE & FOOD PAIRING DEMO** We'll select 6 new, unreleased wines and serve them one at a time with a food sample that pairs well with the wine. Order any of the wines that you like and save 25-30%. See page 1 for details and page 3 for a list of wines. *Reservations required, no admission charge.*

**April 28: ETHNIC WINEMAKER'S DINNER.** Join us on a culinary excursion to Brazil with native Brazilian Celita Welsch and Chef Christine Ferris. \$75 pp. includes champagne, wine, tax, tip. *Reservations required (accepted Feb 1).*

**May 5: GIRL'S AFTERNOON OUT.** Join us for another fun afternoon as Chef Christine Ferris demonstrates how to use whole grains for a nutritious and healthy life style. More details in the February newsletter. \$30/pp includes lunch, wine, tax and tip. 11-2 pm. *Reservations required (accepted March 1).*

**June 23: FENN VALLEY WINE FEST & OPEN HOUSE.** Once again we will kick off the beginning of summer with outdoor wine tasting, ethnic foods and great music. \$8.00 adults. *No reservations.* 1-5pm.



**July 6, 21, & Aug 3: PICNIC IN THE VINEYARDS.** You bring the grillmaster and we supply everything else - wine, food, grill, and The live musical entertainment.. *Reservations required (accepted June 1).*

**TOURS Nov - July:** Saturdays at 3:00 pm. *Reservations strongly recommended* and can be made the week of the tour. No tours on weekends with scheduled cellar events or during the middle two weekends of March. The cost is \$8, which includes a wine glass and a coupon worth \$5 on the purchase of 3 or more bottles of wine.

**VINEYARD TOURS:** Our much sought-after fall vineyard tours begin the last weekend of August. Reservations are *required* and are accepted beginning July 1. Prime time tours fill the first week, *so call early.*

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