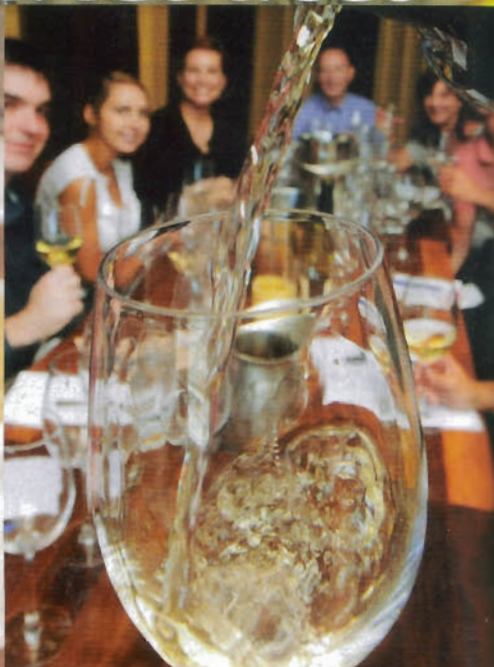
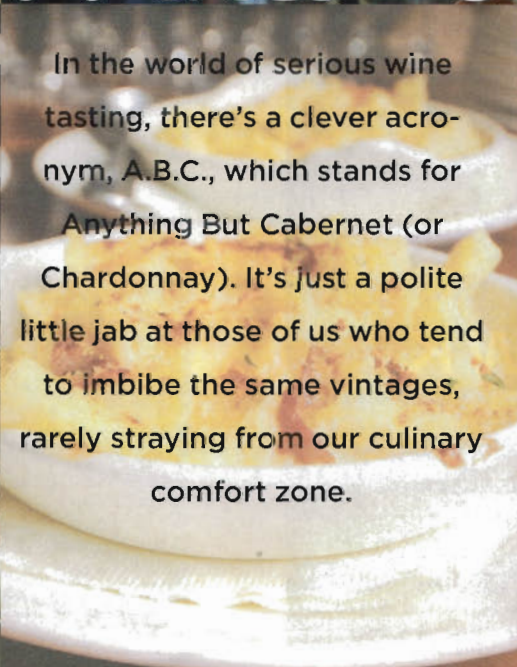


# Local Wines Uncorked



In the world of serious wine tasting, there's a clever acronym, A.B.C., which stands for Anything But Cabernet (or Chardonnay). It's just a polite little jab at those of us who tend to imbibe the same vintages, rarely straying from our culinary comfort zone.

# Notes from Amateurs and an Aficionado

BY LYNN MACHON / PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANTE FONTANA

So guided by Nate Folsom - our aficionado for the day and revered wine consultant with Corti Brothers in Sacramento - several *Style* staffers and contributors recently set out to expand their wine repertoire. Through a horizontal tasting held at Paul Martin's American Bistro in Roseville, we sampled a number of local varietals and blends, all from winemakers right here in our backyard. Some bottles were produced by boutique wineries; others came from large-scale vintners with multiple vineyards. While the group certainly enjoyed a few Cabs and Chardonnays, we also swirled and sipped our way through a delightful collection of Tempranillos, Malbecs, and Vermentinos, among other European varietals becoming increasingly popular here in California. Through our journey of vinos, we discovered that under the diverse label of Viogniers, there are as many different flavors that hit our mid-palates as there are ways to pronounce the trendy grape. We also learned that, when describing wine, characteristic terms like "cigar-box" and "earthy" aren't always negative, just as pours that tasted "fruity" weren't necessarily receiving a compliment.

In our quest to reach beyond the ABC's of wine, we recognized that we aren't all oenophiles like Nate. That's why his opinions on each wine's aroma and taste are listed first. Yet, as simple wine appreciators, we felt adding our collective two cents might help guide you toward a new favorite. Cheers!

1

## Auriga Cellars (Camino)

2008 MARSANNE, \$18

**Aficionado:** Pineapple, lemony citrus and minty on the nose. Very tasty, with honey like flavors, rich mouth feel. Sweetness carries through.

**Style Sippers:** Aroma is buttery, salty, but taste is sweet. Different.

**Food Companions:** Great with Asian foods, would counter balance sweet and fruity dishes like apricot glazed chicken nicely.

2

## Bogle (Clarksburg)

2008 CHARDONNAY, \$9

**Aficionado:** Rich mouth feel with flavors of butterscotch, vanilla, pear, oak and golden apple.

**Style Sippers:** Woody, honey aroma. Tastes chocolatey, rich. Fruity.

**Food Companions:** Would go well with poultry, pork, and heavier cream sauces (like Paul Martin's famous Mac and Cheese). A great Thanksgiving meal wine.

3

## Bumgarner Wines (El Dorado)

2007 TEMPRANILLO, \$23

**Aficionado:** Dry with flavors of raspberry and strawberry. Aromas of fruit and tobacco.

**Style Sippers:** Aroma and hints of crème brûlée, dry raspberry and strawberry. Smooth and kind of smoky.

**Food Companions:** Would pair well with pepperoni pizza, barbeque chicken pizza, or burgers.

4

## Casque (Loomis)

2009 CALOTTE BLANC, \$18

**Aficionado:** Aromas of lemon, pineapple, honey and slight ginger. Nice acidity with flavors of grapefruit and pineapple.

**Style Sippers:** Has a nice tingle to it, with a sparkly citrus flavor. Hints of sweeter, tropical fruit like pineapple. Lingers a bit.

**Food Companions:** Good food wine. Nice with white fish, and salads with fruit to match the fruit of the wine.

5

## Casque (Loomis)

2007 ADRIAN PROPRIETARY RED WINE, \$28

**Aficionado:** Medium bodied with flavors of dark cherry and light spice.

**Style Sippers:** Not too sweet. Taste dark cherry and licorice, maybe cloves. Pleasant tasting.

**Food Companions:** Would go well with barbeques and tangy dishes.

6

## Chateau Rodin (Placerville)

2007 LATE HARVEST CABERNET SAUVIGNON, \$40

**Aficionado:** Ripe, but balanced by nice savory flavors.

**Style Sippers:** Really good. Dark, concentrated flavor. Tastes like liquid candy. Yummy.

**Food Companions:** Would be a very good balance with desserts like chocolate cake and dark berries.

7

## Crystal Basin Cellars (Camino)

2007 EL DORADO RESERVE MALBEC, \$26

**Aficionado:** Delicious, nice spice and long finish. Nose of eucalyptus, slight cigar box. Hints of raspberry, plum, tobacco.

**Style Sippers:** Earthy, nice clove smell. More tannic than Merlot, but smoother than a Cab. Very drinkable, not bitter at the end.

**Food Companions:** Great with red meat.

8

## David Girard Vineyards (Placerville)

2008 GRENACHE, \$22

**Aficionado:** Very nice cranberry aromas that follow through to the palate. Light enough to be a refreshing summertime red. Not complicated, but tasty. A favorite. Suits all tastes.

**Style Sippers:** Lighter wine, with nice tartness from cranberry, cherry and nutmeg hints. Fruity. Nose is heavier than the taste.

**Food Companions:** Good food wine. Lighter barbeque foods like fish and poultry = would counter tangy flavors. Would make a great wine for a Thanksgiving meal.

9

## Gold Hill Vineyard (Placerville)

2009 VIOGNIER, \$22

**Aficionado:** Nice floral nose, possibly lilac and maybe some grapefruit. Nice balance between tropical fruit and an almost sparkly acidity that would make it an excellent food wine.

**Style Sippers:** Refreshing. Nice and spritzy, almost effervescent. Smells like gardenias and grapefruit. Jumps on the palate and lingers.

**Food Companions:** Would be a good before-dinner palate cleanser, with light appetizers, such as spring rolls. Great with Asian food.

10

## Lone Buffalo Vineyards (Auburn)

2008 "WHERE THE BUFFALO ROAM" RED WINE, \$21

**Aficionado:** Blackberry cobbler aromas with hint of nutmeg. Continues with blackberry to a spicy flavor that lasts through the long finish. Another favorite. Makes you want to drink it.

**Style Sippers:** Yummy. Sweet and smooth, dusty and dry.

**Food Companions:** Great with gamier meats like lamb, buffalo, venison or duck.

11

## Scribner Bend (Sacramento Delta)

2009 NOVANTINA, \$11.95

**Aficionado:** Light golden apple and honey aromas, and spice on the nose. Medium-bodied white wine that leans more towards a tart green apple flavor.

**Style Sippers:** Like it. Tasty, refreshing summer drink. Light, not too sweet. Very smooth.

**Food Companions:** Would go well with lighter fish, poultry and cheese.

12

## Spoto Wines (Arden Oaks)

2007 MERLOT, \$40

**Aficionado:** Flavors of ripe fruit - cherries, raspberries, slight plum and herbs. This is how a California Merlot should taste.

**Style Sippers:** Nice herbal nose and dark color. Taste of ripe fruit. Fairly sweet.

**Food Companions:** Good barbeque wine. Would be great with ribs, pork, and even pizza! Ripe and acidic enough to counter-balance red sauces and spice.

Although personal tastes and preferences within our group varied with each glass, all in all, the wines we tasted were fantastic. That's not surprising, considering wine connoisseurs rate the appellations in Amador, El Dorado, Placer and Sacramento counties on par with those found in Napa Valley or even overseas.

In addition to the wineries listed above, wine expert Nate verbally uncorked several others, specifically Bokisch Vineyards in Lodi, Boeger Winery in Placerville, and Karly Wines out of Plymouth that consistently produce good wines.

While our region has long been recognized for producing award-winning Zinfandels, the Sierra Foothills are now also leading the way in the emerging trend of Italian and Spanish varietals. As a result, if you're looking for a few wines to add to your collection this fall, you won't have to go far to find plenty of tasty possibilities.

To check out the labels of more vino from our local winemakers, visit [stylemg.com](http://stylemg.com).

**Special thanks to Paul Martin's American Bistro for their assistance with this feature.**



## FEATURED WINERIES

Auriga Wine Cellars  
[aurigawines.com](http://aurigawines.com)

Bogle Vineyards  
[boglewinery.com](http://boglewinery.com)

Bumgarner Wines  
[bumgarnerwines.com](http://bumgarnerwines.com)

Casque Wines  
[casquewines.com](http://casquewines.com)

Chateau Rodin Winery  
[chateaurodin.com](http://chateaurodin.com)

Crystal Basin Cellars  
[crystalbasin.com](http://crystalbasin.com)

David Girard Vineyards  
[davidgirardvineyards.com](http://davidgirardvineyards.com)

Gold Hill Vineyard  
[goldhillvineyard.com](http://goldhillvineyard.com)

Lone Buffalo Vineyards  
[lonebuffalovineyards.com](http://lonebuffalovineyards.com)

Scribner Bend Vineyards  
[scribnerbend.com](http://scribnerbend.com)

Spoto Wines  
[spotowines.com](http://spotowines.com)