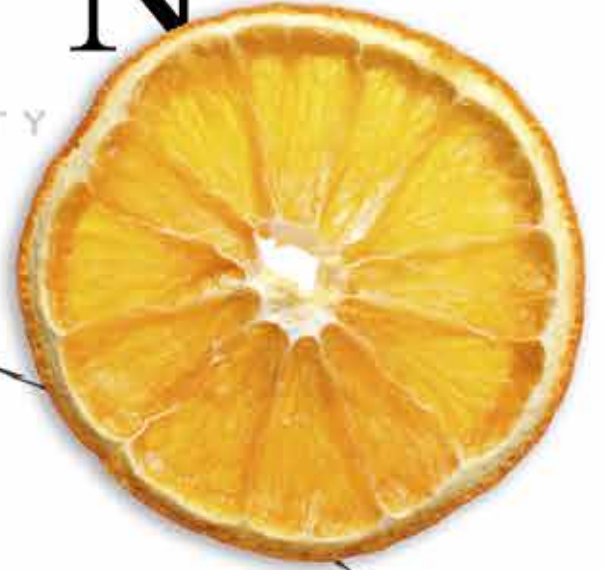


BROWN

SCENTS & SENSIBILITY

SPRING 2015



Floral

Spicy

Microbiological



Suity



Oxidized

Chemical



Herbaceous or Vegetative

Nutty



Earthy

Woody

Caramel



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Cheers!

Our cover design for this issue was inspired by Ann C. Noble's iconic—and too frequently knocked-off/uncredited—Wine Aroma Wheel, copyrighted in 1985 while she was Professor of Viticulture & Enology at UC Davis. Dr. Noble, a PhD in Food Science, memorialized a dizzying and frequently surprising array of aromatic notes that may show up on a wine's nose. In doing so, she bestowed upon the wine world one of our preeminent reference tools, and she provided a point of entry for newcomers to the sometimes intimidating realm of wine appreciation. Who, after all—upon realizing that “skunk” and “horsey” and “soy sauce” and “burnt toast” all are legitimate wine aromatic notes—wouldn't want to get in on the action?

Our theme this time—scent/memory and how the two figure into our endlessly discoverable world of wine—is reprised from a story in our Summer 2011 issue for which we created our own Brown-centric 3D wine aroma wheel. We're captivated by the nose and its superpowers, which may inspire a Part Two follow-up to delve into the brain science of scent. Stay tuned!

At present, page 3 features San Francisco shop Spice Ace, whose proprietors' well-seasoned passports are all the cred they need. Our centerfold is threefold: (1) a rumination on the phenomenon of scent memory; (2) details on our newly released 2013 Napa Valley Zinfandel; and (3) a small treatise on the value of tasting notes. Our page 6 member profile of fragrance consultant Tom Knotek is a riveting resource filled with tips you'll want to bookmark for future reference. On page 7, David

talks swirling, sniffing, and stemware, and as always on the back page you'll find wine club allocations and our “Brown in the USA” list.

We probably should mention, too, that 2015 marks two decades since we established the Brown Estate label and David began dabbling in winemaking (after he'd been running our farming operation for about five years). His code name for his first batch of homebrew wine was “Phat Vine,” and to commemorate that humble beginning (so long ago!) we've revived the moniker for a “winemaker's pleasure” series, the first installment of which we bottled in February, the day before we wrapped this issue. We'll keep the varietal a surprise except to say it's a wine David's long loved but never made. And no... it's not the Tempranillo!

Cheers & love & happy spring!



SPICE ACE

GATEWAY TO GLOBAL FLAVOR

Few things make an urban trek more rewarding than stumbling upon a previously unknown resource while meandering around a familiar city. That's what happened to us one day last year when we discovered Spice Ace, a deceptively unassuming storefront obscured by overgrown trees on a side street in San Francisco—out of sight in both senses of the phrase!

Named a “World's Best Spice Shop” by *Food & Wine*, Spice Ace's inventory comprises a veritable encyclopedia of herbs, spices, salts, peppers, and other tidily packaged seasonings displayed in an impeccably minimalist setting that's part museum and part library. The sleek, streamlined Carrera marble countertops and white shelving and drawers are a deferential backdrop to the main event—hundreds of quarter- and half-cup glass jars with easy-to-read white labels and easy-open ribbed white screw-top lids filled with a breathtaking array of ingredients from around the world just waiting to be pinched or dashed into your next recipe. As a bonus, Spice Ace's website—complete with delicious photos of *everything*—is as exhaustively stocked, thoughtfully organized, and user-friendly as its brick-and-mortar counterpart. Whether you visit online or in person, Spice Ace is a gateway to global flavor.

Several years ago married proprietors Olivia Dillan and Ben Balzer, inspired by a shared penchant for travel, retired from long-haul careers in tech and finance to pursue their obvious passion. We recently visited the shop en route to a dinner party to pick up a host gift, and Olivia kindly agreed to help us spice up this issue with an interview. (*Warning: Reading what follows may bring on hunger pangs and/or wanderlust.*)

Before it gave rise to Spice Ace, how much was your urge to travel driven by your love of food and its ingredients?

I've always loved traveling the world and exploring new cuisines, eating according to local customs, visiting food markets and bringing back spices and ingredients to enjoy at home or as gifts for friends—dried chiles from New Mexico, Sumac from Turkey... Seeking out what are considered the

best restaurants and ordering as many dishes as I and my travel companions can handle is a great way to find new favorites—from fish tacos at a stand in Ensenada to ABC Kitchen in Manhattan!

Was there a moment when you and Ben were globetrotting and everything crystallized—i.e., when a professional transition became inevitable?

We were on a belated honeymoon in Venice in March 2012 in a gondola, passing by a house where Marco Polo once



lived. Right then we decided to leave our lifelong careers and open the spice store of our dreams. It was an exciting moment, and Spice Ace is our happy place.

What's the most thrilling discovery you've made in terms of being swept away by an ingredient at or near its point of origin?

My favorite country food-wise is Italy. Whether north or south—I love how they can take just a few ingredients and

create the most delicious pasta and fish dishes. It's where I fell in love with truffles as well as Calabrian Chiles. Also, during multiple visits to New Mexico, I ate at local haunts and spoke with chefs and learned a lot about chiles and Southwestern cooking. Now I use chiles a lot—be they smoky, mild, or hot—with everything from steak to pork stews. That protracted process of discovery changed my point of view on heat and smoke in food.

Have you ever been stumped by something you've tasted, unable to identify the makeup of a seasoning?

Yes and I enjoy when it happens. It's fun to discover either a new spice or a new technique that changes the flavor of a dish.

Falling in love with the cuisine of a country or region inevitably involves connecting with whoever prepared or served the meal. Would you say that by extension it also leads to a general fondness for the place?

Absolutely! Whether on a rooftop in Athens sampling five different types of Saganaki, from Haloumi to Kasserli, or having amazing ravioli-like dumplings in Istanbul or a great seafood pasta dish with Scorpion fish in Capri... getting to know the chef or the waiter or fellow diners—it's an overall experience. Even a slice of pizza made

Continued on back page

Calabrian Chile

Nob Hill Seasoning

Urfa Biber Chile Flakes

Vadouvan

French Market Seasoning

Turkish Grill Seasoning

The BE FAMILY



BUT WHEN FROM A LONG-DISTANT PAST NOTHING SUBSISTS, AFTER THE PEOPLE ARE DEAD, AFTER THE THINGS ARE BROKEN AND SCATTERED, TASTE AND SMELL ALONE, MORE FRAGILE BUT MORE ENDURING, MORE UNSUBSTANTIAL, MORE PERSISTENT, MORE FAITHFUL, REMAIN POISED A LONG TIME, LIKE SOULS, REMEMBERING, WAITING, HOPING, AMID THE RUINS OF ALL THE REST; AND BEAR UNFLINCHINGLY, IN THE TINY AND ALMOST IMPALPABLE DROP OF THEIR ESSENCE, THE VAST STRUCTURE OF RECOLLECTION. —FROM MARCEL PROUST'S *IN SEARCH OF LOST TIME*

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST...

The excerpt above from Proust's famous passage on the madeleine speaks to the immutable power of smell to reconnect us with long-lost life experiences. (Yes, he references taste as well—but we all know from having our sense of smell knocked out by a head cold that without smell there is no taste.)

Immersed as we are in the business of wine, in conversation we frequently reference the oft-overlooked fact that eighty percent of wine appreciation is in the nose. That's precisely because smell is at once the most ephemeral and most evocative of our senses. The powerful relationship between scent and memory comprises the subtlest yet most intricately woven layer in the fabric of our being... and more than we realize, this magical blend perfumes the ambiance of our lives.

Unlike our five-note taste buds, our olfactory range is limitless. As a result we have a vast scent archive at our ready—if involuntary—disposal. When you stick your nose into a glass of wine and take a whiff (post-swirl, of course), there's no telling what randomly accessed memory may show up, triggered by some familiar aroma that however long dormant in the recesses of your brain yet is imprinted there, permanently.

Throughout wine's ancient history, we humans, relentlessly innovative and at times desperate, have attempted to ferment the juice of every liquefiable fruit known to, well, us. Yet if not scientifically, it's been proven popularly that fermented grape juice has far and away the greatest capacity for producing the depth and complexity of aromatics, palate, and mouthfeel that elevate wine from mere intoxicant to sublime indulgence. A bottle of well-made wine is a window onto worlds both new in the discovering and old in the remembering. Thus from not only our perspective as producer—for whom years of

our lives are suspended inside each bottle—but yours as consumer—for whom a flood of memories likely will arise as you pour out the bottle and breathe in the bouquet—wine is both a time capsule waiting to be unearthed and a time machine awaiting activation. Moreover, wine is as capable of catapulting us forward into an imagined future—i.e., of lulling us to daydream—as it is of inducing reminiscence.

Karl Lagerfeld once observed that photography is the only medium capable of capturing a second. By the same token, memory is the only means of recapturing a moment. Wine's evocative capacity, via the aromatics it conveys,

When you stick your nose into a glass of wine there's no telling what randomly accessed memory may show up.

to mine our memories—to bend time, our most precious commodity, to render the present elastic by transporting us hither and yon—may be the singular quality that makes it peerless among luxury beverages. Time waits for no one, but now and then it circles back courtesy of stimuli that tease out hidden treasures from our mind's safe deposit box.

Like the texture of our lives, scent memory is enriched by the experiences we accumulate as we navigate life's twists and turns. It's what enables Coral, for example, to conjure tasting notes on our new wines in order to memorialize the qualities present in the bottle upon release.



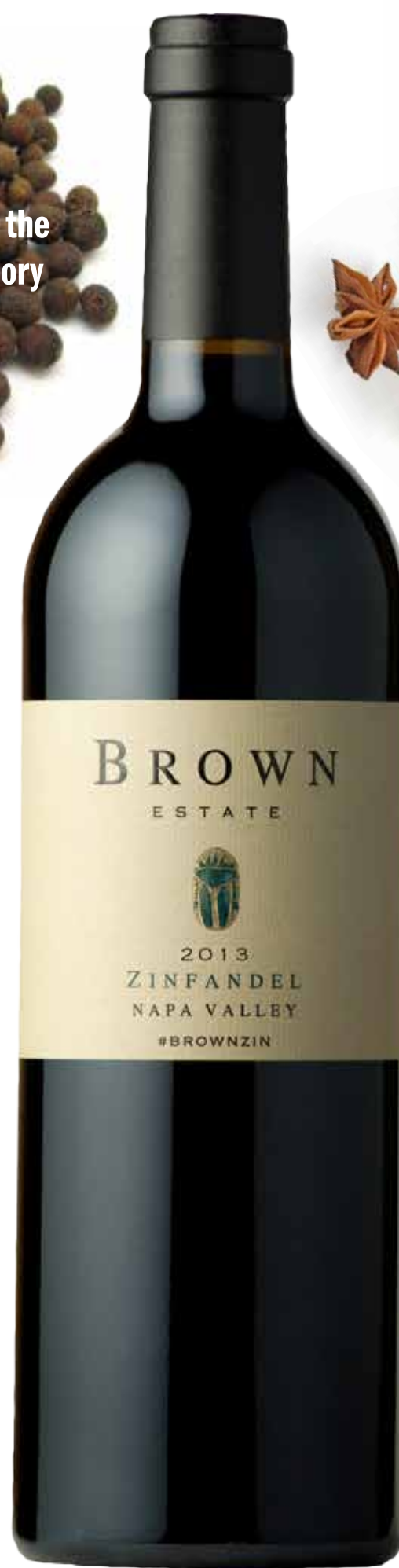
Tasting notes always address four senses in this order: sight, smell, taste, feel—and invariably the dominant notes are aromatics. That's because (to recap) eighty percent of wine appreciation is in the nose. Herewith, an early impression of our **2013 Napa Valley Zinfandel**, broken down by sense:

SIGHT: Beautiful, brilliant ruby core with delicate raspberry rim. A swirl of the glass induces cascades of subtle scarlet.

SMELL: Further coaxing opens evocative nose of ripe fruit with ethereal medium intensity. Notes of red cherry, black plum, and candied cranberry commingle with Brown Estate hallmarks of hibiscus blossom, pink grapefruit, clove, star anise, and Asian pear, followed by allspice, cinnamon, orange zest, and a hint of new leather.

TASTE/FEEL: Succulent and extraordinarily juicy on the palate with dense concentration and rich mouthfeel, ripe with strawberry jam, vanilla, and delicate herbs de Provence. Seamless integration of jammy juiciness, vibrant acidity, and delicate tannins makes for an artfully balanced wine. Drink now through 2030.

It bears mentioning that like a snapshot, tasting notes simply capture a moment in time. No more does a person exactly resemble his or her likeness in a photograph years later than does a bottle of wine exactly resemble its original tasting notes as it ages. Alive and dynamic inside the bottle, wine is constantly in flux. The value in tasting notes is to give the consumer a point of reference reflecting the wine's youthful characteristics. Invariably traces of those early notes will be detectable when the bottle finally is opened, but so will a new subset of attributes have come forward with time.



Retail \$42
Estate & California Clubs \$37.80
Library Club \$35.70



Why We Write Tasting Notes

AND WHY YOU SHOULD READ THEM

The path to discovering the joys of wine appreciation can be intimidating, thanks in part to the perceived pretense that attends the basic act of picking up a glass of wine, swirling it, and taking a few deep, studious sniffs before enjoying your first sip... then having to comment intelligently on what you've experienced.* Enter tasting notes, which from our standpoint memorialize a wine's characteristics—appearance, aromatics, flavor profile, and physical impression on the palate—early in its shelf life cycle.

We typically write in-house tasting notes immediately in advance of a wine being released, meaning at the earliest point we deem the wine ready to meet its public. In many respects producer tasting notes are a love letter, composed by someone whose relationship to the subject is, well, highly subjective. Nonetheless,

bearing witness to a wine's personality before anyone else has access to it is a meaningful exercise that ultimately facilitates consumer engagement—an important objective when your business depends upon people connecting with your wines.

Tasting notes also frequently are written by outsiders at various stages in the aging process—typically wine professionals, critics, bloggers, and enthusiasts. Assuming standard protocols are followed, ideally any set of tasting notes (including the producer's original) will provide a combination snapshot and milestone reflecting the wine's condition at a given point in time. Whatever your level of interest in "wine studies," taking and comparing notes as a wine evolves in the bottle is a great way to deepen your knowledge.

The bottom line on tasting notes—as on wine itself—is that their virtue is in the eye of the beholder. What's helpful to one person may strike another as folly, just as what's delicious to one person may not do it for another. We embrace the idea that *wine should not be stressful*, and that means allowing people to find their way to it. When it comes to premium wines, tasting notes provide an entrée. Our only prescription: follow your palate! **B**

*The art of aerating that first sip of wine by basically sucking air into it through your teeth is another intimidating layer in this process. But it's easily demystified by practice makes perfect. As anyone who's got it down has done, work on it in the privacy of your own home—you'll soon get the hang of it, and it will enhance your ability to discern wine's nuances.



Tom Knotek

BROWN ESTATE MEMBER PROFILE

When we met BE members Tom Knotek and Paul Hilepo five years ago, Tom was Senior VP of Home Fragrance for Bath & Body Works and Paul, talent agent to groundbreaking actress Laverne Cox (among others) was doing his thing—representing! Meanwhile Tom, a lifelong student of fragrance and 25-year professional in the field, left the corporate sector to become an independent fragrance, flavor, and sensory consultant—work that we, given the import of scent in the wine world, find endlessly fascinating. In fact, Tom became one of our wine club member BFFs when, during his and Paul’s first visit to the winery, he and Coral had what we refer to as a “felt-whole” (or “felt-hole,” if you like) experience while comparing fragrance notes on our then current release wines. As it’s imprinted in our collective myth memory, the episode evolved into a friendly sniff-off that was something like an improvised musical collaboration with its back-and-forth of *Show me what you got—Oh yeah, that works—Check this out—Wow!* Since then our conversation with Tom about the intricate science of fragrance, whose mysteries and nuances he’s mastered over a lifetime of impassioned inquiry, has never stopped. After chatting with him for our Scents & Sensibility issue, we don’t think it ever will.

When it comes to personal fragrance, you wear it well—you always smell amazing but your scent never overtakes the room or transfers onto people you hug, as we know firsthand. Share some thoughts on the art of personal fragrance application.

Thanks for the compliment! For me, fragrance is the ultimate accessory to who you are, so should never be the first thing someone encounters when meeting you. I’m very sensitive to fragrance so I try to be considerate of others by not flooding people with my scent of the day. I find the best way to scent oneself is immediately out of the shower as soon as you’ve toweled dry. Before you put on your deodorant, before you dry your hair, etc., think about the scent portrait you want to wear for the day and do three sprays on your body: first on your right wrist, then immediately rub your left and right wrists together to unlock the fragrance; next, spritz on the right side of the base of your neck; next, repeat on the left side of the neck. Spraying yourself upon exiting the shower allows the fragrance to soften on your skin and lets the mid-tones (or heart) of the fragrance begin to warm and come forward with the base notes, also known as the foundation. By the time you’re ready to walk out the door, the fragrance will have acclimated to your person and become a part of you, rather than being your top layer!

We’ve talked in the past about how scent has become an important part of branding and messaging for businesses such as hotels and spas. Do you think there’s room for this sort of “fourth-dimension” marketing in the food/wine space?

Definitely—but done with caution, as scent should enhance rather than overwhelm any epicurean experience. There are many food establishments in your local mall that have been using scent for years as a means of luring customers to stop what they’re doing and buy a bag of pretzel bites or a waffle cone. Our association with scent and the rewards we receive from food is so strong that sometimes even when we’re not hungry we’ll line up for that gooey rich cinnamon roll. Everywhere you go nowadays, in retail environments, scent is used to pull consumers across the lease line. We make numerous unconscious scent-triggered decisions every day.

Home fragrance is a huge industry. What are your best-practice tips for effective use of fragrance in the home?

Some people might think this approach overkill, but in fact every room of the house can be scented if that’s your thing. Regardless, the key to a great scent experience in your home is to pick a scent appropriate for the room. For instance, a powder room is normally on the smaller side so a fragrance that’s thick and fruity like strawberry would be too much. Instead, a lighter fragrance experience such as a soft white floral or a clean scent that’s ozonic in nature would work well.

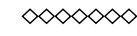
Do you have a favorite home fragrance product?

Mrs. Meyers Lemon Verbena Dish Soap. One squirt on the sponge is like juicing a grove of lemon trees. The scent that envelops the dish sink is so delightful you actually may want to rewash the dishes just to experience the fragrance all over again.

Can unpleasant atmospheric smells be masked by pleasant ones? Or is ventilation the only way to freshen things up?

When you realize you’ve burned the fish under the broiler or polluted the house with pungent leafy greens, the first solution you think of is home fragrance spray or lighting a candle, which may provide immediate masking. But in the time it takes your olfactory bulb to go from smelling the pleasant molecules you’ve introduced back to smelling the unpleasant ones you’re trying to overcome, a whole new molecule has been created that’s a blend of the “good” and the “bad”—and unfortunately the end result is not pretty. I’ve actually been working with a top global fragrance client to solve this exact problem. We’ve developed a line of products that will

One of our questions to Tom was about his favorite personal fragrance. His answer warrants a sidebar, so...



This is like me asking you to pick your favorite wine—but just one! There are so many that speak to me... let me give it a shot by taking a wine pairing approach and putting a fragrance to three different moods/modes:

For an **easygoing everyday** fragrance I gravitate to something fresh like Tom Ford Portofino Neroli, an amazing combination of bitter essence of Neroli with sweet Bergamot, plus amber base notes. Spritz yourself with it sometime and you’ll see why I love it so much. You actually can layer it on top of your favorite/primary fragrance to lighten the character and give it a fresh daytime feel.

For **suit and tie** purposes, things get more complex, like moving from a rosé wine to a big red. I like a complex, multifaceted fragrance like Ermengildo Zegna Florentine Iris. This wonderful scent is one of the first true florals for men, yet it’s so green thanks to its orris root foundation. A perfect accompaniment to a beautiful suit and great tie.

My **black tie** fragrance is Kilian Straight to Heaven. It’s a just-right balance of woody and boozy cognac notes tied together by a sexy patchouli note with a touch of jasmine on top. Brilliant.



Top left: The fragrance engineer at work! Above, from top: With Coral at the winery; with Paul exploring our vineyards; Tom’s actual outdoor shower at Calistoga Ranch!

neutralize foul odors completely by “zapping” the molecules with natural ingredients such as origin-sourced Tasmanian pine and a gorgeous citrus blend. We’ve done extensive testing and let’s just say mission accomplished! However... your best first line of defense is always to open the windows and let some fresh air come in to get the job started.

Speaking of fish and leafy greens, you and Paul love to cook at home. What’s your favorite dish to prepare in terms of aromatics, and what’s the ideal Brown Estate wine(s) pairing?

There are two meals we love to cook based solely on the aromatics of the cooking process: roast chicken and braised short ribs. Each has a completely different olfactive experience. The roast chicken is more herbaceous with the combination of fresh sage, rosemary, thyme, oregano, and Italian parsley grown on our terrace, and we like to add young spring onions that bring in an acidic sweetness. Nothing’s better with this dish than Brown chardonnay. And if it’s a winter night and we want something a bit more robust, the scent of braised short ribs cooking in veal stock with fresh rosemary, garlic, and black pepper is the ultimate for one of your mighty Brown zins or your “silent sleep” petite sirah. It doesn’t get better than this. (I also like to use a whole bottle of Brown in the ribs, but I can’t let Paul know or he’ll cut me off!)

Thanks for the love on the chardonnay and petite sirah, since we know the Chiles Valley zin is your hands-down favorite! Are you able to recall its nose off the top of your head?

From front to back! The nose for me is complex and mysterious at first, but a subtle fruitiness breaks through the rich dark notes of stewed plums and stone fruit. The thing that excites me most about this wine is the persistent black pepper note that isn’t present in your other zins. And a hint of rose floralcy that dances on top of all these notes, adding softness to a powerhouse wine.

You guys stay at Calistoga Ranch when you’re in the Valley—in fact we have them to thank for bringing you into the BE fold. What do you remember about your first encounter with their signature scent?

I love that you ask—it’s something I’ll never forget, one of those recollections that make you realize how powerful the connection is between scent and our emotional memories. Upon arriving at Calistoga Ranch for the first time, I was instantly swept away into what felt like a blissful fantasy of amazing sensory experiences. The first night I stepped into our private outdoor shower and stood under the night sky of a thousand stars letting the hot mineral water drench me. That was almost ten years ago and I can remember to this day the moment I smelled that CR signature shower gel with its classic notes of Bay Laurel (prevalent on the property) combined with aromatic eucalyptus, fresh lavender, fragrant rosemary, and a touch of spice. I felt completely immersed in nature. And to this day, when I have an especially stressful day in NYC, my favorite thing to do is to come home and take a hot shower using Calistoga Ranch shower gel—it instantly transports me 3000 miles across the country to the Napa Valley hills.

What dominant notes would you select if you were creating a signature Brown Estate scent?

The top notes for Brown Estate would need to evoke the feeling of experiencing your property for the first time: inviting, comforting, an embrace by nature. The lilac, jasmine, and wisteria notes that commingle around the house, unfolding to the cedar, verbena, and rose that all who visit you experience while standing across from the majestic redwoods in front of the house. Finally, it would embody the mineral essence of David’s cave and the subtle sweetness of French and American oak that lines the pathway to the tasting room, where Coral’s warm smile ushers you through a sensory flight. And the finish would be a touch of golden citrus stolen from your mom’s intoxicating marmalade. ■

A Winemaker Nose

DAVID ON SCENT MEMORY & STEMWARE



Aroma is an interesting topic for me, especially in the context of wine, because smell—while subjective insofar as you most easily can detect and identify scents you’re familiar with—is not open to interpretation. In other words, if I’m swirling and sniffing a glass of wine and it transports me back to Jamaica... when we were living there... 1979... and all of a sudden... *guinep**—no one can dispute what I’m smelling. That specific scent memory that’s triggered for me is both immutable because it’s permanently imprinted in my brain and incontestable because for me it is what it is.

Now if I’m in the tasting room saying I smell guinep on the nose of this wine... the only people likely to concur are my sisters if they’re there, because most people don’t share that point of reference. BUT—and here’s the thing about aromatics—someone unfamiliar with guinep is going to detect an entirely different primary note from that same wine. Their scent memory is going to recall something familiar to them, say Orange Creamsicle.† This is a note more people can relate to, and the power of suggestion—when it comes to scent memory as it’s evoked by a complex trigger like wine—is incredibly persuasive. So now everyone is sniffing and nodding in agreement and going, “Oh yeah! Orange Creamsicle!”

It goes without saying that the exercise of identifying the aromatics in a glass of wine is a lot of fun. But for us it’s also serious business because it’s a gesture of invitation to our consumers to participate—*Do you smell all these things too? What do you smell?* It’s an icebreaker. It creates an opening that makes the wines accessible. It’s like saying, *Here’s the rabbit hole this took us down... where does it take you?* This is the magic in wine—its endless capacity for transporting us via our individual memory roadmaps.

STEMWARE MATTERS

It’s also why experiencing wine in a proper stem is crucial, because the architecture of fine stemware is designed to optimize the architecture of the wine, and the more you can get on the nose the more you’ll take away from the tasting. Ideally you want a stem and bowl that not only can accommodate but ideally will enhance your swirling and sniffing routine.‡ I remember years ago a Riedel

representative came to the winery with samples of a bunch of different stems. This was almost as exciting for me as when the barrel people come calling—a real geek fest. Anyway, we tasted through the wines and I narrowed it down to three or four candidates that we purchased and used through a release cycle.

Ultimately having to deal with a bunch of different glasses became problematic, so we did a whole tasting through all of our wines in each individual stem and identified one glass that could successfully showcase each of our wines—from the chardonnay to the cabernet sauvignon to the zinfandels to the petite sirah. As I’m thinking about this I’m realizing how long ago that was, and how long it’s been

since we’ve looked at new stemware options. There’s a cool hand-blown stem from Austria that’s engineered and marketed to be universal, suited to all types of wines. Deneen and Stefanie are going to be so happy they sent me on this stream-of-consciousness stroll down scent memory lane when they find out it’s led me to test-drive a bunch of new stemware... ■

* Expressed in the same fashion as *Bingo!* (But to answer your question, guinep—pronounced “gin-up” with a hard “g”—is a tropical fruit that looks like a lime on the outside and something like a cantaloupe-colored lychee on the inside, and variously tastes sweet, sour, tart, and tangy.)

† This is an actual aromatic that we’ve called out on numerous occasions while tasting our wines.

‡ Another important note about wine glass architecture: The stem is meant to be held, not the bowl, and it serves three purposes: (1) it keeps your hands from warming up the wine; (2) it facilitates swirling, which opens the wine’s nose; and (3) it puts distance between your hand, which may be sullied by fragrance residue from soap, lotion, perfume, etc., and your nose. We say “sullied” because your nose is your most important informant when it comes to wine appreciation, so you don’t want any applied or residual fragrances intruding. Personal fragrance is a no-no for people who work in tasting rooms and other professional wine settings, and it’s advisable to avoid wearing personal fragrance when engaged in formal wine tasting.

Wine Club Allocations

SPRING 2015

California Club

2013 Mickey's Block Zinfandel

March

750ml (2 bottles) • Retail \$50
Estate & California Clubs \$45
Library Club \$42.50

2013 Rosemary's Block Zinfandel

April

750ml (2 bottles) • Retail \$55
Estate & California Clubs \$49.50
Library Club \$46.75

Estate Club

2013 Mickey's Block Zinfandel

750ml (2 bottles) • Retail \$50
Estate & California Clubs \$45
Library Club \$42.50

2013 Rosemary's Block Zinfandel

750ml (2 bottles) • Retail \$55
Estate & California Clubs \$49.50
Library Club \$46.75

Library Club

2013 Mickey's Block Zinfandel

750ml (4 bottles) • Retail \$50
Estate & California Clubs \$45
Library Club \$42.50

2013 Rosemary's Block Zinfandel

750ml (4 bottles) • Retail \$55
Estate & California Clubs \$49.50
Library Club \$46.75

2013 Westside Zinfandel

750ml (4 bottles) • Retail \$50
Estate & California Clubs \$45
Library Club \$42.50

Questions?

CALL SUSAN! 707.266.3061

Spice Ace *continued from p3*

by the same man for the last forty years at a pizza parlor in New York is a wonderful, happy connection. It doesn't hurt that he still calls me "Bella..."

In terms of compatibility of your palates would you say you and Ben are more similar or different?

We share a love for Italian, Greek, Turkish, Middle Eastern, Californian, Mexican, Indian, and Southwestern cuisines. I also love Japanese, Vietnamese, and Thai cuisines, and all types of seafood. I'm a bit more adventurous—as long as it's not moving on the plate I will try anything once—whereas Ben's a bit more meat and potatoes.

Your store is a glorious cornucopia. If we asked you to curate a selection of must-have pantry staples/essentials, what would you pull from your shelves?

We get that question a lot! It's a combination of blends and single ingredients. The top ten are: Vadouvan, a great curry; North Beach Italian Blend for pasta sauces or meats; a chile blend for stews or meat rubs; a sage-based blend for poultry, dressings, and meats; French Market Seasoning, a tarragon-based blend for fish and vegetables; Nob Hill Seasoning, a great all-purpose blend; Crushed Red Chile Flakes (Calabrian or Cayenne) to add heat to your favorite dish; domestic Garlic Powder; Vietnamese

Cinnamon; and Vanilla Extract. And truly a good salt and pepper make a world of difference. Then of course Mediterranean Oregano, Basil, Thyme, Paprika, Saffron, Cumin, Turmeric, Shallots, and a smoked chile like our Chipotle Morita to add to the mix.

What about for someone who's got the basics but wants to venture further?

Urfa Biber Chile Flakes, a raisiny, black chile from Turkey that's great on cauliflower or lentils; Szechuan Peppercorns add a citrusy tingle to a meat or fish dish; Lemon Myrtle for fish dishes or simple syrups; Fennel Pollen for pork, risotto, or salads; and a good seasoned salt like our Habanero Sea Salt or our Alderwood Smoked Sea Salt for fish or beets. Also Middle Eastern blends such as Hawaj, which is great in coffee or baked goods, and curries like Vadouvan that will spice up a carrot dish, soup, eggs, or chicken. Another favorite is our Turkish Grill Seasoning—it's wonderful on kebabs, for making your own lamb koftas, or sprinkled on hummus.



What are your favorite aromatic spices?

My favorite aromatic spices trigger memories of family meals and family members. For example, my grandfather was a great Italian cook who made homemade pasta and amazing sauces, so oregano, basil, garlic, crushed red pepper, tomatoes, and truffles all take me back. My stepdad cooked Indian food, so curries—be they spicy or softer and sweeter—always bring a smile to my face as I think of him and those great meals.

Are you interested in the medicinal qualities of any of your wares?

On a personal level I believe we are what we eat, and I see spices as part of a healthy regimen. Whether in my cooking or supplements, I daily have Fenugreek, Turmeric (Curcumin), Cinnamon, Oregano, Basil, Sage, and Capsicum (Cayenne, Calabrian, or Habanero Chile Flakes). However, in the store we focus strictly on the culinary aspect. The fact that these wonderful spices also support good health is an added bonus! **E**

ON THE LIST

Picán, Oakland CA
PlumpJack Squaw Valley, Olympic Village CA
Goose & Gander, St. Helena CA
Rustic Canyon Wine Bar, Santa Monica CA
Palm Restaurant, Washington DC
Joseph's Steakhouse, Iowa City IA
R Bistro, Indianapolis IN
Anoosh Bistro, Louisville KY
Reserve Wine & Food, Grand Rapids MI
Whine Bar, Midland MI
Sunset 44 Bistro, Kirkwood MO

Diamond Horseshoe Bar
(Paramount Hotel),
New York NY
The Blue Point, Duck NC
Market Avenue Wine Bar, Cleveland
OH
Local Roots, Powell OH
The Olive and The Grape, Lake Oswego OR
City Winery, Nashville TN
S&D Oyster Company, Dallas TX
Katz 21 Steak & Spirits, Corpus Christi TX
Byrd & Baldwin Brothers, Norfolk VA

BROWN
IN THE USA

Nielsen Bros. Market,
Carmel CA
Draeger's Market, Los Altos CA
Wally's Wine & Spirits,
Los Angeles CA
Whole Foods, Napa CA
K & L Wine Merchants, San Francisco CA
Woodland Hills Wine Company, Woodland
Hills CA
Cork and Cracker, Indianapolis IN
Ingersoll Wine & Spirits, Des Moines IA
Old Town Wine and Spirits, Louisville KY

ON THE SHELF

Pine Orchard Wines, Ellicott City MD
Plum Market, Ann Arbor MI
Hamlin Grocery & Deli, Ludington MI
Gomers Northland Fine Wines, Kansas City MO
Pop's Wine & Spirits, Island Park NY
B&G Wine & Liquor, New York NY
Chuck's Fine Wines, Chagrin Falls OH
New Seasons Market, Happy Valley OR
The Portland Bottle Shop, Portland OR
Central Market, Dallas TX
Williamsburg Pottery, Williamsburg VA

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Page 7 photos by Carolyn Corley Burgess. We made our deadline this time by a nose! Haha... But seriously, we had so much fun with this issue we wish we had more time to spend thinking, researching, and writing about scent and how it factors into our lives as our primal conduit to memory... and as a supercharger to both brain and palate when it comes to food and wine. Part Two may be a thing! Special thanks to Olivia Dillan of Spice Ace for graciously lending us those beautiful spice images on page 3 + several others on the cover and page 5, and to Tom Knotek for generously sharing so much fabulous fragrance wisdom. We're inspired! Thanks also, as always, to our awesome designer Chris Fettein, with whom we're currently collaborating to restyle our website, and to our friend Sloane Ford, who prints the BE Paper and all of our wine labels. There's magic in working on projects you love with people you love. Speaking of which, we couldn't love YOU more for reading this. Thanks for digging our wines, and for staying engaged. Catch ya next time!

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