

# WINE, SPIRITS & FINER FOODS

# SPEC'S

# Update!



Mon-Sat February 8  
to February 13, 2010

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Five Mondays, April 19-May 17, 2010,  
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for more details go to:  
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**SMITH STREET TREAT**  
February 13: Valentine's Tastings of  
All Things Sweet!

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

Specs Annual Cheese Fest, always a hugely popular event, is April 8-10 this year at Spec's Smith Street



Spec's Radio has an Application on iTunes for your iPhone! go to: [www.specsonline.com](http://www.specsonline.com)

**COMING SOON**

**CORPUS CHRISTI**  
5625 South Padre Island Drive

**TEMPLE**  
3550 S. General Bruce Dr.

SPEC'S UPDATE is a publication of Spec's Wines, Spirits & Finer Foods. All prices listed are subject to change without notice. **ALL PRICES LISTED ARE FOR SPEC'S SMITH STREET SUPERSTORE AND INCLUDE A FIVE PERCENT DISCOUNT FOR CASH.** (Many items are available at Spec's Neighborhood Stores at different prices.) All items are offered "first come, first served" and are subject to availability; some quantities may be limited. Spec's reserves the right to restrict quantities. Spec's is not responsible for errors in printing. Typographical errors will not be honored. "Spec's" and the rabbit logo are service marks of Spec's Family Partners and are registered with the State of Texas.

## WINE OF THE MONTH!



**El Bon Homme DO Valencia, 2008 \$14.24 cash**

50% Monastrell/50% Cabernet Sauvignon  
Big strawberry and red fruit on the nose followed by light mocha notes. The palate displays generous acidity and highlights flavors of strawberry candy with an underlying truffle nuance. Easy finish with medium tannins.

If you enjoyed this selection try some more of the new Spanish selections:

**Real de Aragon Garnacha 2007 (Calatayud)**  
88pts Wine Advocate - \$9.98 cash

**Milcampos Tempranillo 2006 (Ribera del Duero)**  
90pts Wine Advocate - \$12.72 cash

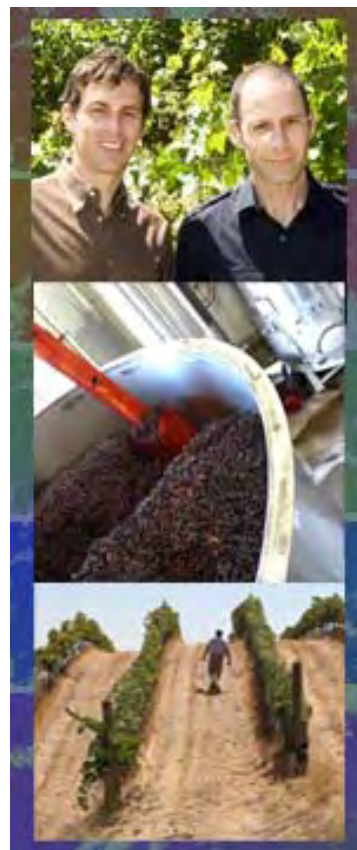
## Winery Profile: Lioco by Charles M. Bear Dalton

Lioco came about as the result of a series of conversations between wine importer Matt Licklider and sommelier Kevin O'Connor about whether California could produce wines of place. They weren't thinking of wines that were just from a specific place; rather, they were discussing wines that unequivocally expressed their place of origin from the first sip. They said that they knew of European wines that expressed place but they professed not to have known California wines "of place." While I think they were being just a bit disingenuous, I take their point. There aren't a lot of wines that really speak of their place in the earth, from California or much of anywhere in the new world. In fact, even in the old world, wines that really speak their terroir are the rarest sort.

After lots of research (you just know they hated opening all those bottles), Licklider and O'Connor (sounds a bit like a personal injury firm, doesn't it) reached a conclusion. In their words "California can achieve a wine of origin, provided certain protocols are adhered to--both in the vineyard and in the cellar. Everything begins in the vineyard--without a compelling vineyard site, there is little chance of creating a distinctive wine. Inspired by traditional European winegrowing practices, we seek out vineyard sites with tougher soil, older vines, and some stress-producing aspect (altitude, extreme temperature, poor soil, etc). Then we simply shepherd the grapes from bud to bottle in the least intrusive way possible."

It is hard to disagree with any of that. It is the same wisdom espoused by the best winemakers in Burgundy, the Rhone, the Mosel, Alsace, The Rheingau, even Champagne, all places famous for at least the potential for producing wines that speak of place.

*Continues on page 3*



**Inside This Issue:** Deli Specials, Collin's Column, Delicious Mischief, Wine and Cheese of the Week & more!

# Wine & Cheese of the Week

**La Violette De Ch. Manoir De Gravoux, Cotes De Castillon, 2005** \$18.98 bottle \$213.74 case 12x750ml

Tech: 13.5% Alc. A blend of 92% Merlot and 8% Cabernet Franc made with a parcel-based extraction through controlled pump-overs followed by delestage (rack and return). Malolactic is in French oak barrels with 12 months total barrel aging. Sensory: This is a chewy, rich, deep expression of the terroir of the chateau featuring red and black fruit with complexity from gravel, tobacco, spice, black pepper, and violets. Lovely, elegant feel. **Delicious. Really Fine. Spec's Score: 90+VHR (WP).** *Note: This is part of the "Terra Burdigala" collection produced by François Thienpont and Stephane Derencourt.*

**Saint André** \$7.99 lb. **on sale until 3/6/10**

Named for its producer, St. Andre Creamery located in France, this soft-ripened triple cream is an amazingly rich and creamy cheese that is made from fresh cow's milk and enriched with pure cream. St. Andre has a bloomy white edible rind and a soft creamy interior; similar to Camembert but more intense. Its flavor is rich and buttery due to the addition of sweet cream during the cheese making process.



*Prices include 5% Cash Discount, and are subject to change without notice. Not all items available at all locations. Shop online at [www.specsonline.com](http://www.specsonline.com)*

## Produce Feature of the WEEK (Houston Superstore)

Week of February 8, 2010

### Strawberries

\$2.99 lb



## February

The month of February we are featuring **Columbia Supremo (Regular, Dark or Swiss Water Decaf coffee)**. A full bodied, sweet tasting coffee with a rich flavor and aroma, considered by many to be the best of Colombian coffees. It is noted for its rich, full taste with roasted nut flavors and hints of fruit aftertastes as the cup cools down. As the acidity emerges there is a firm coffee fruit flavor lurking behind a good bittersweet roast taste.

**COFFEE OF THE MONTH**

**ONLY \$5.99 LB. WITH KEY**



## BEERS OF THE WEEK

Week of February 8, 2010

Shiner, ALL Varieties  
12-Pack 12oz Bottles **\$10.99**

Shiner 101, Czech-Style Pilsner  
6-Pack 12oz Bottles **\$5.99**

Southern Star Pale Ale

4PK 16oz Cans **\$4.99**

Southern Star Bombshell Blonde Ale

6PK 12oz Cans **\$6.49**

Southern Star Buried Hatchet Stout

4PK 12oz Cans **\$6.99**



## SANDWICH of the WEEK

Monday, February 8-Saturday February 13, 2010

### Cheese Burger Basket

This picture speaks for itself: A third of a pound of fresh ground beef is chargrilled and served up with melting American cheese, leaf lettuce, tomato & mayo or mustard on a bakery fresh bun. You can't beat this deal! And the basket comes with our perfectly seasoned fries.

**\$3.99 w/key**



Winery Profile: LIOCO *from page 1*

Here is what the "law firm" says about their Chardonnays:

*"Chardonnay is a site-transparent grape and very revealing of the particularities of where it is grown. We will bottle several single-vineyard Chardonnays and vinify them in inert, stainless-steel tanks. No oak. We pick these wines earlier to maintain natural acidity (and lower potential alcohol), employ wild yeasts, and bottle without fining or filtration. This is "natural winemaking" and the resulting wines are crystalline, alive, and pure."*

Here are my notes:

**LIOCO Chardonnay, Sonoma, 2008**

**12x750ml \$19.10 \$215.06**

Tech: 13.5% Alcohol. 100% Chardonnay sourced from three Sonoma Chardonnay vineyards in Alexander Valley, Dry Creek Valley, and Carneros fermented and aged in stainless steel tanks (no oak) using indigenous yeasts and full, naturally occurring malolactic fermentation and bottled without fining or filtration.

Sensory: Yellow-straw in color with well formed legs; dry, medium full-bodied with balanced acidity; dusty, elegant, fresh, forward, and ripe offering citrus stone fruit and pear with mineral earth accented with just a hint of mushroomy terroir. Very long finish. Complete, elegant, delicious, vibrant; alive-in-the-mouth. This is a vivid expression of Chardonnay. **Excellent. BS: 92VHR**

**LIOCO Chardonnay, Carneros, 2008**

**12 x750ml \$28.60 \$322.08**

Tech: 13.4% Alcohol. 100% Chardonnay from older vines growing in typical Carneros alluvial hard clay soils fermented and aged in stainless steel tanks (no oak) using indigenous yeasts and full, naturally occurring malolactic fermentation and bottled without fining or filtration. Sensory:

Straw-to-yellow straw in color with well formed legs; dry, medium full-bodied with balanced acidity and a very light phenolic impression (maybe from skin contact?). Exotic, funky, juicy, spicy, citrus, stone fruit, and tropical fruit with mushroomy, earthy terroir accented with subtle vanilla and toast notes (I know vanilla and toast are oak descriptors and this is a "no oak" wine but they are there). Very long, lively finish. Delicious, complete, elegant, and satisfying but alive-in-the-mouth. **Excellent. BS: 92+ VHR**

**LIOCO Chardonnay "Demuth Vineyard", Anderson Valley (Mendocino), 2007**

**12x750ml \$34.57 \$389.28**

Tech: 13.7% Alcohol. 100% Chardonnay from a high altitude (1600 ft) planting of Wente Clone Selection on 1982 AXR-1 rootstock (as the vines are dying of phylloxera, the vineyard is producing yields of up to 1 ton per acre) fermented and aged in stainless steel tanks (no oak) using indigenous yeasts and full, naturally occurring malolactic fermentation and bottled without fining or filtration. Sensory: Straw in color with well formed legs; dry, full-bodied with balanced acidity and a very light phenolic impression. Exotic, lively, spicy, with rich earthy-minerally terroir and accents of vanilla and subtle butter. Very long finish. Delicious, rich, precisely focused, satisfying; lovely-in-the-mouth. Shocking unoaked wine. **Excellent. BS: 93+ VHR**

**LIOCO Chardonnay "Durell Vineyard", Sonoma Valley, 2007**

**12x750ml \$41.33 \$465.41**

Tech: 14.1% Alcohol. 100% Chardonnay from a widely recognized great site fermented and aged in stainless steel tanks (no oak) using indigenous yeasts and full, naturally occurring malolactic fermentation and bottled without fining or filtration. Sensory: Yellow straw in color with well formed legs; dry, full-bodied with balanced acidity and a very light phenolics impression. Forward, focused and lively, juicy with citrus, tree fruit, and tropical fruit with subtle, earthy, mushroomy, mineral terroir and accents of subtle vanilla and a hint of toast. Very long finish. Rich, satisfying, and even a bit rustic but still alive-in-the-mouth with a lovely texture. **Excellent. BS: 93HR**

I also tasted the 2007 Lioco Michaud Vineyard Chardonnay but the sample bottle was corked. Despite that, it showed good potential.

On their proprietary red, the "firm" says:

*"Blended wines were perhaps an inevitable diversion from our Chardonnay/Pinot Noir program. These wines were inspired by the egalitarian "everyday wines" of rural Europe--especially those found along the Mediterranean coastal regions of Spain and France. We love the medium-weight, fruit-driven reds. Rather than expressing the character of a unique site, the goal of these wines is to provide balanced, food-friendly wines for under \$20."*

My note:

**LIOCO "Indica", Mendocino, 2007**

**12 x750ml \$19.10 \$215.06**

Tech: 14.2% Alcohol. A Languedoc-esque field blend of 78% Carignan, 10% Petite Sirah, 9% Mourvedre, and 3% Grenache featuring 70+ year old organically-farmed vines from the cool Redwood Valley all co-fermented with indigenous yeasts using open tops with punch-downs, aged in neutral oak barrels, and bottled without fining or filtration. Sensory: Purple-deep red in color with well formed legs; dry, medium full-bodied with fresh acidity and moderately chewy phenolics. Offers fresh, forward funky-juicy-lively-dusty red fruit with mineral-dusty terroir and accents of black pepper, cocoa powder, coffee grounds, leather, dusty wood, and spice. Long finish. Chunky, focused, lively; alive-in-the-mouth. **Really Fine. BS: 90HR (WP)**

And finally, the firm of Licklider & O'Connor notes:

*"While this varietal seemed to come of age in America only recently, its Burgundian cousins were early to inspire us. Pinot Noir, if appropriately handled, can produce a transcendental experience. This elusive grape is universally regarded as the most soil-susceptible, making vineyard selection paramount. We will bottle several gently-treated, single vineyard Pinot Noirs from "fringe sites", or places with extreme climate and tougher soil."*

And my note:

**LIOCO Pinot Noir "Michaud Vineyard", Chalone, 2007**

**12x750ml \$44.58 \$502.01**

Tech: 14.3% Alcohol. 100% Pinot Noir from a biodynamic, high altitude (1800 ft) vineyard at foot of Pinnacles National Monument with soils mixed from both decomposing granite and limestone. The extreme climate results in yields of less than a ton per acre. Fermented using indigenous yeasts with 15% whole clusters in open-top containers with punchdowns and aged 11 months in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th use French oak barrels before bottling without fining or filtration. Sensory: Red-medium purple in color with well formed legs; dry, medium-bodied with balanced acidity and moderately chewy phenolics. Offers developed but still fresh juicy-spicy red fruit with limestone minerality and accents of black pepper, violet, cola, and subtle cocoa powder. Very long finish. Elegant, focused, satisfying; alive-in-the-mouth. **Excellent. BS: 93.**

I tasted two other Pinots – Hirsch and Klindt (another law firm?) - but we are already out of both.

**By the way**, the "law firm" cracks

are all in fun. I tease them because I think they can take it and their wines are more than good enough to stand on their own. Although their prose is a bit stilted (and yes, I know mine is sometimes a bit stilted as well), they don't take themselves too seriously. The wines are quite serious and I think that is enough. ■

