

[It's A Winderful Life](#)

Living la vida vino with Tracy Ellen Kamens, Ed.D., DWS, CWE




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Flights of whites

In preparation for my AWS Wine Judging Training Program exam, which was held in early November 2010, I spent the summer blind tasting through different flights of wine. It was both a challenge to see which wines I could identify by either the grape variety or the appellation as well as to determine how several wines tasted in comparison to one another. NB: Tasting notes appear below the description of the two blind tasting exercises.

Flight 1: June 5, 2010

This flight included four white wines (all samples).

While I knew the identity of the four wines, I did not know which wine was in which glass. I sat down, began to taste and take notes and made some initial observations. The first glass showed notes of citrus, stone and a hint of butter, which repeated on the palate. The aromas in the second glass were quite pronounced and I detected citrus (specifically, pink grapefruit) and minerality on the nose and the palate. I suspected that this might be the New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, but as I hadn't tasted through all four wines yet, I wanted to reserve final judgement until the end. I was glad that I did because the very next glass made it evident that I would have been wrong. Yes, glass # 2 was very concentrated with its citrus notes, but glass #3 had unmistakable herbaceous notes of green pepper. The fourth glass exhibited notes of oak and other barrel-derived aromas and flavors (cinnamon and toasted nuts). Knowing that there was a California Chardonnay in the mix, I attributed this wine, with its oak influence, to be the Chardonnay. Wrong again! Unbeknownst to

me, one of the Rueda wines had been produced in a wooded style. The wine was not a Chardonnay, but rather a Verdejo. All in all, it was a very educational experience, helping me to see how my methodology was working even if I sometimes arrived at the wrong conclusion. In any case, the wines were all quite enjoyable.

Flight 2: July 24, 2010

This flight included four white wines (all samples).

Again, the identity of the four white wines (all samples) were known to me, but the order in which I tasted them was a mystery. We had another houseful of guests, so they were also invited to participate. They declined the rigor of blind tasting, but enjoyed tasting a few different wines separately. With a pair of Rueda wines and a pair of Gruner Veltliners, I was curious as to whether I would be able to determine which two wines were produced from the same grape variety, even if I wasn't sure which grape variety that was. The first glass had melon and citrus notes, while the second glass was more complex with earth and herbal aromas and flavors. Glass #3 was again aromatically citrus with lemon and lime, but also showing some minerality. It seemed more similar to glass #1 than to glass #2. The fourth glass offered earth and citrus on the nose and palate and appeared to be showing some development, while the other three glasses were all youthful. While I wasn't sure if glass #4 was a Verdejo or Gruner Veltliner, I was fairly certain it was the same as glass #2. Upon revealing the wines' identities, I had correctly identified the pairs, even though I had been unsure as to the actual grape variety.

TASTING NOTES

Flight 1

-Bodega Matarromera Emina Verdejo 2009, Rueda, Spain, \$9.00

100% Verdejo; Stainless steel fermentation.

Medium+ aromas of pink grapefruit. Dry, medium acidity, medium body, grapefruit, mineral, pith; good concentration, long length.

-Bodega Matarromera Seleccion Personal Carlos Moro Emina Verdejo 2008, Rueda, Spain, \$36.00

100% Verdejo; Fermented and aged for four months in French oak barrels.

Medium notes of toasted nuts, green apple, cinnamon. Dry, medium acidity, full body, apple, pear and an undercurrent of wood/toothpick, nuts; long length.

-Bouchaine Estate Chardonnay 2008, Napa Valley and Carneros (CA), USA, \$25.00

100% Chardonnay; 70% barrel-fermented and aged (1-4 year old wood); 30% fermented and aged in stainless steel.

Medium aromas of citrus, stone and a hint of butter. Dry, medium acidity, medium+ body, citrus, stone, pith and medium+ alcohol; long length.

-90+ Cellars Lot 2 Sauvignon Blanc 2009, Marlborough, NZ, \$12.00

100% Sauvignon Blanc; Stainless steel fermented.

Medium+ herbal and citrus notes. Dry, medium+ acidity, medium body, citrus, pepper, green pepper; long length.

Flight 2

-Javier Sanz Villa Narcisa, Rueda, Spain, \$16.50

100% Verdejo; Stainless steel fermentation.

Medium aromas of melon and grapefruit. Dry, medium+ acidity, melon, citrus, pith; medium length.

-Laurent V SINGING Gruner Veltliner 2009, Niederösterreich, Austria, \$15.00

100% Gruner Veltliner; Stainless steel fermentation.

Earth and citrus aromas. Dry, medium+ acidity, lime, pith, herbal flavors; medium+ length.

-Laurenz V CHARMING Gruner Veltliner 2006, Kamptal, Austria, \$27.00

100% Gruner Veltliner; Stainless steel fermentation.

Aromas of grapefruit and showing some development with notes of damp earth. Dry, medium acidity, earth, melon and grapefruit; medium+ length.

This was our favorite Gruner Veltliner of the flight.

-Pagos del Rey Analivia Verdejo, \$11.00

100% Verdejo; Stainless steel fermentation.

Medium notes of lemon, lime, minerality. Dry, medium+/high acidity, lime, minerality; long length.

This was our favorite Verdejo of the flight.



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