

Wicked Cellars Tasting Notes
Saturday, March 16th, 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Gino Cuneo's Tre Nova Wines from Walla Walla
With Drew Murphy of A&B Wines

\$10 Tasting Fee

In 2008, Gino Cuneo's Cuneo Cellars launched **Tre Nova** ("Three Stars" in Italian) and in 2011, Gino moved from Oregon to Walla Walla to give his wines and their production a new home there. Though his wines may be some of the newest being produced in Walla Walla, Gino is certainly not new to winemaking, having explored red Italian grape varietals since 1989.

Cuneo Cellars was named the 2005 Oregon Winery of the year by Wine Press Northwest Magazine due to its "innovation and Gino's unique approach and success in crossing borders that show up in the bottle."



2011 Tre Nova Rosato (Sangiovese and Barbera Rosé)
\$12.99

Gino Cuneo's well-constructed **Rosato** gives plenty of ripe fruit character on both the nose and on the palate. Following Italian tradition, **Rosato** is a dry rosé-style of Sangiovese, bright and crisp with fruity notes of strawberries and watermelon. There's also plenty of acid to balance it out, making this a wine to be enjoyed with food such as grilled artichokes, salmon, or pork and paella to spicy Asian foods.

2009 Tre Nova "Nebbaro" \$21.99

This wine's name is a play on two Italian varieties, **Nebbiolo** and **Barbera**. This vintage is a blend of 62% Barbera and 38% Nebbiolo. Each varietal brings something unique to the

blend: the Nebbiolo with its tannins and perfume, and the Barbera bringing its color and racy acidity. The wine is dark in color, showing aromas and flavors of blackberry, black cherry, dark fruits, licorice and dried cranberry, making this a wine to serve with rich sauces and meats from the grill.

2010 Tre Nova "Bonatello" \$16.99

This is 100% Sangiovese from Doeblner Vineyards on the Wahluke Slope and Coyote Canyon Vineyards in the Horse Heaven Hills.

Translations of the Latin term "Sangiovese" range from "blood of love" to "blood of Jove." This wine is both earthy and generous, offering lively red raspberry, cranberry and cherry fruit. With approachable tannins and balanced acidity, this wine makes love to tomato-based pasta topped with mounds of salty Italian cheeses.

2009 Tre Nova Ripasso \$21.99

This is the second release of Gino Cuneo's version of the traditional Ripasso from Italy's famed Veneto region. **Ripasso** (*repassing*) was originally produced by "re-passing" younger and lighter red wines onto the remaining dried skins left over from the famed Amarone wines of the region.

This blend of 75% Sangiovese and 25% Barbera is a gracefully pure and elegant wine full in volume and rich in texture with aromas of fresh and dried fruits and smooth flavors of dark plums and cherries with just a hint of cocoa.

This deep red wine, finishing with silky, supple tannins is a wine to be served with Italian-style prepared beef or a boozy and chocolaty tiramisu.

2008 Tre Nova "Bonatello" Riserva \$37.99

The Tre Nova **Bonatello Riserva** is made from a very limited selection of the best Sangiovese fruit in its best years, and usually comes from a single vineyard. This vintage it's sourced from Doeblner Vineyards on the Wahluke Slope and aged in one-to-four-year-old French oak for 23 months.

Tre Nova uses a number of clones such as the “Brunello” Clone VCR 6 and Romagnolo Clone VCR 23. Each clone contributes differing attributes to the final wine, but together they express lively red fruit, and earthy aromas, rich fruit, and approachable ripe tannins, characteristic of the Sangiovese grape.

2008 Tre Nova Seccopassa Regularly \$48.99

(Starting Saturday as our Wicked Wine of the Week Preview, it's only \$39.99)

Seccopassa is the name that Tre Nova gives to their dry (Secco) wine made using the Appassimento (passa) dried-fruit method, the same process used to make the world famous Venetian Amarone wines. To date **Seccopassa** is the only true Appassimento wine made in America.

In true Venetian tradition, grape clusters are laid out on drying racks to dry under controlled temperature and humidity for three-and-a-half-to-four months resulting in a 30% to 35% weight loss. By mid January or early February the grapes are destemmed, lightly crushed and fermentation proceeds as a normal red wine.



However the resulting wine far from “normal.” Instead it's a big and powerful wine with an elegant, velvety palate and long, lingering finish. It shows excellent concentration, good acidity and complex flavors of ripe and dried fruit with aromas of fruit and spice.

Seccopasso is an excellent expression of an Amarone style wine grown in the Pacific Northwest that will develop and gain complexity for many years. As a wine with food it is at its best with richly braised meats or full flavored cheeses.

Seccopasso may be Cuneo's best expression of his motto, *"Italian Style- American Soil."*