

THE SOMMELIER JOURNAL

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FROM TREASURY WINE ESTATES: From left to right, Christophe Paubert, Winemaker/General Manager, Stags' Leap Winery; Margo Van Staaveren, Winemaker/General Manager, Chateau St. Jean; Mark Beringer, Chief Winemaker, Beringer Vineyards; DLynn Proctor, Winemaking Ambassador, Penfolds; Harry Hansen, Senior Winemaker, Sterling Vineyards; Trevor Durling, General Manager/Chief Winemaker, Beaulieu Vineyard; Gillian Ballance, Trade Education Manager, Treasury Wine Estates; and Jon Priest, Senior Winemaker/General Manager, Etude, gather at Stags' Leap Winery.

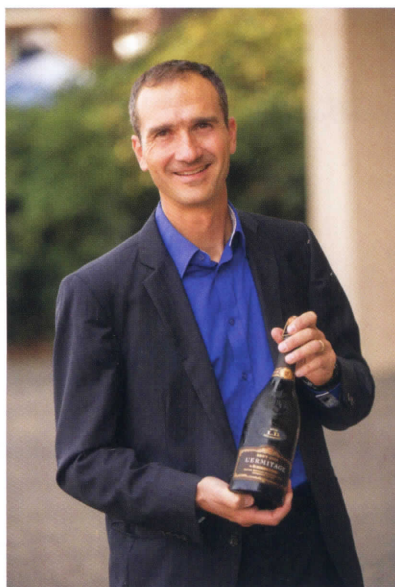
Exhibiting Unique Terroir

THE SOMM JOURNAL CONTINUES EXPLORING DIVERSITY IN THE WINE WORLD AT THE SOCIETY OF WINE EDUCATORS CONFERENCE by Allyson Gorsuch / photos by John Valls

SEVEN PRESENTERS FROM SIX countries introduced us to the reasons their particular areas of the world produce distinctive, quality wines at the recent *Digging In to Unique Terroir* seminar, an ongoing series for *The SOMM Journal*. "We could talk about terroir all day, but I'd rather talk about the term as it applies to each of these wines," stated moderator **Eric Hemer, MS, MW, CWE and Senior VP and Director of Wine Education for Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits**. By the end of the discussion, attendees had learned that while many regions share several similarities, each possesses a quality distinct to its corner of the world.



Arnaud Weyrich, Winemaker/VP Production, Roederer Estate; Toshio Ueno, MSS, CSW, FWS, VP/ Executive Instructor, Sake School of America; Bob Bath, MS, Head Beverage Instructor at CIA, Napa; Attila Balla, President, Vinum Tokaj International; Eric Hemer, MS, MW, CWE and Senior VP/Director of Wine Education for Southern Glazer's (our Moderator); István Szepsy Jr., Winemaker for MAD and Szent Tamas Winery in Tokaj; Marcke Lhyle, Riboli Family Wine Estates; Gustavo Rearte, Winemaker for Achaval-Ferrer; and Alto Adige Wines Ambassador May Matta-Aliah, DWS, CWE.



Arnaud Weyrich, Winemaker and VP of Production at Roederer Estate in Anderson Valley, CA.

Roederer Estate 2003 L'Ermitage

"How do you make a high-acid wine in a warmer climate?" asks Arnaud Weyrich, Winemaker and VP of Production at Roederer Estate, located in the Anderson Valley of Mendocino County, California. A few factors contribute to the success of the Champagne house's Californian sparkling venture, but the number-one assist comes from the large, daily diurnal shifts. Day- to night-time temperatures can differ by almost 50 degrees Fahrenheit, with the average temperature swing closer to 40-plus degrees Fahrenheit—still a dramatic shift.

The close proximity to the Pacific Ocean incites the diurnal swing, but it also provides a generous fog in both the morning and evening; the fog slows the ripening of the grapes, allowing them to gain ideal ripeness without losing acidity. The winery has also planted specific clones that aid in retaining acidity. The soils serve to improve acid retention as well, as they are well-drained and primarily made up of alluvial sandstone.

The Roederer Estate 2003 L'Ermitage was disgorged after 13 years; it showed some age but, more so, remarkable freshness and complexity.

**For the full Digging In to Unique Terroir presentation at this year's Society of Wine Educators Conference, go to <http://winewitandwisdomswe.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Digging-Into-Unique-Terroirs-presented-by-Eric-Hemer-and-panel.pdf>*



*Alto Adige Wines
Ambassador May
Matta-Aliah, DWS,
CWE with Muri-
Gries Lagrein.*

Muri-Gries 2014 Abtei Muri Lagrein Riserva, Alto Adige, Italy

Alto Adige's climate is extremely distinct climate: From its elevation to its basin, the region presents many different microclimates as well. In its elevated vineyards, white varieties thrive; in its warmer regions within the basin near Lake Caldaro, it delivers compelling expressions of varieties only grown in this unusual place—enter Lagrein.

Lagrein is a dense, dark, fruity and sometimes meaty red variety exclusive to Alto Adige. It is a descendant of Teroldego, another autochthonous northern Italian variety, and is related to Pinot Noir and Syrah as well. It grows well in the quartz-porphry soils that surround Bolzano, especially on the Moritzing site where the best Lagrein grows. These soils retain heat, which allows the grapes to fully ripen and helps control vigor.

The Muri-Gries 2014 Abtei Muri Lagrein Riserva saw a short maceration, as well as a short time spent in barrel, to enhance its expression without hindering its nature and terroir.

See more on Alto Adige on page 76.

San Simeon 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon, Paso Robles, CA

Paso Robles is quickly becoming a “hot spot” as it proves itself worthy of a regal title. It is, indeed, the terroir that is elevating the region to noteworthy status—a trend aided by passionate winemakers and viticulture specialists.

The region offers two notable things: calcareous soils and warm weather. The soils allow drainage and the retention of acidity while the warm weather permits ripe fruit flavors—the combination is special. The soils also possess a high degree of marine sediment from being underwater during its geologic formation, translating into a high calcium content. San Simeon 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon is produced from calcareous vineyards in the El Pomar and Creston sub-regions of Paso Robles.

Specifically speaking, El Pomar District AVA offers sandstone, loam and clay. Appended to the eastern section of El Pomar and stretching farther east and south is the Creston District AVA. A bit warmer than El Pomar; Creston still gets around 11 inches of rain per year and offers sedimentary rock, granite and fertile alluvial soils.

The Riboli family has been in the wine business for 100 years, and San Simeon may just epitomize their passion and dedication to not only producing wine, but producing it for their esteemed customers.



*Marcke Lhyle,
Northwest Regional
Manager for Riboli
Family Wine Estates,
poses with San
Simeon 2014 Cabernet
Sauvignon.*