

DESSERT WINE DIGEST

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Deviation wins sweepstakes at The San Diego Fair

Our new dessert wine, *Deviation*, garnered some impressive awards: Gold and Sweepstakes at the 2007 San Diego Fair, Chairman's award and Best of Class at the Long Beach Grand Cru, Double Gold at Riverside International Wine Competition, "Best Fortified" recognition by Stephen Spurrier writing in Decanter Magazine, Double Gold at Taster's Guild International Wine Competition, and a 93 point score from World Wine Championships – tastings.com (Beverage Testing Institute).

The following tasting notes were published on the internet by a wine shop in Multomah Village, Oregon: *"This wine is a philtre, pure and simple. It is perhaps the most exotic beverage at this price I have ever tasted- literally breathtaking. The bouquet is prismatic in its complexity, waves of succulent Comice pears, apricot, canned peaches, and calvados twining around a thicket of Deschutes River wind: peppermint candy, fresh-picked white sage, and juniper berries. On the tongue the ride continues: raspberry preserves, tart cherries, honeysuckle, grilled pineapple, and hibiscus tea, with a thrillingly long finish that sighs with roasted hazelnuts and rose petals..."*

[Darryl Corti](#) an internationally known food and wine expert had this to say about *Deviation*: *"A novel wine, it is prettily rose scented with leaves from Quady's own production of rose geraniums and the sweet greenness of the damiana plant from Mexico. Drunk chilled as an aperitif it is striking. Mixed with bourbon or rye, it makes a wonderful cocktail. Try it in making a Manhattan. This is one of the most exotic products ever to come out of California's central valley."*

We also get the occasional negative review such as the following which reached us via the magical world wide web: *"...This was a most peculiar wine. ... It failed because it didn't have a sense of terroir, balance and proportion."*

Deviation, as the name implies is a departure from normal winemaking. It is not supposed to have "terroir" or to taste like any grage. It is something new: an aromatized degestif and dessert wine.

2007 Crush Report New Equipment: A Delta Destemmer and Crusher

When Andy and Laurel Quady started Quady Winery in Madera in 1977, the first piece of equipment we purchased was a used crusher-stemmer from Pedrezetti winery in Morgan Hill for \$1000, delivered. The machine came equipped with a hopper and conveyor. If one of the main bearings hadn't gone out last season we could still be using this amazing piece of equipment made by Valley Foundry in Fresno in the 1930s, and one of the first models produced after the repeal of prohibition. According to veteran Valley Foundry employees, our crusher was one of perhaps 2 in the world still in operation, of that early model. The old crusher works a lot differently than the new one. It is a design designated "Garolla" after the original Italian design. The grapes are introduced into a rotating cylinder with internal blades rotating at a faster speed than the cylinder.



Vintage 1930s Valley Foundry Crusher
Installed 1977 Retired 2006

The blades smash the grapes against the cylinder which has slots permitting the crushed grapes to pass through while the stems are moved toward and discharged from the opposite end. The design is not perfect because too many of the stems and pieces of stems pass through with the grapes and the grapes are overly crushed – actually turned into sort of a pulp by the high speed paddles.

The design of our new Delta destemmer crusher is an improvement containing slower moving paddles which separate the stems from the grapes leaving the grapes more or less intact. The whole grapes then pass through a set of rollers which crushes them

more gently, generating more clean juice and lower amounts of solids.

The change may make a difference in our Essensia wine. Among the features of Essensia is its golden color and tea like aftertaste. The tea taste which results from grape tannins helps give Essensia more character and prevents it from being just another cloyingly sweet dessert wine.

How much of its character was due to our antique crusher and how much to the variety will be known this crush. At this stage it looks like we have a little less of the “tea character” but still enough to be noticeable. Other characteristics seem, if anything, improved. The aroma seems fine, very pure in the orange/apricot. The taste: low bitterness and increased “lusciousness”.



Delta Destemmer Crusher (in back), Receiving Hopper, Conveyor, Michael Blaylock, Winemaker Operating Forklift

What’s Happening at Quady North ?

Herb Quady lives with his family in the beautiful Applegate Valley in Southern Oregon where he is winemaker for Troon Vineyards, operates a vineyard management company, and grows Viognier, Cabernet Franc, and Syrah on a 100 acre parcel purchased by Andrew and Laurel in 2005. *Quady North Winery*, established earlier this year is now releasing its first wines from locally purchased Viognier. The first crop from their own vines will be harvested next year.

Besides grapes and wine the Quady North crew (Herb, Meloney, Margaux, Consuelo, and Daniel) raise free range chickens, eggs, a few sheep, and will soon be providing fresh vegetables to local Applegate valley markets from their organic garden and greenhouse. To purchase or receive information

about Quady North’s first release e-mail Herb at: hquady@quadynorth.com or check out www.quadynorth.com.



Vancouver BC dessert competition

Fifteen pastry chefs entered our annual Western Canada Dessert competition earlier this year vying to make the best dessert to enjoy with Elysium. Two tied for first place: Candice Low from Five Sales restaurant preparing *Etoile Filante* and Tamara Currier from Thomas Hass pastries with *Ambrosia*. Recipes posted on www.quadywinery.com.

As her prize Chef Candice and her sister joined Liz and Jim Mockford (winners of the trip donated by the Quadys to the auction benefit for the Michael Willingham Foundation Fund Raiser) on a High Sierra horse back and fly fishing adventure led by the Quadys. In the words of Jim Mockford, “It was the adventure of a lifetime.”



Candice and Melanie Low, and Liz Mockford from Vancouver B.C. Ansel Adams Wilderness California Sierra Nevada Mountains

Dessert Wines and Food The Art of Pairing

A few years ago I wrote a small book: Dessert Wines and Food – The Art of Pairing to assemble the most delicious and creative recipes collected from 20 years of wine pairing competitions. We decided to publish the book for the first time here, in our *Dessert Wine Digest* in serial form. There are eight chapters. This first installment includes the forward, introduction, Chapters 1 and 2 and part of Chapter 3.

Forward

Almost from the time I entered the wine business I have been concerned with the pleasures of enjoying dessert wines, particularly Muscat dessert wines, with desserts. Over the years our winery has come to produce four different Muscat dessert wines in addition to Port style wines.

The first pairing competition resulted from a suggestion by the GM at the Nikko Hotel in San Francisco. This beautiful new hotel was looking for a way to bring in people. They had a ballroom and needed events. We acquired use of the ballroom and the first of many Quady wine pairing events was born.

A few years later our enthusiastic agents in Vancouver BC offered to organize a pairing contest if we would donate the prize. The Vancouver event continues today as a part of the Vancouver Wine Festival held each March. We were asked by chefs to organize more events and after a few years added a second California competition in Los Angeles. Then we went crazy and started one in New York. After two years we started cutting back. For awhile the competition rotated between LA and San Francisco. But nothing lasts forever and there is now just one, organized for us by [Wendy Taylor](#) and our Vancouver agent, Authentic Wines.

In these events, we ask chefs to come up with foods (usually desserts but we have worked with entrees and appetizers) which taste good when accompanied by one of our wines. The recipes are the heart of the book. They not only display techniques and principles of successful dessert/dessert wine pairing, they present a new genre of less sweet end of the meal foods often incorporating new and sometimes exotic ingredients. They are surprising. Enjoy!

Introduction – How it all Started

My short lived career in chemical engineering - making fireworks and explosives (a dangerous messy business) ended in 1971. I wanted work satisfaction, inner peace and a life away from freeways and smog so in spite of my grandfather's warning "only winos drink wine", we moved to Northern California and I enrolled at UC Davis to study winemaking. I have always been fascinated by the miracle of growing plants which is perhaps why I found wine, as a synthesis of nature, craft, art and science so compelling. We spent three glorious years living in a cottage in the middle of vineyards close to the town of Lodi while I changed jobs a few times and also made the first (1975 vintage) Quady Port. In 1976 we moved to Madera, known for its sun dried raisins and "port" wines. The next year, Laurel and I built our own little winery behind our house and made "port" on evenings and weekends. Our day jobs (mine down the road at a big industrial winery and Laurel's job as CPA), paid the bills.

In 1980 I stumbled on a vineyard planted to the little known *Orange Muscat* variety and created from those grapes a new sort of dessert wine: moderate in alcohol, balanced in sweetness, with refreshing acidity, and made to accompany desserts. The new wine, *Essensia*, soon eclipsed our port sales. In 1981 with the success of Laurel's CPA practice to support us, I was able to retire from the big winery and devote myself to our own endeavor. By 1983 our fame had spread north to Manteca where the grower of another under-appreciated Muscat, the Black Muscat, had grapes to sell and sought us out. *Elysium*, sweet and red with an aroma (Narsai David likes to say of Chrysler Imperial) roses was made. Over the years as sales grew we were able to hire help: Cheryl Russell in 1983 (now our longtime general manager) and Michael Blaylock in 1984 (now our longtime winemaker).

Chapter 1: The experience of dessert wine with dessert

It was 1973 and I had just received my master's degree in food science with an Enology specialization from Davis. I had no job but Laurel and I were blowing our savings on a trip to France. It was lunchtime in the city of Orange, in the Rhone Valley. Laurel ordered pigeon, which arrived with its head tucked under its wing. Dessert was a piece of cake served with a blue tumbler of dessert wine, a sweet

Muscat with the aroma of ripe peaches. Some of the diners were pouring their dessert wine over their cake. When so moistened, the cake exploded with flavor enhancing wine and dessert. It was memorable.

To try it yourself, serve some pound cake (such as Sara Lee found in the freezer section of your grocery store) with and without Essensia poured on top. It will be good both ways but the Essensia soaked one will be better.

In the mid 1980s, a fellow dessert wine aficionado and I decided that it would be fun to drink a really famous and wonderful sweet wine, the 1967 Chateau d'Yquem, with a great dessert. We went to L'Ermitage, in its day the top French restaurant in Los Angeles, and ordered two dessert soufflés, one Vanilla and one Chocolate. As I recall, we had a very nice time but something wasn't quite right with the pairing. It wasn't the gastronomic heaven we had expected. Instead of harmony the desserts seemed to compete with the wine for attention and both suffered.

A pairing works if wine and dessert enjoyed together taste better than separately. In our competitions, the judges first taste the wine, then the dessert, and then the wine again. Did the wine taste better the second time? They then clear their palate, take a bite of the dessert, then the wine and then the dessert. How did the flavor of the dessert change?

After the judging, when a consensus has been reached on the best pairings, the judges are interviewed to document why they selected the desserts they did. We included these notes along with the winning desserts so that a home chef, making the dessert himself, can better understand what the creator of the dessert was thinking.

The word "Muscat" derives from the Greek root "musk" meaning perfume. When made in the fresh style, such as ours, Muscat smells and tastes like a mixture of fruit and flowers; and has sufficient intensity to stand up to full flavored desserts. Fresh Muscat wines often act like a piquant fruit based sauce adding a lift, a tang and another dimension to the taste.

In all the years of pairing dessert wines, we have been able to identify some important factors:

1) The wine should be in the same sweetness range – perhaps even a little sweeter than the dessert.

2) The perfume and fruit characters of the wine should enhance but not clash with the dessert's flavor.

3) The wine should have sufficient alcohol to give some mouth feel in order that it doesn't taste thin against the texture of the dessert.

Yeast convert grape juice into wine via fermentation, an enzymatic conversion of sugar into alcohol and carbon dioxide. They cannot tolerate more than a certain level of combined sugar and alcohol which allows naturally stable sweet wines to be made by either starting with very sweet grapes or adding alcohol to stop the fermentation. The process of adding alcohol or brandy is "fortification" and wines made stable by this process are "fortified" wines.

Alcohol has an important affect on taste. At moderate levels, it imparts increased "body" (mouth feel). The key is to put in just enough for stability without making the wine taste fiery. Sweetness is also important in body both because it increases body on its own and reduces the fiery taste from alcohol.

Acidity is often important. Think of acidity as one of the secrets of mother nature which makes her desserts (fruit) taste good. Ripe fruit has a tang, cleansing to the palate, which encourages the eater to take another bite. That tang is acidity without which fruit tastes dull. In sweet wines acidity keeps them lively (not cloying) - so the drinker wants another sip.

Keeping these basic ideas in mind will help to achieve successful pairing experiences, even using off the shelf groceries for the dessert. Given time and inclination, one might create a very special experience - the sort which would win a prize at one of our competitions. Perhaps we should issue a warning: Dessert wine with dessert can become habit forming.

You may now be asking yourself: What about all the other types of dessert wines Quady doesn't make? Admittedly we are overlooking them, botrytis wines for example. But we don't have the experience to write about those wines and that topic, of desserts to go with botrytis wines, is large enough to require a book of its own.

Chapter 2: Sweet Food and Drink

Why Dessert?

Often, because of dieting or because the diner is simply too full, dessert is skipped. But dining is more

than simply eating. It is integral to civilized living, a form of art, entertainment, a time for conversation, and a time to share with family, friend or lover. Dessert completes and rounds out the meal. When dessert is skipped, these opportunities for pleasure are lost.

After dinner beverages (coffee, tea, liqueurs, and dessert wines) make dessert substitutes. They may not round out the meal in the same way the dessert course does, but they capture that space of time by creating a reason to linger. Among alcoholic beverages, dessert wines, because they are sweet and not as alcoholic, are more dessert like than liqueurs. Whether used as a dessert substitute or a complement, an after dinner beverage completes the meal experience by relieving the palate of the taste of the meal.

Best and Worst Beverages to Serve with Dessert

We consume beverages with solid foods because we need lots of water to live. Desserts especially bring on a sensation of thirst. By far the most popular beverages with desserts are coffee and tea, both of which contain tannins which in the presence of sugar tastes pleasantly bitter-sweet.

Desserts make wines taste less sweet. With dessert, dry wines begin to taste unpleasantly sour, and sweet wines begin to taste dry. If a dry wine is served with a sweet food, its acidity, normally masked by alcohol, jumps out and the wine becomes unpleasantly tart, like vinegar or lemon juice which is why if wine is to be served with dessert, it should have a sweetness level equal to or slightly exceeding the sweetness in the dessert.

Why Wine with Dessert?

There are two good reasons: First, pure hedonism. When properly done, the combination is nothing less than exquisite. The dessert wine's flavors combined with those in the dessert create a whole new experience. This is more interesting than having your dessert with coffee or tea. You get to relish two delicious universes. Second, for certain occasions (for example, an elegant dinner party or an occasion involving food and wine pairing) dessert wine is more appropriate because it is more festive than tea or coffee.

Exception to the rule for pairing wine with dessert

The rule: Sweet wine with sweet dessert has an exception in the case of an unusually sweet dessert, something like baklava or pecan pie and many other traditional American desserts. In those cases: a very sweet dessert wine served with a very sweet dessert results in too much sweetness. It is better just to serve coffee or tea. The bitterness will relieve the palate of the dessert's sweetness.

Fine Points

1. Balancing Acidity and Alcohol

Dessert wines vary in acidity. It is difficult to drink much of a sweet low acid wine. It is just too cloying. A dessert wine with balanced acidity to offset its sweetness is more useful with moderately sweet desserts and easier to drink.

Acidity seems to magnify a high alcohol wine's hotness which may be why few high alcohol dessert wines are also high in acidity. Classic high alcohol wines: Sherries, Ports, and higher alcohol fortified muscats are moderately low in acidity. Sweet Sherries which have both lower acids and lower alcohols (18%) than ports tend to be cloying. In Port, its alcohol (20%) accentuates its acidity such that port is not cloying even though it has only moderate acidity.

If the dessert is not sweet (cheese for example), the beverage to be served with it does not need to provide refreshment. It only needs to taste good with the dessert. Cheeses, especially blues, are good accompaniments to high alcohol wines. The fat in cheese coats the palate making the wine less fiery. The classic example is port with Stilton cheese (about 75% butter fat) which softens a 20% alcohol port very nicely. Chocolate (also high in fat) is frequently enjoyed with port, partly for the same reason.

Sauterne wines have moderately low acidity but normal alcohol levels. Fatty foods such as Foie Gras and Roquefort cheeses are proven classics with Sauternes. These successful pairings are based on a compatibility of textures and flavors. While it seems natural that full bodied wines should accompany fatty foods, it is not so apparent why the "blue" taste of penicillin should partner so well with the honey apricot flavor of botrytis. Making great pairings is an art.

Dessert wines pair best with desserts which are no more than moderately sweet. With sweeter desserts, it becomes necessary for the beverage to provide refreshment, but for the wine to partner with the food the wine must be at least as sweet - or a little sweeter - than the dessert. Refreshment in a sweet wine comes from the wine's acidity but if the dessert is too sweet, forget dessert wine. Serve coffee.

Our Electra (4%) is sweet, tart, and, because the alcohol is low, very smooth. Its excellent acidity makes it a good complement to desserts which also have acidity, such as fresh fruit. With its low alcohol and high acidity it is unusually refreshing making it especially appropriate as a dessert wine to be used in warm weather, as on a picnic.

2. *Tannin and Chocolate*

An exception to the rule: (Sweet wine with sweet food) may be found in the case of chocolate where a rather tannic dry wine can actually (to some people) taste good with chocolate. This seems to work because of the affinity of chocolate for bitterness. Perhaps the acidity in a tannic dry red is not so apparent because the sensors in the mouth are saturated with the interaction of both the wine and chocolate bitter elements with the chocolate's sweetness.

3. *Flavor Affinities*

Certain flavors naturally complement others. Dessert wines thought of as a sauce modify the taste of a dessert. For example, raspberry sauce is a lively addition to chocolate decadence. Elysium, with its predominant berry character acts similarly. Chocolate and orange is a famous match. Tasted with chocolate, the orange flavor in Essensia is brought out. Besides chocolate, Essensia's orange-apricot flavor works with almond, peach, and apricot. Elysium's berry like flavor is also good with vanilla cream, and red berry puddings. Sometimes it works to build the flavor affinities into the dessert by using the wine as an ingredient. For example, pears poached in Elysium, and served with Elysium.

Chocolate Desserts

Most people love chocolate but chocolate is notoriously difficult to pair with wine. In a dessert, chocolate is a dominating flavor presence. One reason Essensia and Elysium can be used with chocolate desserts is that they have sufficient

intensity of their own such that they act as a fruit counterpoint to the chocolate like a raspberry or orange sauce.

The match seems to work better if there are other elements at work besides chocolate and the wine. At a wine and chocolate tasting many years ago, tasters rated Essensia paired with Almond Biscotti dipped in French vanilla dark chocolate as their favorite combination. The tasters noted the following: 1) Acidity in the wine seemed to act as a counterpoint to the muted sweetness in the chocolate. 2) The crisp texture of the biscotti, combined with the almost syrupy character in the Essensia, provided an alluring contrast in feel. By dipping only half of the biscotti into chocolate, other flavors were allowed to show. This was assumed to be the reason this combination was successful. This pattern can be seen in many of the dessert recipes given in this book. Straight dark chocolate, while good, is not usually the best match.

Chapter 3: Desserts to accompany a full bodied dessert wine having a spicy orange-apricot flavor

Chocolate Cream Cake, a celebration of intense pure chocolate flavor is a dessert for the chocolate lover. It will show off the finest most exotically flavored chocolates. When you taste this with Essensia, the orange component in the wine stands out. There are better chocolate desserts to accompany Essensia but it is difficult to find a better wine than Essensia to accompany this dessert.

Chocolate Cream Cake

October 3, 1984
Lisa Hemenway, Hemenway and Fleisner
Santa Rosa

14 oz. semi sweet chocolate
2 oz unsweetened chocolate
¼ cup freshly made espresso or good strong coffee
6 eggs
¼ cup sugar
1 cup heavy cream

Serves 6

Melt chocolate and coffee in a double boiler under gentle steam. Meanwhile, beat eggs with sugar until lemon colored and light. Fold the melted chocolate

mixture into the eggs. Fold in cream. Bake in a bain marie for one hour at 350F or until the top is just firm. Serve warm. Accompany with Essensia.

The next recipe, demonstrating the affinity of Essensia with the mild tanginess of goat cheese, takes the taster in an entirely new direction. Where the first recipe is all about the love of dark chocolate and a liquid to act as a counterpoint, the second is about delicacy and balance.

Other fortified Muscat wines are typically made with the Muscat Blanc instead of Orange Muscat grape. They may not work so well with chocolate but if the alcohols are not too high and they are made in the “fresh” style, they can be used to accompany many of the other desserts in this chapter.

Tanner Farm Goat Cheese Cake with Honeyed Essence of Essensia and Mixed Berries of the Season



December 2000
Gayle Tanner, David Berkeley's Wine and Food Sacramento
1998 Essensia Pairing Competition
Northern California

First place in our 1998 Essensia competition went to Gayle Tanner, pastry maker at ([David Berkeley Fine Wines and Food](#)), for a goat cheese cake made with goat cheese from goat milk from her own goats. The judges remarked on the affinity of mild goat cheese to Essensia's apricot flavor.

In 1999 the Tanners relocated, goats and all, to Tennessee. This year their [Bonnie Blue Farm](#) was recognized as 2007 [Tennessee Small Farmer of the Year](#).

11 ounces mild fresh goat cheese, softened
3 tbs. all purpose flour
¾ cup sugar

2 tsp. orange juice
3 cups mixed fresh berries
1 tsp. minced orange zest
6 oz Essensia reduced to 1 oz.
1 tsp. vanilla extract
6 large eggs, separated
A tad (1/16 tsp.) honey
Confectioner's sugar for dusting

Serves 8

Preheat oven to 350F. Butter a 9 inch round cake pan and dust with granulated sugar, pouring off the excess. Taking care not to scorch, reduce Essensia to 2 tbs. Cool. Add honey. Combine goat cheese with the granulated sugar, orange juice, orange zest and vanilla. Beat at medium speed until smooth. Beat in egg yolks, 2 at a time, incorporating completely before adding the next batch. Beat in flour at low speed.

In another bowl, beat egg whites until firm but not dry. Beat one third of the whites into the goat cheese mixture, then gently fold in the remaining whites. Spoon the batter into the prepared pan and bake for about 35 minutes, or until a skewer inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. Cool completely on a wire rack. Invert cake onto a large plate. Dribble Essensia syrup evenly over cake, arrange berries on top and garnish with sifted confectioners' sugar.

Essensia Sabayon From The Mediterranean Kitchen 1989

[Joyce Goldstein](#), [Square One Restaurant](#)
San Francisco

1 bottle (750ml) Essensia 14 egg yolks
½ cup sugar 1 cup heavy cream

Serves 6

Whisk everything together (except the cream) in a metal bowl. Place in a double boiler over simmering water, and whisk constantly until the mixture is thick enough to hold a ribbon for 3 seconds. The mixture should be very light and fluffy. Serve warm, or after cooling, whip cream to stiff peaks and fold it into sabayon. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

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*L. Quady
Sept 2007*

