

# The Fresno Bee

## Wine thoughts and odd lots

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I can't believe it's the middle of December and I haven't a clue what to make from my 7,000 (and growing) cork collection. I have this obsession of saving wine corks, I mean all corks, even the synthetic ones. I used to make things like trivets, coasters or Christmas ornaments. But now, I'm out of ideas and the corks keep coming. Can you help the cork dork?

Our amazing session at the 38th Annual Vintners' Holidays in Yosemite featured four female winemakers. The grand finale was the Gala Dinner in the beautiful Ahwahnee dining room. Carol Shelton's Coquille Blanc Rhone Blend was paired with Seared Scallops. Merry Edwards' Estate Pinot Noir was perfect with the Smoked Duck Leg Confit. Cathy Corison poured her Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon with the Lamb Chop Au Poivre and Amelia and Dalia Ceya finished the meal matching their Ceja Vineyard Dulce Beso with the Cypress Grove Purple Case Goats Cheese Cake. The Navigator summed up the Gala Dinner in one word, "Wow!". The Yosemite Vintners' event could be the best gift ever for wine and food lovers.

Our visit to the SLO Coast in October was centered on small production wineries. There are 30+ wineries in the SLO Region from San Simeon to Arroyo Grande. All are within 5 miles of the Pacific Ocean producing 20 grape varieties. Make sure you put Stolo and Cutruzzola Vineyards in Cambria on your list. Both are excellent Pinot Noir producers plus Cutruzzola bottles a Riesling and Stolo, a cool climate Chardonnay. Also, take advantage of the selection of restaurants in Cambria. Austry Winery, Deovlet Wines and Chamisal Vineyards all take pride in what the region is known for, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Chamisal's plush 2017 Califa Pinot Noir is a must, as is Deovlet's 2016 Sanford and Benedict Chardonnay. With no crowds, no rush, great wines and fair tasting fees, the SLO Coast wine region is a hidden gem.

What's on our table this week was g3. The g3 is a Cabernet Sauvignon from Goose Ridge Vineyards in Washington. The wine has toasted oak aromas with flavors of cherry, plum and spice. It's a gold medal winner from the Sunset International Wine Competition. The SRP is \$15 (less on sale).

Goose Ridge also produces Chardonnay, Merlot and a Red Blend. To find the g3, just look for the 3 Goose Heads on its very unique label.

Three bargain reds to track down at the Grocery Outlet are the Columbia Crest H3, the Camino D' Oro Zinfandel, and the French Bar Petite Sirah, all just \$6.95. Also, the 2017 Malene Rose' from Santa Barbara, at \$4.95 is definitely case worthy. Happy holiday wine hunting. Cheers!