

HILL FAMILY E S T A T E

CROSSROADS NEWSLETTER, APRIL 2016

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Crossroads Red Club

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2013 *LOVE*

2013 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley

Crossroads Two White One Red Club

2015 "Stewart Ranch" Albarino

2013 *LOVE*

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PROPRIETOR'S MESSAGE

Greetings from Hill Family Estate –

Warm weather has awakened the vineyards, after experiencing an unimpressive El Niño that was scheduled to bless California with heavy, and much needed rainfall. While ski resorts were blessed with snow, and many reservoirs, lakes and rivers reached their highest points in years, many parts of California will continue to experience fallowed fields and dry wells, which will create lasting, if not permanent damage to the farming world. With this in mind, we feel extremely fortunate to have access to water where our vineyards are planted, and were excited to see areas like Atlas Peak, where much of our Cabernet Sauvignon is grown, record 25 inches of rain.

This quarter, we're shedding light on an establishment that's been in the spotlight since Thomas Keller took over the building in 1994. The French Laundry, which is one of only two restaurants in America to feature our Atlas Peak Sauvignon Blanc, will be unveiling their new, state of the art kitchen in 2016. There's been a lot of buzz throughout town, as it will only allow Thomas and his team to add to the magic of creating the perfect dining experience. With this in mind, we hope you take the time, and enjoy preparing the selected recipes to pair with the featured wines.

Upon receiving your wine shipment, you'll notice a new label that we're unveiling for the first time – which was crafted exclusively for our members. The *LOVE* wine is a 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon that celebrates our collaboration with recent Super Bowl Champion, Vernon Davis and his charity, the Vernon Davis Foundation of the Arts. 50% of the proceeds from the *LOVE* wine will benefit the "VDFA," which gives scholarships to kids who are embarking on college and plan to study art and music. In addition to being a football player, Vernon Davis is an esteemed artist, and painted the limited edition *LOVE* wine label. The *LOVE* release party is slated for April 24th in Yountville from 2pm-5pm, where you can meet Vernon Davis and have your bottles personalized. For more information and to secure tickets to this highly anticipated event, please contact Matt Mills at 707-944-9530.

Warmly,

The Hill Family

LOVE RELEASE & BENEFIT EVENT

FEATURING HILL FAMILY ESTATE & VERNON DAVIS

The poster features a dark green background with decorative gold scrollwork at the top and bottom. Stylized green leaves are in the corners. The text is centered and reads: "HILL FAMILY ESTATE" in white serif font. Below it, "JOIN HILL FAMILY ESTATE AND VERNON DAVIS FOR LOVE WINE, A CELEBRATION TO BENEFIT THE VERNON DAVIS FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS." in gold serif font. Then, "An exciting afternoon gala of HFE wine, light appetizers, silent and live auctions benefitting VDFA, a special live musical performance, Vernon Davis and the release of the 2013 LOVE wine." in white serif font. A small gold scroll with two green grapes is below. The date and time "Sunday, April 24th | 2:00pm to 5:00pm" and location "Barrel Room at the V Marketplace Yountville" are in white. The price "\$125 per person; limited attendance" is also in white. At the bottom left, contact info for Matt Mills is provided. At the bottom right is the Vernon Davis Foundation for the Arts logo, which includes a stylized football and the text "VERNON DAVIS FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS".

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JOIN HILL FAMILY ESTATE AND
VERNON DAVIS FOR LOVE WINE, A
CELEBRATION TO BENEFIT THE VERNON
DAVIS FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS.

An exciting afternoon gala of HFE wine, light appetizers, silent
and live auctions benefitting VDFA, a special live musical
performance, Vernon Davis and the release
of the 2013 LOVE wine.

Sunday, April 24th | 2:00pm to 5:00pm
Barrel Room at the V Marketplace Yountville
\$125 per person; limited attendance

For reservations call Matt Mills at (707) 944-9530,
or email mattm@hillfamilyestate.com
Advance tickets required

VERNON
DAVIS
FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

"I'm ecstatic that we're able to raise money for the VDFA charity. Vernon Davis is a recent Super Bowl Champion, upstanding individual, friend, and is continually making the time to give back to his community. Because of this, the relationship with both Vernon and the VDFA was a natural fit. We hope to raise a lot of money for the VDFA, as well as making a little noise in the world of wine and football by offering the LOVE wine to sports and wine enthusiasts across the country."

- Ryan Hill, *Proprietor*

RESTAURANT FOCUS & PAIRINGS

THE FRENCH LAUNDRY



While neighbors with this international dining destination, Hill Family is also honored to be wine and farming partners with *The French Laundry*. The highly touted 3-star Michelin and crown jewel of the Thomas Keller Restaurant Group is celebrating the completion of their first kitchen remodel in over twenty years (artist's rendering picturing above). This marks the completion of Phase I of an ongoing expansion to the 116 year old original structure.

Jacobsen Orchards, the feature of our "Secret Garden" tour and located in the heart of Yountville, is a produce supplier for not only *TFL* but also Keller's other local restaurants *Bouchon* and *Ad Hoc*. As much as 95% of the produce grown by Jacobsen Orchards is destined for all these great restaurants.

Just this week Ryan ran into the TKRG's Culinary Director while picking fresh fava bean tips for a new seasonal dish, taking "farm to table" to its purest form.

Our 2013 "Atlas Peak" Sauvignon Blanc is currently paired on their tasting menu with TFL's famous "Oysters and Pearls" opening course (pictured below). Additionally, the 2012 "Double Barrel" Cabernet Sauvignon is also available on *TFL's* wine list.

Please enjoy our more adventurous pairings and recipes courtesy of *The French Laundry*, which all and more are available in Thomas Keller's *The French Laundry Cookbook*.



SAUTÉED ATLANTIC HALIBUT WITH SUMMER SUCCOTASH & RUE-SCENTED ONION GLAZE

CIPOLLINI ONIONS & SAUCE

6 ounces Cipollini onions
2 ½ cups chicken stock
½ cup veal stock
5 sprigs thyme
½ inch sprig rue
1 tbsp honey
1 tbsp whole butter
6 tbsp unsalted butter

SUCCOTASH

4 ears baby corn
1 ½ teaspoons sugar
1 cup milk
18 fava beans, peeled & blanched
1 tsp diced red bell pepper
1 tsp diced yellow bell pepper
½ tsp finely minced chives
2-3 tbsp whole butter

HALIBUT

6 three ounce halibut fillets
½ cup whole butter

6 chive tips
6 small sprigs chervil

Makes 6 servings.

FOR THE CIPOLLINI ONIONS

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F. Trim the root ends of the onions, leaving the skin on and enough root intact to hold them together. Coat the bottom of a pan wide enough to hold the onion in one layer with 1/16 inch canola oil. Heat the oils over medium-high heat and when it is hot, add the onions root side down. Sear the onion on the root end only until they are a dark, golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Once the root ends are brown, transfer the onions to a fine strainer to drain excess oil.

Return the onions, and any brown bits in the strainer, to the pan and add 2 cups of the chicken stock, the veal stock, thyme, rue, honey, and salt. Bring the liquid to a summer. Cover with a parchment lid and braise in the oven for 45 minutes, or until the onions are meltingly tender. They should still hold their shape, but there should be no resistance when tested with a paring knife.

When the onions are tender, remove them from the pan. Peel away the skins and any tough outer layers and place the onion in a container. Strain the braising liquid through a fine strainer into a small saucepan. Reduce the liquid slowly for about 15 minutes. The liquid should be dark and thick, but if it too sticky add chicken stock a tablespoon at a time to thin it out.

FOR THE SUCCOTASH

Place the baby corn in a small saucepan with the sugar, milk and a pinch of salt. Bring to a summer and poach the corn for 10 to 12 minutes, until tender. There should be very little resistance when the corn is tested with a paring knife, but it must be able to hold its shape without falling apart when cut. Rinse the corn and cut each cob into rondelles, thin rounds of about 1/16 inch.

Combine the baby corn with the fava beans, red and yellow peppers and chives in a saucepan. Add the whole butter and about 1 tsp water to moisten the vegetables and set aside.

TO COMPLETE

For the halibut, place some flour in a dish. Season both sides of the halibut with salt and pepper and lightly coat the skin side with flour, patting off any excess. Heat 1/8 inch of canola oil in a large skillet; the pan should be big enough to hold all six pieces of fish comfortably without overcrowding them. If the fillets touch each other, they will steam rather than sauté, so if your pan is not big enough, use two pans.

cont.

Place the fish skin side down in the hot oil and cook for 2 minutes, or until a crisp golden-brown crust forms. Turn the fish and cook for another minute. Halibut should be cooked only to medium, as it has a tendency to dry out. When the fish is done, turn off the heat and coat the pieces on both sides with the whole butter. Let the fish rest for a couple of minutes, then drain the fillets on a paper towel to absorb excess butter.

Meanwhile, place the onions in a saucepan with the 1 tbsp whole butter and just enough chicken stock to come 1/8 inch up the sides of the pan. Heat gently to warm. Reheat the succotash over low heat and season with salt and pepper.

Set the sauce over medium heat. Whisking continuously, add the butter, a tbsp at a time. Do not let the sauce come to a boil, or the butter will separate and become oily. The sauce is ready when it coats the back of a spoon. Adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper to taste.

Place a spoonful of sauce on each plate. Place 1 medium Cipollini onion or each pool of sauce and place a piece of halibut on top. Spoon the succotash over the fish. Garnish the top of each serving with a chive tip and sprig of chervil.



2014 "STEWART RANCH" PINOT NOIR

DOUBLE RIB LAMB CHOPS WITH CASSOULET OF SUMMER BEANS & ROSEMARY

CASSOULET OF BEANS

2 tbsp dried marrow beans
2 tbsp dried cranberry beans
½ cup chicken stock
2 2-inch sections leek
2 2-inch sections carrot
2 2-inc long onion wedges
10 large green beans
10 large yellow wax beans
¼ cup peeled fava beans
¼ cup fresh soybeans
2 tbsp julienned tomato
2 teaspoon julienned carrots

LAMB

6 double cut rib lamb chops
3 cloves garlic, split & crushed
6 sprigs thyme

Makes 6 servings.

TO COOK THE DRIED BEANS

Marrow and cranberry beans should be soaked overnight at room temperature. Green, soybean, fava and yellow wax beans should be blanched until tender, chilled in ice water and cut into 1 inch pieces. Remove any skins that have risen to the top of the water. Drain and rinse the beans and place them into two separate small pots. Add cold water to cover by 2 inches and bring to a boil. Remove and discard any beans that come to the surface. Drain the beans and run under cold water to cool.

Return the beans to the pots and cover each with half the chicken stock and enough water to cover the beans by 1 inch. Add a piece of leek, carrot and onion to each pot and slowly bring to a simmer. Any beans that have not hydrated and any loose skins will come to the top: skim them off and discard. Simmer the beans for about 1 hour or until tender.

FOR THE LAMB

Loop a piece of kitchen twine around the bone of a lamb chop just above the meat, wrap both ends of the twine around the meat, bring them back to the bone, and tie the twine around the bone to give a uniform shape. Cut off excess twine and repeat with remaining chops. Wrap the bones in aluminum foil to protect from burning, season with salt and pepper, and let rest at room temperature for an hour.

TO COMPLETE

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Heat 1/8 inch of canola oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the lamb chops and sauté for about 3 minutes to brown on the bottom. Turn the chops and continue to cook for another 3 minutes. Place the chops on their sides and rotate them to brown the sides, another 1 to 2 minutes. The chops should be well browned but still slightly rare.

Remove most of the fat from the pan and add the butter, basting the lamb chops with the butter as it melts. Top the lamb with the garlic cloves and sprigs of thyme. Place the pan in the oven for about 4 minutes, or until the meat is medium-rare; an instant-read thermometer should register 115 to 120 degrees F. Remove the pan from the oven and let the meat rest for 3 to 4 minutes.

While the lamb is cooking, drain the cooked beans and combine the beans and about half the lamb sauce or drippings in a saucepan. Bring to a simmer, skim the sauce, and warm through, about 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in the butter, then add the green and yellow beans, the fava beans, soybeans, tomato, julienned carrots, and salt and pepper to taste.

Meanwhile, place the remaining lamb sauce in a small pot and simmer over low heat for 3 to 4 minutes to reduce the glaze.

Place a portion of the warm ragout on each plate. Stand a lamb chop on its side with the bone facing up over the beans. Scatter rosemary leaves and drizzle olive oil over the beans and lamb.

VENISON CHOP WITH PAN-ROASTED BUTTERNUT SQUASH & BRAISED SHALLOTS

BRAISED SHALLOTS

2 large shallots, unpeeled
6 sprig thyme
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 teaspoons julienned carrots
1 tablespoon julienned tomato
½ cup whole butter
Six 3-ounce venison chops
Canola oil

BUTTERNUT SQUASH

1 butternut squash
3 cups chicken stock

Venison sauce
6 small pieces crisp cooked bacon
6 sprigs chervil

Makes 6 servings.

FOR THE SHALLOTS

Place the shallots and thyme sprigs on a square of aluminum foil, drizzle with the olive oil, and enclose in the foil. Peel the shallots, cut off the root end, and cut into small wedges. Place the shallots in a small saucepan.

FOR THE VENISON

Loop a piece of kitchen twine around the bone of a venison chop just above the meat, wrap both ends of the twine around the meat, bring them back to the bone, and tie the twine around the bone to give a uniform shape to the chop. Cut off the excess twine and repeat with the remaining chops.

FOR THE SQUASH

Cut off the neck of the squash and peel it (reserve the remaining squash for another use). Cut six ½ inch thick rounds from the neck of the squash. With a 2 inch cutter, cut a round from each slice. Score one side of each round in a diamond pattern. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Bring the chicken stock or water (lightly salt the water) to a boil and blanch the squash rounds until tender. Drain the slices.

TO COMPLETE

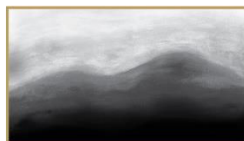
Season the venison chops. Heat 1/8 inch canola oil in a large heavy sauté pan. When the oil is hot, add the chops and cook on the first side for 2 to 3 minutes to brown. The pan should be hot enough that when you shake the pan after about 10 minutes, the chops move freely. Don't move the chops until they move on their own. Turn the chops and brown the second side for 2 to 3 minutes for medium rare, basting the chops several times with the oil in the pan.

Meanwhile, in a second large sauté pan, heat 1/8 inch of canola oil. Add the butternut squash, scored side down, and sauté until slightly browned on the bottom. Turn and continue cooking until the squash is heated through.

Add the julienned carrots, tomato, and whole butter to the shallots and heat through. Warm the venison sauce.

Place a spoonful of sauce on each plate and top with a round of squash and a venison chop. Divide the shallots among the chops, set a piece of bacon on each bone, and garnish each with a sprig of chervil.





HILL FAMILY E S T A T E



Napa Valley

2013 LOVE

Production: 257 cases

Composition: 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Malbec, 9% Merlot, 6% Zinfandel, 5% Petite Sirah, 5% Petit Verdot

Vineyards: Baker, Windy Flats & Smith

Cooperage: 90% new oak barrels aged for 16 months (of the new barrels, 10% American Oak 80% French Oak, 10% Stavin French oak)

Alcohol: 15.68%, TA 0.57, pH 3.78

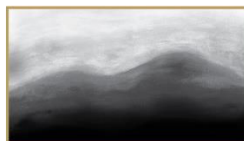
Bottling Date: June 4, 2015

Release Date: April 2016

Release Price: \$85.00

Notes: We created this wine with the help of Vernon Davis, peerless tight end for the 2016 Super Bowl Champion Denver Broncos. The label was painted and designed by Vernon who majored in Art Studio, making each bottle a work of art. Vernon found that for him, art frees creativity, and creates a more confident sense of self, so the Foundation has scholarship opportunities to help kids who want to go to school in the arts. After several blending sessions, Vernon chose this blend that included 4 Bordeaux varieties and just a little Zinfandel and Petite Sirah. Almost 35% of this blend comes from the Windy Flats Vineyard in the western foothills of Wooden Valley, with Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, and Malbec.

Winemaker Alison Doran's Tasting Notes: Still young, with loads of dark spicy fruit, the nose has boysenberry and blackberry mixed with sweet cherry and freshly ground coriander seed. The palate is big, smooth, and complex, with cassis and black licorice flavors. The finish is still a bit restless, trying to resolve the tannin and dark chocolate from the Atlas Peak Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah. Tasted March 22, 2016.



HILL FAMILY E S T A T E



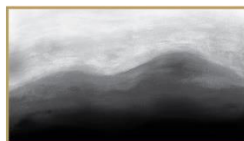
Napa Valley

2013 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley

- Production:** 1,605 cases
- Composition:** 78% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Malbec, 6% Merlot, 3% Petit Verdot
- Vineyard:** Baker, Beau Terre, Red Door, Windy Flays and Knubis
- Appellation:** Napa Valley
- Elevation:** Valley floor – 1,200 ft.
- Cooperage:** 45% new oak as follows: 8% new American oak (Charlois American oak), 29% new French Oak (Leroi, Bossuet, Orion, and Remond), 8% Stavin French Oak, 55% neutral French, Hungarian, and American oak.
- Alcohol:** 15.80%, TA 0.59, pH 3.75
- Bottling Date:** June 4, 2015

Notes: The 2013 growing season offered marvelous growing conditions. A wet December gave way to a rainless January and February, and dry, warm weather extended into the spring. These conditions encouraged early bud break and bloom, and we enjoyed great set with beautiful uniformity in our Cabernet fruit. Summer started with a brief heat spike in early July; perfect ripening weather followed throughout September. These ideal end-of-harvest temperatures yielded grapes with incredible concentration of flavor, color and tannin. We had 27 lots to consider blending, and decided on 6 vineyards that would make the base blend. We let this blend age in barrel for a year, and then did additional blending to balance and create the ideal finish we desired.

Winemaker Alison Doran's Tasting Notes: The 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon presents black cherry and blackberry aromas layered with subtle herb, vanilla and floral notes. The entry is velvety and intense, revealing dark cherry and boysenberry notes married with toasted oak and light licorice. This is an elegantly structured wine with silkiness through the midpalate and a persistent, juicy finish. Deep, coating Atlas Peak tannins ensure that this wine will age beautifully in the cellar. Tasted March 12, 2016.



HILL FAMILY E S T A T E



Napa Valley

2014 “Carly’s Cuvee” Chardonnay

Production: 3,191 cases

Composition: 100% Chardonnay

Appellation: 100% Napa Valley

Elevation: Valley floor

Cooperage: 10 months in French oak barrels

Alcohol: 14.40%, TA 0.60, pH 3.46

Bottling Date: August 2015

Release Date: Spring 2016

Release Price: \$35

Notes: The 2014 Carly’s Cuvee was made from a selection of Chardonnay vineyards in the American Canyon area of Napa Valley (Watson and Clarke) and from a gravelly area of Zinfandel Lane near St Helena. Made in a partial-malolactic style, with only light oak influence, this lovely multi-layered Chardonnay will please people looking for a wine that enhances food and holds its own out on the patio. Carly Hill is the daughter of Doug and Darci Hill, and her contributions to Hill Family Estate are honored with this beautiful wine. She is now a nutritionist in San Diego, and helps with the family business.

Winemaker Alison Doran’s Tasting Notes: The 2014 Chardonnay opens with light tropical aromas alongside melon, juicy citrus and a layer of toasted oak and mineral. The silky entry introduces bright melon and citrus notes complementary to the nose, then progresses to a creamy, structured midpalate. The long, mouthwatering finish has bright acidity with lingering citrus, toasted nuts and wet stone flavors.



HILL FAMILY

E S T A T E



Napa Valley

2014 “Stewart Ranch” Pinot Noir

Production: 395 cases

Composition: 100% Pinot Noir

Vineyard: Stewart Ranch

Appellation: Carneros

Elevation: Sea level

Cooperage: 63% new oak (40% Francois Freres, 40% Trust Hungarian, 20% Tonnellerie O), 37% neutral French oak

Alcohol: 14.96%, TA 0.59, pH 3.71

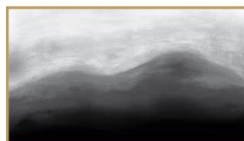
Bottling Date: August 2015

Release Date: Spring 2016

Release Price: \$48

Notes: The 2014 Pinot Noir was picked on August 28th at 24.6 Brix, destemmed not crushed, fermented in an open top and punched down. Unfortunately, the big earthquake hit on Aug 24th, so harvest had to be put off a bit while the buildings were inspected for damage. The season had been nicely moderate, with even ripening and average crop sizes. We did not warm the tank, and added RB2 yeast for a slow steady fermentation. We were rewarded by the spicy cherry and dark rose notes that developed in the wine, and these evolved beautifully in the 11 months it spent in barrel. We had more new oak in this Pinot Noir than most years, because it seemed to be more intense and ripe. This wine had no fining and no filtration. A small ppt may occur in the future as it was 10.4 NTU, but Citrogum was added to keep tartrates and particles in suspension

Winemaker Alison Doran’s Tasting Notes: This is one of the “Big Pinot” years. Stewart seems to alternate back and forth between the light and elegant and the more full bodied. This Pinot has deep jammy notes and dark red roses, with a dense toasted hazelnut spice, due to concentration at harvest and to the new oak. The palate is big and velvety, with chocolate and toasted almonds, and plum jam. Round and savory tasting with only minor supporting tannins, the 2014 Pinot is very drinkable for such a big wine. Tasted March 12, 2016.



HILL FAMILY E S T A T E



Napa Valley

2015 “Stewart Ranch” Albarino

Production: 445 cases

Composition: 100% Albarino

Vineyard: Stewart Ranch

Appellation: Carneros

Elevation: Valley floor

Cooperage: Stainless steel

Alcohol: 13.20%, TA 0.72, pH 3.38

Bottling Date: January 20, 2016

Release Date: April 2016

Release Price: \$28.00

Notes: Stewart Ranch in Carneros has its toes in the estuary south of Napa, and stays cool and breezy. Due to the drought, the warm temperatures, and the small crops in 2015, these grapes ripened early and were picked on August 29th at 21.6 brix. We fermented the grapes in stainless steel with Top Floral yeast. Albarino itself is an uncommon variety in California, but it is well known in Spain where it is grown in Galicia. Its zippy, acidity and light floral notes make it a natural companion to tapas and fresh seafood.

Winemaker Alison Doran’s Tasting Notes: Aromas of fragrant lilac and Mexican vanilla with light lychee notes. True Albarino acidity greets the palate, but the center is balanced and has a lively orange flower water-gin fizz creamy flavor. Tasted March 12, 2016.