

Wine class demonstrates the art of blending in

by Mallory Gnaegy | A&E Editor



Filling the pipette to the correct amount

guest winemakers. And there were also three demonstrations that taught the average person how to become a wine expert.

One of the demonstrations was a blending class led by Michael DeLoach, of Sonoma's Hook & Ladder Vineyards, Nov. 10, on the beach. Attendees learned the art of blending wines and then had the chance to blend their own bottle.

Chemistry of wine

The blending class drew everyone from resort guests, to wine enthusiasts, to a winemaker from France.

DeLoach is the second generation of winemakers at Russian River Valley's Hook & Ladder Vineyards. Before jumping into the blending seminar, DeLoach explained his family's history:

It date backs to 1970 when DeLoach's father, San Francisco fireman Cecil DeLoach, bought the first 24 acres of what would expand to 900 acres of land. As a fireman, Cecil DeLoach worked 24 hours on, followed by 48 hours off. During his time off, he opted to grow grapes.

In honor of his career as a tillerman (the firemen who ride on the back of the truck), Cecil DeLoach created a blend called The Tillerman.

DeLoach told the group it's important that every blend has a muse.

"Now smell it," he said. The Cabernet-based blend leaves notes of spiced cherry.

He then talked about the four

other varieties the winery offers and outlined a personality profile of wine-lovers: Sangiovese-lovers are classy, and people either love or hate the Franc — those who like it are strong-willed.

After sampling, the group recreated The Tillerman blend, made from each of the sampled wines.

Using a mouth-controlled pipette, individuals drew the correct measurement of each of the four wines into the tube and filled a beaker to 100 milliliters to recreate The Tillerman blend.

"It sucks to be a winemaker," DeLoach joked.



Antonin Bonnet, the French winemaker with Domaine La Roche winery, sucks wine into his pipette.

A person would have to travel to Massachusetts, Oregon, New York, California and eight countries in only two days to experience something similar to Sarasota's Bacchus on the Beach.

The Longboat Key Club and Resort brought wineries, winemakers and experts from around the world together Nov. 9 and Nov. 10, to offer a unique foodie experience.

More intimate events were offered throughout the weekend in addition to the grand finale, the Wine & Stone Crab Festival sunset dinner. There were five vintner dinners with menus from Key Club chefs, paired with wine from

