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Hello, from California Wines

Another warm, mild winter brought early bud break to many of California's wine-growing regions. Our vineyards were graced with abundant sunshine throughout the spring growing season with this year's winegrapes poised for another exceptional vintage. Meanwhile, our Wine Institute representatives and California vintners have been hard at work putting on events around the world.

FROM GRAPE TO GLASS

- **Travel.** California wines are best enjoyed in their native environment. That's why we've curated [a list of the best food and wine road trips](#) so visitors to the Golden State can experience all the best it has to offer. It's no coincidence that wine regions also feature great artisan food producers, so visitors can enjoy craft cheese, farm-fresh fruits and restaurants with celebrated chefs while tasting California's finest wines.
- **California Wines Summit 2015:** The [California Wines Summit 2015](#) program took place during the week of May 3rd. The comprehensive program featured more than 400 wines and 200 vintner spokespeople from throughout the state. The itinerary included intensive tasting programs on California Chardonnay, Zinfandel, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Next Generation, California Sustainable Winegrowing, Then & Now, California Style, New Pioneers, and California Wine Families. Attendees from around the world lauded the event, and much positive press is expected to emerge from it.
- **Zin Is In.** Zinfandel is the heritage grape of California, but wine fans outside the state may be mystified by this unique grape. We've compiled [a list of 10 facts about zinfandel](#) to help expand awareness and understanding of this varietal, encompassing its history, food-friendliness and sustainable growing practices.

FROM FARM TO TABLE



Grilled Eggplant and Tomato Salad with Parsley Parmesan Vinaigrette

Serves 4

Parsley adds a bright lift of flavor to the smoky grilled eggplant in this Mediterranean-style salad. Pair with California Merlot or Chardonnay.

Ingredients:

- large globe eggplant, cut into 1-inch-thick (2.5cm) rounds
- ¼ cup plus 3 T (105 ml) extra virgin olive oil
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons (45ml) apple cider vinegar (1/4-inch dice)
- 2 tablespoons (30ml) finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons (30ml) minced flat-leaf parsley, leaves only
- 2 teaspoons (10ml) minced shallots
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25ml) salt
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25ml) freshly ground black pepper
- ½ pint (8 ounces/225g) cherry, grape, or other small tomatoes, cut in half
- 16 small fresh mozzarella balls, cut in half
- ¼ cup (30g) pine nuts
- parsley leaves with stem for garnish

Directions:

Preheat the grill to medium high.

Brush both sides of the eggplant slices using ¼ cup (60 ml) of the olive oil. Season on both sides with salt and pepper.

Grill the slices for 6 minutes on each side. Let cool completely. Cut into 1-inch (2.5cm) pieces and place a large bowl.

Grill the slices for 6 minutes on each side. Let cool completely. Cut into 1-inch (2.5cm) pieces and place a large bowl.

To make the vinaigrette, whisk the vinegar, Parmesan, parsley, shallots, and measured salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Gradually whisk in the remaining 3 tablespoons (45ml) of olive oil.

To serve, add the tomatoes, mozzarella, and pine nuts to the eggplant. Add 3 tablespoons (45ml) of the vinaigrette and toss to combine.

Divide the salad among 4 plates. Garnish with parsley. Pass the remaining vinaigrette separately.

Still hungry? [Discover more seasonal recipes with California wine pairings on our wine and food page.](#)

AROUND THE GLOBE

- **Vinexpo.** California Wines had a significant presence at Vinexpo Bordeaux, with 19 exhibitors featuring 100 wineries pouring 350 wines on display. reportedly brought 48,500 attendees.
- **Continental Europe.** A seminar titled "Top California Chardonnay & Pinot Noir Masterclass – Under the Sign of Balance" was held on May 4th at Le Méridien Parkhotel in Frankfurt. The seminar was preceded and followed by a walk-around tasting of approximately 60 wines poured by 8 importers and brand representatives. The invitation-only event was attended by 60 top sommeliers, key trade and media. The seminar successfully demonstrated the huge leap in quality of California Pinot Noir in recent years as well as the elegance and restrained and well-integrated oak of the current generation of California Chardonnay. In Holland, we had a full house in the California Wine Lounge at the Libelle summerfair. Close to 8,000 women visited and tasted our wines. National TV station RTL did a four-minute TV piece on California wines and our presentation at the fair for their "Vino" TV series.
- **Nordics.** California Wines had a wine lounge at Smaka på Stockholm in June 2015. This food and wine festival, which took place from June 4-7, was expected to attract approximately 400,000 people. California Wines will have a wine bar at the annual Wine, Food & Good Living consumer show in Helsinki October 22nd-25th. Finland's largest food and wine event is organized in conjunction with the Helsinki Book Fair, Helsinki Music Fair and ArtForum.
- **Canada.** California Wines was the theme region of a promotion in the SAQ stores in the Quebec province from April 30 through May 10th. Promotion components included California Wines endcap displays; "category dressing" which includes in-store signage for displays, window posters; neck tags, shelf signage in the category section; significant visibility on www.saq.com; added value offer on May 2nd when consumers would get a free 2 glass Govino set for every two bottles of California wine purchased. (70,000 sets were distributed!); as well as prominent advertising exposure.
- **Japan.** Wine Institute's office in Japan has worked with over 20 specialty stores, supermarkets and department stores in a promotion centered on producing large California Wines displays in their stores, and conducting California wine sales promotions for a minimum of two weeks in May and June, featuring at least 50 different California SKUs.
- **China.** Leading wine expert and author of The Wine Bible, Karen MacNeil, led seminars as part of the vintner trade mission to China, teaching [California Wines Advanced Master Classes](#) and taking her very well received California Wines Summit programs "on the road" for seminars in Hong Kong on May 29th and in Shanghai on June 1st.

HAPPENINGS & EVENTS

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