

OH, I'VE GOT TIME...

To paraphrase an old proverb, "Time passes and waits for no one."

It's so easy to procrastinate. All of us have a multitude of excuses to put it off...to hesitate...to prolong...to wait until it's either almost too late or it's too late to do what we should have done before it got too late.

Procrastination — why do you exist?

And of course, the usual result of putting off, hesitating, prolonging or waiting to do something is the heart pounding OMG moment when we are filled with anxiety and/or regrets.

During a recent conversation, my coffee partner said she was running a few miles everyday because she was kind of in training for a half marathon (13.1 miles long) event during which the participants carried a 35-pound rucksack on their backs. She said, "Well, I run almost everyday, you know how it goes. Some days I'm too busy or lazy or..."

I looked her right in the eye and rather forcefully said, "Don't have regrets! Train everyday, participate in the half marathon event and know you did it." That darn devil named procrastination was trying its best to

derail her but she is one of the most ambitious people I know and there's no doubt in my mind she will participate and finish.

It's easy to let things slide and get used to the same old whatever is the same old. For instance, for

many years, I enjoyed the same German Riesling and the same California Cabernet Sauvignons without thinking of anything else. I always thought there was time to taste other wines and procrastination became habit. I had no regrets until the day when I became more familiar with the world of oenology and began to realize that waiting was wasting time.

It was time to stop putting off my exploration into other wines and to start learning about that world by diving into the new and exciting sensory experiences that awaited me in those bottles of wine. And so, I did exactly that.

With a little bit of regret, I pushed my normal wines aside and started to reach into the world's blended wines. My first blended wine was GSM made by California's Hahn Winery. The "G" stand for Grenache and since this wine is 60 percent Grenache, the spiciness of the grape is noticeable throughout the wine. About 37 percent of the wine is made from the Syrah (S) grape and this little beauty gives the wine its structure and fruity aroma and flavor. The rest of the blend is from the Mourvèdre (M) grape which brings tannins and a long dry finish to the wine. I have no regrets about tasting this blend — it's slightly sweet, with a hint of spice and fades gently away down your throat.

Next it was time to visit a Spanish wine and from the Rioja region of Spain, Altos Ibericos' Tempranillo was beckoning me. Although technically a blend, this wine is really all about the Tempranillo grape and thankfully so because it's

just plain darn delicious. It's aged awhile and this process provides the wonderful chocolate taste that augments the grape's slight strawberry and spicy taste which, in turn, leads to a soothing moderate tannin finish. Just when you think you've got this wine pegged, it throws in a surprise by giving you a hefty spicy finish — don't ask why, it just does and it's worth waiting for after each swallow. Don't wait — give this one a try.

France is well known for its blends and from the Côtes du Rhône region of the country, a bottle of the Boisset Family Estate's Reserve de Bonpas found its way onto my table. Again, this is a blend of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre grapes and is similar to the Hahn's GSM blend. On the nose, one can smell some raspberry and on the palate, there's that nice cherry/chocolate taste which ends with a spicy finish. I waited too long to try this wine — don't hesitate and have regrets, drink this classic.

Time waits for no one and we shouldn't let it fly by us. In case you haven't noticed, this year's deadline for filing your taxes is very near — does that give you anxiety or have you already filed and have no regrets? When my newfound friend completes her half marathon, we'll raise a glass to her accomplishment — maybe even sooner than that! We don't want any regrets, do we??

Next week, what does it mean?

As always, eat and drink in moderation but laugh with reckless abandon!

Cheers!

CHEERS

By Ron Skjong

