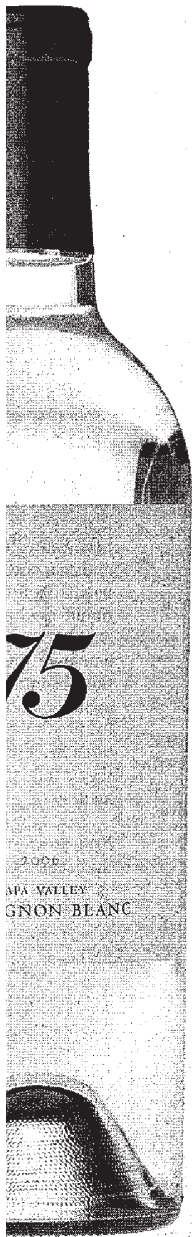


TASTING NOTE

75 Wine thrives on balanced flavors



A name such as Beckstoffer opens doors in the wine world. Not as famous as a Mondavi or a Gallo, Andy Beckstoffer's impact on the Napa Valley nevertheless was huge. He pioneered the development of modern grape-growing during the 1970s and heads up Beckstoffer Vineyards, the largest family-owned vineyard company on California's North Coast.

Mr. Beckstoffer moved his family permanently to the Valley from Virginia in 1975, and son Tuck Beckstoffer chose that date for his wine company's name: 75 Wine.

After working in the wine industry and even running a luxury jet service several years, the younger Mr. Beckstoffer again has his hands in the vineyard, as grower and co-winemaker at 75 Wine, which has two wines in the Dallas market. "I want to re-create the wines I grew up with in the Napa Valley," Tuck Beckstoffer said over lunch, starting with the 2006 75 Wine Napa Sauvignon Blanc (pictured). "I wanted to get back to the clear, clean sauvignon blanc of the past."

The wine never sees wood. Its creaminess comes from long contact with the lees, the sediment that collects as the juice ferments. It smells of muted citrus, but it erupts with a pleasantly jolting splash of fruit and wet stone in the mouth. Pairing it with scallops was like lifting a veil to reveal its passion-fruit dimension and affinity for food. At just under \$20, what a value it is. Available at Centennial, Mr. G's, Rex's Seafood Market, Dallas Central Market and Love Thy Wine in Flower Mound.

Similarly, the 75 Wine 2005 Amber Knolls Cabernet Sauvignon went against Napa Valley type, eschewing big, jammy flavors for an intense, "red-fruit-driven" experience that settles into the mouth like a dark chocolate bar with raspberries, complete with the dark chocolate tannins. No surprise that it makes a good companion to beef.

True story: In 2003, Mr. Beckstoffer released bottles of this wine in its first incarnation for wine industry pros to taste, not tell what it was. Then he would ask them the price of the wine. "Not one person said under \$60," he says.

The price? Suggested retail is about \$20. Available at Centennial, Big Daddy's, C. Wines, Goody Goody, Ice House Beverage, Majestic, Next Vintage and Pe



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by Kim Pierce

June 25, 2008

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