



## Balance in Wines

Peter Bell

Winemaker  
Fox Run Vineyards

pinot\_envy@hotmail.com

## What Constitutes Excellence?

Red?

Expensive?

Massive Tannins?

High Wine Spectator Score?

Flavor Intensity?

Aging Potential?

French?

- Longevity
- Persistence
- Complexity
- **BALANCE** (harmony)

### Balance:

The interaction and harmony between two or more of a wine's components

Sugar + acid

Acid + tannin

Alcohol + acid + tannin

Sugar + bitterness

Sugar + Flavor Intensity ("extract")

Oak + fruit

Age + youth

### Acid : Tannin Balance

1. High acid makes tannins more apparent
2. High tannins make acid more apparent
3. Tannic red wines should have relatively low acid to be in balance

### Alcohol : Acid : Tannin Balance

1. High acid wines are in better balance if the alcohol is relatively high
2. Very tannic red wines are in better balance if alcohol is low and acid is high

## How does temperature affect a wine's balance?

- **Low temperature:**
  - Exaggerates tannins
  - Makes acid less apparent
  - Makes sweetness less apparent
- **High temperature:**
  - Makes alcohol more apparent

## Excerpts from *Some Thoughts on Judging* (anon.)

- 3. Aroma: if off it loses (*sic*), if intense it wins
- 4. Taste: acid makes saliva to formulate
- 7. If a wine smells sweet it isn't
- 8. Swallows:
  - 3 swallows in 5 seconds = high extracts
  - 2 swallows in 5 seconds = required for a quality wine

## The Subjective Nature of Wine Aroma Description Courtesy of Alan Young

- *Strawberry* has been called: peach, cherry, vanilla, musk, cough medicine, apple juice, jelly beans, rose perfume, chewing gum, caramel, chocolate, mango, pineapple, apricot.
- *Ginger* has been called: Soap, 3-in-1 oil, turpentine, pine-gum, grass, gasoline, onion, rancid butter, lemon, citronella, mothballs, cedar, oil of cloves

*Apricot* has been called: hard candy, mango, pineapple, Hawaiian punch, peppermint, strawberry, shampoo, orange, gingerbread

*Lychee* has been called: musk, cedar, banana, caramel, strawberry, marzipan, toffee, coconut, candy floss

Questions?