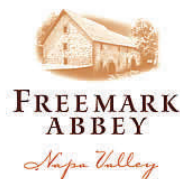


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Simple Summer Recipe

Ahh...as Spring turns into Summer, the weather calls for dining al fresco! Time to whip up a fun snack and relax outdoors with a nice glass (bottle?) of vino. We found this recipe in the book *Party Appetizers; Small Bites, Big Flavors*, available in our Tasting Room. Paired with our Truchard Chardonnay, this tasty treat is sure to be a hit with you and your guests. Bon appetite-

Endive with Crab Salad

2 heads Belgian Endive

2 tbs mayonnaise

1 tsp freshly squeezed lemon juice

6 ozs best-quality crabmeat

Salt to taste

1 celery stalk finely diced

Whole chives

Trim the base off the endives and separate the heads into leaves; rinse the leaves and pat dry. In a small bowl, mix the crabmeat, celery, mayonnaise and lemon juice. Season to taste with salt. Spoon the crab mixture onto the endive leaves. Criss cross two 2-inch pieces of chive over the crab. Pour a glass of Truchard Chardonnay and serve!



We're on the web:

www.freemarkabbey.com

Support the 26th Annual Auction Napa Valley

For the past 25 years, the first weekend of June has seen the vintners and residents of the Napa Valley combine their talents to produce what has been billed as the world's most successful charity wine event: *Auction Napa Valley*. By donating hundreds of hours of time, one-of-a-kind wines, event and destination experiences, and other unique, luxury items, the Napa Valley community hosts a fundraising party unlike any other, with over 98% of the proceeds benefiting health organizations and programs dedicated to providing affordable housing and youth development for underserved residents of the Napa Valley. In 2005, *Auction Napa Valley* raised nearly \$11 million dollars in just four days! Freemark Abbey is proud to be a founding member of *Auction Napa Valley*, having participated every year since its inception in 1980.

The theme for *Auction Napa Valley 2006* is *Celebrating Roots. Cultivating Dreams*. The Auction celebrates not only the rich heritage of Napa Valley, but the vision of its vintners to collaborate and use its world-renowned reputation to better life for all who call Napa Valley "home." Each year, guests from around the world visit Napa for a special weekend and the opportunity to participate in the revelry and excitement that the Auction brings.

As in past years, the weekend will focus on a celebration of all things Napa. Those lucky 1,000 people attending the Auction are guaranteed a once-in-a-lifetime experience of wine, food and entertainment, as well as the chance to attend the live auction for bidding on and winning a bountiful selection of luxurious items. New to the auction fund raising in 2005 was the closed circuit e-Auction, which alone generated nearly \$100,000.

For 2006, the e-Auction goes global! From anywhere in the world, wine enthusiasts can participate in the Auction by logging-on to the Auction website and placing their bid for a multitude of exclusive auction lots. We invite you to bid on the e-Auction lot that Freemark Abbey has created offering fans the ultimate winemaking experience: a 2006 Harvest Survivor Weekend!

Four lucky people will join our winemaking staff for an intense winemaking experience. Walk the vineyards, take sugar samples, pick grapes, do pumpovers, blend your own wine and enjoy a delicious lunch with select Freemark Abbey wines. Each day after the intensity of winemaking, guests can collapse in the guest cottage located on Freemark Abbey's historical grounds. As an added bonus, each couple takes home a mixed case of our current release wines.

We invite you to bid on this extreme weekend and be a generous supporter of *Auction Napa Valley*. Visit the Auction website at: http://www.napavintners.com/auctions/e-auction_how_to_bid.asp. The Freemark Abbey 2006 Harvest Survivor Weekend is lot number 125. Bidding begins on May 19 and continues through June 02. Don't miss this exclusive opportunity to help those that help make the Napa Valley a magical place!



Freemark Abbey

Key to the Abbey

Summer 2006

Freemark Scoop by Tim Bell, Winemaker

As dedicated Freemark Abbey Wine Club members, you have seen how some Merlot and Cabernet Franc are always a part of the Sycamore Cabernet Sauvignon blend. We grow small quantities of these grapes at Sycamore along with the great Cabernet Sauvignon that we have all come to love. But why do we add these grapes to the blend? How do they make the resulting wine better? As the winemaker, I have the advantage of tasting the wines from these grapes unblended. I can tell you from years of experience with this vineyard that the wines from Sycamore Merlot and Cabernet Franc are very consistent and distinctive. They are always among the best lots for their respective varieties in any given vintage. When tasting these lots of wine recently, I thought a discussion of these components of the Bordeaux-styled Sycamore Cabernet might be in order.

Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Merlot are all grapes that first achieved their greatest

heights in the Bordeaux wine region of France. Our Director of Winemaking, Ted Edwards, has been guided by the winemaking philosophy of creating an elegant, complex wine that is made more complete by the blending of several varieties. With Sycamore, the focus is clearly on the Cabernet Sauvignon, but the wine by itself, unblended, could tend to be a little more heavy-handed and less complex than when the other complimentary varieties are added. Adding small amounts of Cabernet Franc and Merlot fills in different aromas and flavors, and softens the powerful tannins of the star variety. (Tannins are naturally occurring compounds in grapes that can create a mouth-drying sensation when a wine is young, much like the sensation from a cup of strong black tea.)

To be more specific, Sycamore Merlot is a fairly powerful, full-bodied wine on its own. But there is no denying that its tannin structure tends to be softer than Cabernet Sauvignon. Where Sycamore Cabernet Sauvignon



gnon has aromas of cassis, mushroom, and damp earth, the Merlot brings black cherry and a slightly herbal quality. You can see these qualities more obviously in Freemark Abbey's Napa Valley Merlot bottling. Part of what makes the Sycamore Vineyard Merlot so good is that the soil and careful management of irrigation make for very balanced vines—just the right amount of shoot growth and leaf area to ripen the crop without providing too much shade or encouragement for the vines to produce more leaves instead of ripening fruit

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Keep In Mind:

- Winemaker Dinner: June 21
- Reds, Whites & Blues: July 08
- Harvest Party: September 09
- Keep your address and credit card information current! Don't miss a shipment!!
- We need your birthdate on file—call or email today!
- Remember: all state laws require an adult signature for all wine deliveries. Work addresses are preferred.
- Wine tastes best after it has had the chance to rest after traveling.
- Beginning August 2006, a surcharge of \$5 will be applied to all residential deliveries!

The Scoop Continues

Cabernet Franc, in general, has always been more of a conundrum for me as a winemaker. You hear members of the wine trade, who profess some knowledge of the variety, wax poetic about the aromas of violets from 'Franc, and talk about how much they love it. But when I've heard fellow winemakers speak about it, they seem to wonder why we bother growing it. I've had the same sentiment at times myself. However, when you can get good Cabernet Franc grapes, the wine can be very interesting, although perhaps—like even our beloved Cabernet Sauvignon!—incomplete. But my experience with Cabernet Franc grown in several different vineyards has been that it is often hard to get healthy, well-established vines. A certain amount of struggle to grow can pro-

duce intense, aromatic grapes, but when the vine cannot produce sufficient shoot growth or leaf area, the grapes can lack color and flavor. Even at Sycamore Vineyard we have had some problems with the vines expressing symptoms of virus, leading to some replanting here and there. Fortunately, most of the vines don't express symptoms too heavily and, unless Mother Nature provides some extreme challenges in a given year, the Cabernet Franc at Sycamore achieves good color and flavor. There can be a certain level of cherry or plum flavor in the wine, but often the dominant aroma is of dried chilies. This may sound like an odd component, but it can be quite interesting, and at low levels in the blend, does not express itself overtly, but adds another layer of complexity in the wine. Like Merlot,

Cabernet Franc tends to have softer tannins, helping to tame the burlier Cabernet Sauvignon.

If nothing else, I hope this discussion may inspire you to do a fun and informative comparative tasting of our wines made from each variety. Although all are blended with other Bordeaux varieties, the dominant grape will express its qualities over the other blend components, and give you a better picture of what each one is like. We have all three varieties planted here at Freemark Abbey, so the next time you are here on a sunny day (despite our Seattle-like weather pattern this spring!), ask to stroll around and compare the appearance of the various vines. Then reward yourself with a bottle of delicious Sycamore Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon.

New Wines, New Releases

We are pleased to announce the birth of a few new wines to our selection—as well as the release of the new vintage of one of our old favorites!

For those of you receiving the Master Key Club selection, the Winter 2006 shipment included the latest addition to our Chardonnay family. Please give a hearty round of applause to our 2004 Truchard Vineyard Chardonnay. This luscious wine is from the renowned Carneros vineyard and displays a full mouthfeel with a tasty balance of crisp and creamy textures, reminiscent of angel food cake or pineapple upside down cake. Yum! Perfect for the fresh days of Spring.

Next up, our 2001 Sycamore Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon. The Sycamore is always a favorite amongst staff and club members alike, and the 2001 vintage is

no exception! Released in February, this wine is flying off of the shelves and is a treat for those lingering cool nights of Spring. Savor the plush and balanced flavors of blueberry and black cherry with hints of dark chocolate.

Wines to Look for in Summer 2006:

- 2004 Truchard Chardonnay
- 2005 Sauvignon Blanc
- Josephine

On deck: this Summer we release two rookie wines to our line-up! First up, our Sauvignon Blanc. This wine was created at the behest of our Wine Club Manager and is made specifically for our wine club members. Our very first attempt at this popular wine creates a perfect balance between the

grassy, lower-ripeness flavors of Sauv Blanc and its more melon-like, riper side. Releasing this Summer, our new "SB" is a sure hit with seafood. Our staff tested this theory at our recent lobster feed lunch and everyone agreed—Freemark's SB and lobster are a great combo!

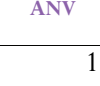


And finally, the heavy hitter—what we've been asked for many, many times over: a signature Cabernet blend. Late this Summer, look for the release of our *Josephine*. This non-vintage wine is a select combination of grapes from the 2001 and 2002 vintages, as well as a unique blend of grapes from our Bosche and Sycamore vineyards. Only 143 cases of this precious wine was made, and all of it is exclusively for our club members. It's the gem that our loyal Freemark fans have been waiting for!

So, make room in your cellar! We've got a lot of great wine to share with you in the coming months!

MAY 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	 9	10	11	12	Bud Break Party 
 14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	 29	30	31			

JUNE 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	Auction Napa Valley	9
 11	12	13	14	15	 17	17
 18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

JULY 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	 4	5	6	7	Reds, Whites and Blues 
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Schedule of Events

- ♦ **All Summer: Our Tasting**
Room is open every day from 10a-5:30p. Make sure to stop in when visiting!
- ♦ **June 01-04: Auction Napa Valley.** Place your online e-bid to win Freemark's Harvest Survivor Weekend.
- ♦ **June 10: Winemaker Dinner.** Celebrate our phenomenal winemaking staff with an exclusive dinner for wine club members! 7p at Freemark. Enjoy three decades of Cab—\$75 per person. Members only.
- ♦ **July 08: Reds, Whites & Blues.** Bring a picnic and blanket to enjoy on our grass, as we supply the reds, whites and blues (music that is!) \$20 per person, all welcome for a summer evening of wine and music.
- ♦ **September 05: Club selections** begin shipping. For timely delivery, make any credit card or address changes at least three weeks before shipping. Cheers!