

2010

put it on your calendar...

Announcing 2010 Wine & Food Adventures

Prices from \$3593* incl. taxes and airfare!

Book by November 30 for Free gratuities

Celebrate Kosta Browne Cruise

March 31– April 7

A one-week Silversea Caribbean cruise with owner Dan Kosta.

Food & Wine Magazine's First Wine Voyage

May 19 – June 2

Join America's top food and wine magazine and top European wineries on a 14-day cruise that visits Spain, Portugal, France and ends in London. This cruise offers some very special optional tours.

Great American Appellations Cruise

with Firestone, Sebastiani, Lincourt & Three Rivers

May 24 – June 5

Enjoy a 10-day Oceania cruise that visits Tuscany, Campagna and Croatia, hosted by four of America's top wineries.

Chateau Ste. Michelle

June 5 – June 17

The winemaker and sommelier from the Northwest's top winery will be your host on a 12-day cruise that explores Croatia, Italy and France.

Russian River's 2nd Pinot Passion Cruise

June 17 – June 27

Do you love Pinot Noir? Join Russian River winemaker's as they take their passion for Pinot to the French & Italian Riviera.

The Best of Napa Cabernet Cruise

June 30 – July 10

Robert Mondavi Winery joins two other Napa Valley powerhouses, Franciscan and Mt. Veeder, on a 12-day cruise from Athens to Barcelona.

Flowers Winery

July 24 – August 5

CEO Tom Hinde raids his cellar on a Venice to Rome, 12-day Oceania Mediterranean cruise.

Trefethen Family Vineyards

August 5 – August 15

A Rome to Barcelona 10-Night wine and food adventure.

ZAP'S Mid-Summer Night's Dream

August 10 – August 24

Zinfandel interacts with Jacques Pepin and Jean Pierre Moeller from Chez Panisse on a cruise beginning in Copenhagen and visiting Bordeaux, Lisbon and other European ports.

2nd Best of Long Island Cruise

with Paumanok Vineyards and Wolffer Estate

August 24 – September 5

East-coasters, here's your cruise. Two of your region's hottest wineries embark on their 2nd cruise to a new set of Med wine-ports.

Viansa Winery & Vineyards

September 5 – September 17

Viansa's owner leads friends on a 12-day cruise to Italy and the surrounding lands of their inspiration.

White Oak Vineyards & Winery

October 24 - November 3

Experience the harvest in Europe, when you sail with founding owner Bill Myer on their 2nd Med cruise from Athens to Rome.

Pat Kuleto's Food, Wine and Design Down Under

November 16 – December 1

Join four of San Francisco's and Napa's hottest chefs, designers and food experts on a high-end food and wine adventure from Sydney to Auckland.

Paul Hobbs Celebrates 20 yrs in South America

November 17 – December 3

Lauded as one of America's hottest winemakers, Paul Hobbs will visit his winery in Mendoza before sailing from Buenos Aires thru Patagonia and onto to Santiago Chile.

Programs include:

- *Deluxe accommodations*
- *All onboard meals and entertainment*
- *Private parties, winemaker dinner, tastings & more*
- *The personal hosting of a winemaker or expert*
- *Conviviality and fun*
- *Optional tours to top regional wine estates*

** Prices are per person double occupancy and are subject to change.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF OUR F&WT'S 2010 WINERY-HOSTED CRUISES CALL OUR TRAVEL CONSULTANTS AT

800-367-5348

OR VISIT US AT www.foodandwinetrails.com

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FALL 2009 NEWSLETTER:
ANNOUNCING 2010 ADVENTURES, PLUS
TUSCANY, MENDOZA, & MORE

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Fall 2009 Newsletter

Living la dolce vita

Mendoza, Argentina

Power & drama in a glass



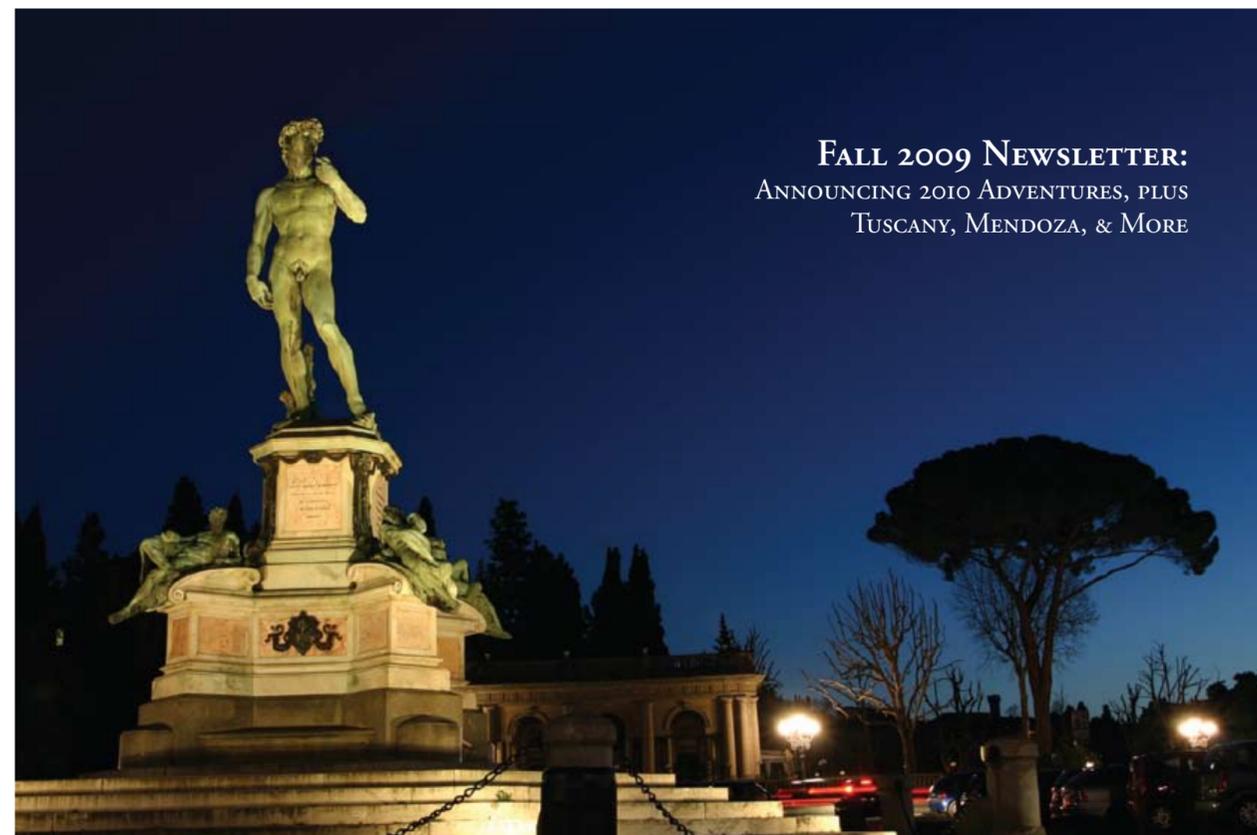
Here in Sonoma we've nearly finished the harvest. And whether one is a grape grower or gardener, the abundance overwhelms. Laura and I had our own harvest, putting up tomatoes for future winter dinners and our harvest was good. We had near-perfect conditions, so if our friend's grapes are as good as our tomatoes, the vintage will be excellent. In this issue we've written about one of the most dramatic wine regions we've ever visited: Mendoza. We wanted to bring Mendoza to your attention because of its wine, its scenery and because we are offering a unique opportunity to visit Mendoza with the famed Argentinean and Napa/Sonoma winery Paul Hobbs. Paul's Winery has received the highest rating ever given to a South American wine by Robert Parker, and in November 2010, you can visit his winery and others, and then cruise with them around the horn to Chile! It will certainly be the trip of a lifetime for a wine-lover, so please consider joining.

– Larry and Laura Martin

Is it a dream
or a nightmare?

The 2010 Adventures

Dining in Italy



FALL 2009 NEWSLETTER:
ANNOUNCING 2010 ADVENTURES, PLUS
TUSCANY, MENDOZA, & MORE

Tuscany

living la dolce vita: *Wish you were here!*

On July 4th, members of the Franciscan and Simi winery wine-club celebrated their temporary independence from day-to-day cares. As dockside well-wishers waved bon voyage (or buen viaje), the ship departed Barcelona for a voyage that traced the Mediterranean shoreline of Spain and France and sailed down the shin of Italy's boot to Rome. The cruise offered ten days of relaxation and wine and food revels. Wine club members enjoyed a private winemaker dinner with Franciscan winemaker Michael Eckstein who also hosted several on-board wine seminars, including a Magnificat blending session and a comparison tasting of Cabernet Sauvignons from Napa and Sonoma. Ports of call were a wish list of European travel: Barcelona – Marseilles – Saint Tropez – the Riviera city of Monte Carlo – Portofino, Italy – Livorno – Porto Cervo in Sardinia – Sorrento and the Isle of Capri – Amalfi and Positano – and finally, the Eternal City of Rome.



Livorno is Italy's second largest port and the gateway to Tuscany and the great cultural centers of Florence, Lucca, Pisa and Siena. Departing the pier in Livorno, the group's itinerary took them to San Miniato, a quaint mountaintop town famous for its white truffles that overlooked the golden Tuscan countryside and the Arno Valley.

The first stop was San Miniato, and the town's olive oil mill. Even though none of the Italian hosts spoke English, they were very fluent in body language. With much mutual gesticulation, they were able to explain to club members how the olive press works and the precious oil is extracted. The tour ended with a hearty sampling of oils and freshly baked breads, which required no more language skills than the ability to say "Mmmm."

After exploring the medieval town of San Miniato, we took off to Le Grotte d'Arno, a family-run restaurant on the road between San Miniato and Florence, where the group enjoyed an al fresco lunch on the poolside terrace. At Le Grotte, Beppe d'Andrea was waiting with a grand welcome. "We met Beppe on our 2007 cruise, and our visit to Le Grotte d'Arno was definitely a high point of the trip," remembers club manager Darlyne Miller, who was thrilled to once again share fabulous Tuscan hospitality with her Expressions members. Beppe d'Andrea is the brand ambassador for Ruffino Winery, one of Chianti's more celebrated brands, and is a walking advertisement for Dolce Vita – the Italian good life. In the 1980s, he headed up the Slow Food movement in the Chianti region and later earned his professional sommelier certification. He also is a winemaker, and for many years was Ruffino's cellarmaster. While short of stature, Beppe has a huge personality. His English is maybe not so good, but he forges ahead anyway, often with amusing results. He doesn't care, he just keeps going, making sure everyone has a wonderful time.

Before our cruise group sat down for lunch, the local butcher showed guests the different cuts of meat and discuss his aging, cutting and cooking techniques. As guests enjoyed the six-course menu, Beppe passionately expounded upon the Ruffino wines that he personally selected to complement Le Grotte's luncheon. In short, the wines were over the top in quality and never ending in quantity. Mama mia. So by the time the grand repast was concluded at Le Grotte and the group got back on the motorcoach to return to the ship, all were well sated and ready for il riposino pomeridiano (an afternoon nap).

Courtesy of the "Expressions of the Vine", wine club newsletter.

Mendoza

power and drama in a glass

It's hardly headlines, for those into wine, that Mendoza is the heart of the wine country in Argentina, the fifth largest wine producer in the World. Home to 80% of the Argentine production, Mendoza is much more than just another wine destination. High altitude, poor soils, lack of ocean influence, intense sun exposure and the love and passion of those working the vineyards, create unique and full bodied, expressive wines.

Though originally from France, Malbec never found in its native land the ideal conditions that exist on the eastern edge of the Andes. The quality of Mendoza's Malbec has long surpassed its native origins and is now considered to be one of the best in the world, winning many international awards and medals.

During the last decade, Mendoza has flourished with ultra-modern, design-forward wineries on one hand and purely Medocinian mud-toned structures on the other. No matter which style you prefer, choosing a favorite is a tall order, they are all distinctively amazing. But there is one other overriding characteristic that sets this wine region apart from others in the world, the breathtaking Andes. No matter where in the wine country you are, these towering peaks stand sentinel over your glass, offering dramatic views to go along with that perfect sip of Malbec.

Vist Mendoza with celebrated vintner Paul Hobbs. To celebrate his 20 years of making wine in Argentina, Paul has invited a select group of friends and customers to visit his much acclaimed and recently opened winery, Vina Cobos. Robert Parker has awarded Vina Cobos the highest rating for any South American wine, and refers to it as "At the top of the (Mendoza) hierarchy". Trip details are still being coordinated, but you will spend three nights at the Park Hyatt Mendoza, the city's finest hotel. Featuring a beautiful, colonial façade and a modern interior, the Park Hyatt has a great location across from one of the city's nicest parks, and is close to shopping and sightseeing. This tour is limited to only 20 participants and will include a welcome dinner, a private tour of Vina Cobos, visits to other top Mendoza wineries and various winery-lunches and dinners. Tour dates are Nov 14-17, 2010 as a pre-cruise option for the Paul Hobbs wine cruise between Buenos Aires and Santiago.



Mendoza offers the ideal growing conditions for Malbec.



Laura Yafe is our local shore excursion specialist in Mendoza.



New favorite restaurants of our local food and wine guides: Piera and Donald

Sorrento:

At the quiet end of a busy street in the village of Sant Agata, is Ristorante Lo Stuzzichino a family-run restaurant worth seeking out. Excellent food, quaffable wine and reasonable prices are why it's been a long-time favorite for both locals and the tourist looking to leave the crowds behind. Don't miss their "stuzzichini" – appetizers made of seasoned toasted bread and small fritters. Another exceptional dish is "scialatielli" which includes seafood or scents of lemon with zucchini and clams. www.ristorantelostuzzichino.it

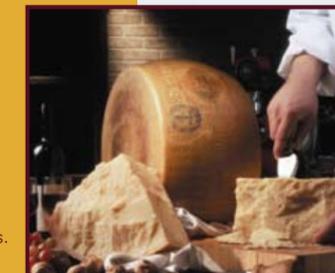
Amalfi:

Relais Blue Belvedere offers an unforgettable gourmet experience together with commanding views of the Mediterranean and the island of Capri. You'll dine in elegance on international and nouvelle cuisine. Savor dishes such as octopus salad with potatoes and green apple jelly, blue fish with green pepper sauce, ricotta cheese and purple potatoes, cassata with cherries and ginger sorbet. The restaurant features eleven rooms to rent, and a cooking school. www.relaisblu.com

Florence:

Reservations are necessary to score a seat at Restaurant Firenze, a small, narrow restaurant. In operation since 1869, the trattoria excels at the yummy, no-frills cuisine for which Tuscany is famous. Their specialties include steak, buttered chicken breast, artichoke pie and tripe. These deceptively plain-sounding dishes are the backbone of a hand-written menu.

Mon. – Fri., Lunch and Dinner. Open Saturday for lunch in April, May, September and October. Closed in August. Reservations highly recommended for dinner. \$\$\$. No credit cards. Via del Porcellana 25R off Borgo Ognissanti near the square. Tel: +39.055.212691.



Parmigiano-reggiano.

The true value of a vacation; will it be a ... Trip of a lifetime, or a nightmare?

Today's travelers are benefiting from a heady array of discounts and deals from distressed travel suppliers. The exception has been Europe, where the plunging dollar has kept Americans away. The exception to the exception is Mediterranean cruising, where prices are quoted in dollars and where the inclusive nature of the product encourages deals. We've taken advantage of this, and all of our cruises (including high-end cruise lines that didn't normally discount) now include discounts with free airfare, prepaid gratuities, and the value of traveling with famous chefs and winemakers and enjoying private parties, dinners and get-togethers.

You may find the best price online, but not necessarily the best value. And even discounted, cruises are pricey, so a mistake can be costly. Booking a cruise is an involved process, and Web sites can't yet provide the judgment and expertise the job requires. For instance, if you want to plan your own private shore excursions, rather than traveling with a large group from the ship seeing standard tourist sites, a capable cruise counselor will offer customized day tours with English-speaking guides. This can change the ordinary trip into a superb trip. They can also help you find the right cruise to match your style, because unlike a hotel, if you don't fit in, you can't easily leave. Or explain the morass of travel insurance. Cruise lines and Web sites can't do this, so always work with an experienced cruise counselor. How do you know if they are experienced? Ask them how many cruises they have taken or if they have actually cruised on the line you are interested in. Has the company received any industry awards or can they provide you with client referrals?



A dream dinner with friends.