

DRINKS

HOTELS

THE FOOD & BEVERAGE MANAGER'S MAGAZINE



structure are apparent on the palate. The wine can be enjoyed now, but will wait for more patient wine-lovers. As for the **Special Selection** of the same age, the colour is darker, the still-closed nose hints at gentle touches of smoke and blackberry, while on the palate the fullness and alcohol will not prevent the fruity substance, crispness and elegance from expressing themselves in five to six years. Excellent!

CHATEAU ST. JEAN (Sonoma)

The **Sonoma County Chardonnay** offers scents of toasted praline, with oak that is still very present after three years, leaving marked flavours of tropical fruit on the palate. I really like the **Robert Young Chardonnay** which gives pride of place to elegance and refinement, offering fleshiness and



Chateau St. Jean

good fruity substance on the palate, but also crispness. Looking at red wines, the **Sonoma County Pinot noir** is crafted from well-ripened grapes, the black cherry fragrance is appealing and the tannins are velvety. In the **Reserve**, the alcohol tends to stand out too much, alas! As for the **Cabernet sauvignon**, in the same appellation, wine-lovers

will enjoy structure, tight tannins and flavours of tobacco and sweet spices. But one will have to pay a lot more for the **Merlot** and **Cabernet sauvignon Reserve**, still from Sonoma. After a long maturation in French oak barrels and 18 months in the bottle before marketing, these wines arrive in the glass with strong intensity, aromas with touches of cocoa and tobacco (for the merlot), and a marked tannic structure (for the cabernet sauvignon), both wines sharing finesse and power.

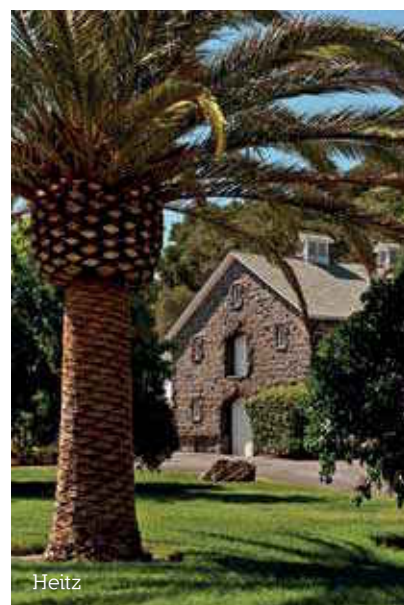
DELOACH (Sonoma - Russian River Valley)

In the **Heritage** category, I particularly enjoyed the **Chardonnay**, with its floral, dry and crisply fruity touches. This is a wine that has not seen oak, and many other wineries should do the same. In the same product line, the **Pinot noir** is a good, unassuming thirst-quencher, and between the **Zinfandel** and the **Cabernet sauvignon**, I preferred the latter with its fruity substance and pleasantly spicy notes. Of the two **Russian River Valley Chardonnay** cuvees, the Estate, with still-present oak after two years in the bottle, gives fruit, body and unctuousness, with a nose offering hints of nice grilled vanilla. A wine to be enjoyed in three years' time. The appropriately priced **Pinot noir** offers magnificent cherry aromas, tight tannins and a great deal of crispness and class. In the O.F.S. series, both for **Chardonnay** and for **Pinot noir**, we have two great wines that give pride of place to elegance, finesse and balance. Finally, at the very top of the line, DeLoach offers several cuvees crafted from separate vineyards, including the **Van der Kamp Pinot**

noir and the **Zinfandel Forgotten Vines**, aromatic, nicely fleshy, chock full of black fruit and flavours of cocoa, tobacco and black pepper.

HEITZ (Napa Valley)

Not only are the very dry **Sauvignon**, with its pleasant notes of citrus fruit and its fine fruitiness, and the **Chardonnay** with its very discreet oak excellent, but the prices are



very reasonable and justified. The price range changes with the red wines, but the quality is undeniable there. Still affordable, the **Bella Oaks Cabernet sauvignon** offers an intense and appealing colour, with ripe and plump tannins. The more classical, concentrated and structured **Trailside Vineyard Cabernet sauvignon** comes from the Rutherford vineyards, while with the **Martha's Vineyard Cabernet sauvignon**, we have the quintessence of a varietal that can achieve greatness. The 2007, **A Tribute to The May Family** - a great

To accompany this Alaskan Red King Crab riviera of mango and red onion, Jacques Orhon suggests...

A traditional and very successful match with the **Chablis Premier Cru Fourchaume** crafted by **Brocard**, well-known in the Burgundy landscape. This 100% Chardonnay Premier Cru, one of the most sought-after in the region, offers mineral touches and fine acidity, but also, thanks to its richer terroir, power, breeding and fullness, in particular if you opt for a wine cellared for five to eight years.

With an owner who is also well settled in Burgundy (JC Boisset), **DeLoach Vineyards**, a reputed winery of the Sonoma region of California, crafts chardonnay wines that are both full-bodied and finely sculpted. **Estate**, from the **Russian River Valley** AVA, offers fruit, flesh and crispness along with delicate aromas of exotic fruit reminiscent of ripe mango flavours, present in the recipe.

Those eager to open a bottle of **champagne** as an aperitif can enjoy the **Brut Premier** from the famed house of **Roederer**. It will then work wonders with the crab. The champagne boasts grace and elegance, partly due to the chardonnay (40%), as well as good vinosity lent by the pinot noir (40%). The pinot meunier offers fruit and fullness to this great wine, crafted from an astute blend of six vintages.

