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YOUR OWN AND  
WHAT TO DO  
WITH THEM

SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 6, 2010

LOCAL NEWS, FOOD, ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

**CHILI**  
**FOR THE PEOPLE**

**A LOOK AT  
THE SPICY  
COMPETITION AND  
THE TASTY DISH**

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# INSIDE: GREEN HOMES TOUR

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**DRINK****Meet Marechal Foch**

New Hampshire's grape?

By Paulette Eschrich  
food@hippopress.com

In June, I attended the first New Hampshire Winery Association "Live Free & Wine" Festival. At the time I noted that many of the wineries produce a red wine from the Marechal Foch varietal. Some wineries actually grow their own "Foch," as it is often called, and others purchase the grapes and/or juice from farmers in New York State. Fast forward to September, when my monthly Wine Book Club selection was Jim Beauregard's *New Hampshire Wine*. That presented the perfect opportunity to collect bottles of as many Marechal Foch wines as I could that were produced by New Hampshire winemakers.

Marechal Foch, an Alsatian hybrid, was developed to withstand harsh winters, it ripens early, and the clusters are resistant to fungus. The best wines come from mature vines. Although it's not officially New Hampshire's state grape, the New Hampshire Winery Association has encouraged member winemakers to include Marechal Foch in their line-up.

I located 10 New Hampshire-made Marechal Foch wines, including two from Jewell Towne Vineyards. I visited six of the nine wineries, and purchased three bottles from a New Hampshire State Liquor Store and one from The Wine Studio in Manchester:

**2006 Candia Vineyards** (their current vintage is already sold out), acquired at the winery.

**2007 Flag Hill Winery** (NH Code 32809), \$12.99 from New Hampshire Liquor Store.

**Haunting Whisper Vineyards**, \$14 at the winery.

**Jewell Towne Vineyards** (NH Code 35313), \$10.49 at the New Hampshire State Liquor Store.

**2009 Jewell Towne Vineyards Private Reserve**, \$15 at the winery.

**LaBelle Winery** [Granite State Red includes 20% Blueberry Wine] (NH Code 763), \$13.99 at the New Hampshire State Liquor Store.

**2009 Olde Nuttfield Winery** (NH Code 801), \$16.99 at the Wine Studio, Manchester.

**Stone Gate Vineyard & Winery**, \$15 at the winery.

**Sweet Baby Vineyard**, \$11 at the winery.

**2006 Walpole Mountain View Winery at Barnett Hill Vineyard**, \$18, acquired at the winery.

The blind tasting was conducted in two phases. All 10 bottles were opened and blindly tasted by an initial panel of five oenophiles. The panel included Jim Beauregard (who is writing his own account of the tasting for his column in the *Union Leader*), me, and two friends who regularly participate in tasting events. The fifth panel member was Charlie Saunders, proprietor of the Wine Society in Nashua, as well as a viticulturalist (his vineyard is in Billerica, Mass.) and winemaker; he provided a sample of his wine, Chateau Montclair, to be included in the blind tasting, which actually brought the

tally to 11 (this wine is not available for purchase). From the first tasting, we selected the top five to be tasted blind by the Wine Book Club attendees.

One thing you learn when you are in the wine business is that it's always possible to get a bad bottle. Many official tasting events require two samples to ensure a back-up bottle as a contingency for just that reason. Alas, I did not have back-up bottles, and two wines had to be eliminated from the tasting: Candia Vineyards and Olde Nuttfield. Ironically I had sampled the 2006 at Candia Vineyards, and it was light and fresh with a dry finish, similar to Beaujolais. At the Book Club meeting a Candia Vineyards spicy red wine from the grape Noiret was a crowd favorite. The week after the Wine Book Club, I tasted the Olde Nuttfield at A Market's Customer Appreciation event in Manchester and it had hints of blackberry and cherry on the nose with an off-dry finish like maraschino cherries. If you encounter a bottle that is defective, recork or cap the bottle and return it to the place where it was purchased for a refund or replacement. Please do not assume that all of that winery's production is bad!

The top five that made it into the Book Club Tasting were these: both wines from Jewell Towne Vineyards, Haunting Whisper Vineyards, Walpole Mountain View Winery and Charlie's entry from Chateau Montclair. We had 13 Book Club attendees who tasted all five wines side by side, both alone and with cheeses from New Hampshire's Boggy Meadow Farm in Walpole.

The winner by a landslide was the 2006 Walpole Mountain View Winery Marechal Foch made from her own estate grapes by Virginia Carter. The color had a tinge of brick consistent with an older vintage. This light-bodied red was well-balanced with nuanced flavors of soft cherry and hints of oak leading to a long, dry finish with the characteristic nod to Beaujolais. A new tasting room at the winery in Walpole is open on Saturdays and the drive up the hillside reveals breathtaking scenery — perfect for a foliage drive over the next several weeks while they are harvesting this year's grapes.

In a tie for second place were the slightly sweeter Haunting Whisper Vineyard Marechal Foch and the drier style entry from Chateau Montclair. Made from purchased fruit, although future vintages will include grapes grown in their own vineyards, the Haunting Whisper is a light garnet with a nose like cherry cola, a touch of sweetness on the mid-palate balanced with medium acidity, and a lingering finish laced with black cherry. Located in the Lakes Region, this winery's tasting room is sited on a hill overlooking the vineyard and with windows providing a bird's eye view of the working winery space.

The two Foch wines from Jewell Towne Vineyards tied for third place. The medium-bodied Private Reserve, made exclusively from estate fruit, was a deep almost purple color with Concord grape and brambly spice on the palate, followed by an off-dry finish. The regular Foch is lighter in body, exhibit-

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**DRINK**

ing hints of cherry cola and cotton candy on the nose and palate with a dry finish.

Recently New Hampshire Magazine conducted a blind tasting of four Marechal Foch wines — Sweet Baby Vineyards, Jewell Towne Vineyards, Flag Hill Winery and LaBelle Winery — and they crowned Sweet Baby Vineyards the winner.

Why not try your own blind tasting of New Hampshire wines accompanied by a selection of New Hampshire cheeses? Many

wines are only sold at the winery. Additional private shops or restaurants are often listed on the winery's website. Check the New Hampshire Winery Association website at [www.nhwineryassociation.com](http://www.nhwineryassociation.com) for links to all of their members' websites.

*Paulette Eschrich is a dedicated oenophile and former wine retailer who runs a wine book club and conducts custom in-home wine tastings.*

**Drink Listings**

Costs for wine events vary. Call or go to Web sites for pricing details.

**Brewerys/Distillerys/Cider**

• **ANHEUSER-BUSCH** 221 DW Hwy in Merrimack. Complimentary tours include a visit to the Clydesdale Hamlet, home of the world-famous Budweiser Clydesdales. Open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 595-1202.

• **FARNUM HILL CIDERS** 98 Poverty Lane, Lebanon, 448-1511, [www.farnumhillciders.com](http://www.farnumhillciders.com)

• **ELM CITY BREWING COMPANY** Colony Mill Marketplace, 222 West St., Keene, 355-3335, [www.elmcitybrewing.com](http://www.elmcitybrewing.com). Restaurant, brewery and pub, open Mon.-Thurs., 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to midnight; Sunday 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

• **REDHOOK BREWERY** 35 Corporate Drive, Pease Tradeport, Portsmouth, [www.redhook.com](http://www.redhook.com), produces Redhook ales and features the Cataqua Public House offering brews and a pub menu. Tours offered Monday and Tuesday at 2 p.m.; Wednesday and Thursday at noon, 1, 3 and 4 p.m.; Friday and Saturday every hour on the hour from noon to 4 p.m.; Sunday every hour on the hour from 1 to 4 p.m. For private tours, call 430-8600 ext. 327.

• **SMUTTYNOSE**, 225 Heritage Ave. in Portsmouth, [smuttynose.com](http://smuttynose.com), 436-4026. Free tours to the public Friday at 3 p.m. and Saturday at 11 a.m.

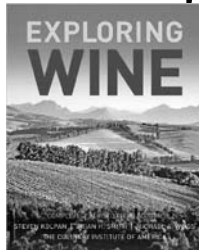
• **TUCKERMAN BREWING COMPANY** 64 Hobbs St. in Conway, 447-5400, [www.tuckermanbrewing.com](http://www.tuckermanbrewing.com), offers tours every Saturday at 3 p.m.

**Classes/workshops on wine/beer making**

• **BEER/WINE-MAKING** classes and demonstrations on making beer, wine and soda at IncredibREW, 112 DW Hwy., Nashua, 891-2477, [incredibrew.com](http://incredibrew.com). Shop features fest-nights that focus on making a particular kind of beer.

• **HOME BREW COMPETITION** New Hampshire homebrewers group Brew Free or Die and Southern Maine Homebrewers will host the Fifth Annual New England Regional Homebrew Competition on Saturday, Oct. 23, at the Redhooke Ale Brewery in Portsmouth. Winners will be named in homebrew beer, cider and mead categories. Last year, there were 350 entries, according to a press release. The event will start at 9 p.m. Entries will be accepted between Sept. 20 and Oct. 8 with judging to be held on Oct. 23. For information on how to enter your brew, see [www.bfd.org/NERHBC](http://www.bfd.org/NERHBC).

**In the spotlight**



*Exploring Wine*, by Steven Koplan, Brian H. Smith, Michael A. Weiss, **The Culinary Institute of America (2010, John Wiley & Sons, 792 pages)**

If you have any interest in wine at all, this is your book.

(Well, at \$65 maybe it's the book you give your spouse for Christmas, but still, it belongs in your house.) Because this book, with intelligence, clarity and very nice pictures and maps, will answer most of your wine questions, from "what's up with wines from Bordeaux?" (there's a map of the region, a rundown of the grapes and an explanation of the blending) to "Canadian wine? Really?" (yes, with a list of the better wineries in Ontario).

Building a cellar? Trying Riesling for the first time? Wanting to do something with that bottle of Port you got last holiday season? Curious about the debate over wine and pregnancy? This book has something on all of that. Also, pairing wine and food. Also, the potential health benefits of a Mediterranean diet. Also, building a menu with wines based on the cuisine you're cooking. Also charts explaining not just what wine to serve with seafood but which wines go better with mollusks versus which wines to serve with tuna.

Sold yet? No? It's the \$65, isn't it? Well, let me argue that that \$65 is a bargain.

This isn't one book on wine, it's a small library that lets you nerd out on the microclimates of France or just look up some grape you've never heard of, Torrentes, let's say, and read a short description that lets you decide whether you're interested in trying out a bottle (page 422 if you're talking about Spain; page 220 if you're looking at a South American Torrentes).

Get this book and you can save yourself the money you'd use on a wine course — though the information in this book will likely get you so interested you'll want to take a class just to learn more (and maybe show off your knowledge). What to sip while you're gaining all this vino knowledge? I'm sure the book has some suggestions.

— Amy Diaz

• **INTERNATIONAL FOOD & WINEFEST** On Fri., Oct. 8, at 7 p.m. it's a celebration of the world of wine with the International Food and Winefest at IncredibREW, 112 DW Highway in Nashua, 891-2477, [www.incredibrew.com](http://www.incredibrew.com). With the help of Trader Joe's, try food and wine from around the globe while you learn how to make wine from Spain, Germany, Australia, the Alsace region, Italy and New Zealand.

• **OKTOBERFEST — INCREDIBREW** On Wed., Oct. 6, at 6 p.m. and Thursday, Oct. 7, at 6 p.m., it's Oktoberfest 2010 at IncredibREW, 112 DW Highway in Nashua, 891-2477, [www.incredibrew.com](http://www.incredibrew.com). Brew German beers and order pretzels from German John's Bakery in Hillsborough.

Return in two weeks for bottling and to pick up your German eats. The cost is \$30 for a variety case or \$50 for two variety cases.

• **VINTNER'S CELLAR CUSTOM WINERY — BEDFORD** Vintner's Cellar at Sebbins Brook Marketplace, 410 South River Road, Route 3 in Bedford, offers a chance to taste and create custom wines. Call 627-9463 or go to [www.vintnerscellarnh.com](http://www.vintnerscellarnh.com).

• **VINTNER'S CELLAR WINERY — CONCORD** 133 Loudon Road, allows customers to make custom wines in batches of 24 to 28 bottles.

• **VINTNER'S CELLAR WINERY — PORTSMOUTH** Design and create your own high-quality wine. At 801 Islington St. in Portsmouth. Open Mondays through Wednesdays, and Saturdays, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.,

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