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On Wine

Incisive criticism and accessible advice on the world of wine

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MAY 14, 2010, 4:55 PM ET

Marriage in Napa; Tim Atkins on Fine Wines; Wine Consumption in China

Article

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By Cathy Yan

Even though Napa vintners may be having a [hard time selling their wines](#) these days, they won't be pinging out their properties to bridal parties anytime soon. The Napa Valley County Board of Supervisors [voted this week](#) to (still) prohibit weddings from taking place at wineries. Actually, the new rule states that any kind of party – including weddings – may not take place unless it's "directly related to the marketing of the wine." Surely there must be an enterprising bride and groom or two who could figure out how to turn their wedding into a marketing opportunity? If not, I suppose there's always Sonoma. *-Lettie Teague*

* * *

Tim Atkins, famous British Master of Wine, opened the Fine Wine 2010 summit in Spain by arguing for a [broader definition of fine wine](#). "The average quality of the wine we drink is higher now than at any time in history," said Atkins, and some great wines are coming from around the world. According to Atkins, regions like Tuscany, Piemonte, Ribera del Duero and Rioja should also join classic regions like Bordeaux and Burgundy as fine wine areas. He also disagreed with Robert Parker's generous review of the 2009 Bordeaux vintage, arguing for a more global approach: "Instead of it just being about Bordeaux, or a few isolated producers in Europe and the New World, I would like to come up with a new definition of fine wine," he said.

* * *

A [story in the San Jose Mercury News](#) looked at the growing appetite for Californian wines in China, the world's largest market. The article says that many members of the Chinese middle class "are replacing the long-popular baijiu grain liquor and beer at their dinner tables with French Bordeaux and Napa Valley Zinfandels." From 2004 to 2008, wine consumption in China doubled to about 900 million bottles. According to Vinexpo, that makes China the eighth-largest wine market in the world, compared to the U.S., which is number two. Wine consumption in China is also expected to grow 32% in the next three years.

Napa Valley, Weddings

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10:23 am May 17, 2010

Anon wrote:

Robert Parker is a shill.

5:43 pm May 14, 2010

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