

HAPPIER HOUR

We observe certain trends among our Foodtrainers' clients when the temperatures rise: many are more active, some cook more and grill more on the weekends and inevitably a fair number end up drinking more. And while we're not encouraging limitless drinking we thought we'd provide you with the latest information on better drinks or dare we say healthy drinks?



ORGANIC

We've been fielding many questions about organic wines and spirits. We called in experts Greg Wacks and Adam Morganstern from www.organicwinejournal.com to educate us. Organic wine is "wine free of pesticides, fungicides and herbicides." One type of preservatives added to conventional (non-organic) wines are sulfites. The US law says wine "can't be organic if additional sulfites are added." Adam added "many people who get headaches from red wine and switch to organic don't have any problems". Studies have shown organic produce contains much higher levels of nutrients versus conventional counterparts. We look forward to the study comparing antioxidant content of organic and conventional wines (we'd be interested in tackling this research ourselves!).



In terms of spirits, Adam remarked that you "have to assume if people go out of their way to produce organically they are interested in the craft of doing it well" and encouraged supporting organic vodkas and tequilas too.

Organic Wine Picks: Greg suggested Weingut Hofer's Gruner Veltiner as "a wine that pairs with everything and is basically a thirst quenching wine." We loved another Austrian Organic a sparkling Pinot Noir from Weingut Michlits.

Organic Spirits: Square One Organic Vodka, 4 Copas 100% Organic Tequila

Stores: Astor wine and Spirits, Chelsea Wine Vault, Appellation Spirits on 10th Ave and West Side Wines on the UWS.

*note Greg (greg@organicwinejournal.com) is a certified sommelier and conducts fantastic events and wine tastings.

LOWER CALORIE CHOICES

Most of us know that sweet frozen drinks have tons of calories and sugar while wine, beer and martinis are 'better' calorically. The problem is, sometimes you want to indulge in a festive drink... well thank goodness it's summer. Use limes and lemons, fresh watermelon and berries and herbs such as mint and basil to add flavor. We love Ina Garten's margarita recipe below, it's proof you don't need a mix or any sugar.

Real Margaritas (serves 6)

- ½ cup freshly squeezed lime juice (5 limes)
- 2tbs freshly squeezed lemon juice (1 lemon)
- 1 cup Triple Sec (we happen to like Patron Citronage too)
- 1 cup white tequila
- 3 cups ice

Combine lime juice, lemon juice, Triple Sec and ice in a blender and puree until blended. Add tequila and puree 2 seconds more. Serve over ice.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Clear alcohols are less likely to cause a hangover than dark-colored ones because of chemical compounds in darker ones known as congeners. The quality of the alcohol is also important.
- Cheers to white wine- while reds tend to get touted for their antioxidant content white wine also has antioxidants and can lower blood pressure as well.
- Commercially available flavored or infused vodka do not contain added sugar. Flavored rums, on the other hand, may contain added sugar.

Don't forget to join the Foodtrainers group on Facebook and follow Lauren (username Foodtrainers) on Twitter.