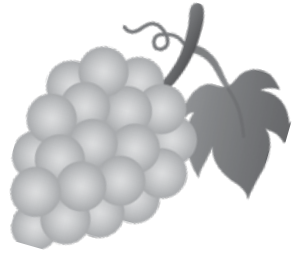


Grape Talk: Family, holidays and wine



BY DEBBIE TOLLEFSON

The *Applegater's* holiday issue focuses on art, and I come from a family of artists and wine-drinkers going back a number of generations. This time of year is all about family, and wine plays an important role in our family's traditions. Whether it is a mug of mulled wine, or a red wine sauce on a tender slab of meat, or just a great bottle of wine shared with friends and family, I believe wine elevates the experience. I remember the special wines that connect me with my special life events.

The Schmidt family of Schmidt Family Vineyards also is intertwined with art and wine. I sat down with Jocelyn Schmidt in the winery's beautiful tasting room at 330 Kubli Road to talk about the family and how they all got to the Applegate Valley.

Three generations of the Schmidt family are working with the family's two businesses. In addition to the vineyard and tasting room, they also own Grants Pass-based Northwestern Design, which designs

and manufactures custom cabinetry.

In the 1990s Cal and Judy Schmidt brought their growing family and their Northwestern Design business north from Santa Rosa. In 2000 the Schmidts opened Schmidt Family Vineyards. Today their daughter Rene runs the tasting room, and Cal, along with Rene's son Duncan, creates Schmidt's award-winning wines. Jocelyn Schmidt married into the Schmidt family after a career in musical theater and is now Schmidt's marketing director. Then there is two-year-old Easton Schmidt, the fourth generation currently interning for a future position in the family business.

I asked Jocelyn about the role family and wine play during the holidays and she laughed. "In our family, wine is very closely intertwined. We keep our family events simple so it is less about work and more about sharing the time together. This has been a bountiful year with an amazing harvest, and our wines

won multiple medals at this year's *San Francisco Chronicle* International Wine Competition. We are so thankful and want to give back to the community."

One way that Jocelyn, also a dance teacher, gives back is by helping a number of Grants Pass theater and dance groups with their productions and choreography. She showed

me a beautiful boxed set of wines named after beloved animal residents of Wildlife Images in Grants Pass. Schmidt has sponsored fund-raisers for this animal sanctuary and is selling this boxed set (see photo, below left) during the holiday season with a portion of the proceeds going to the wildlife sanctuary.

Many of the wineries in the valley have gone dark after the Uncorked Event in late November, but the Schmidt family has a special holiday cookie-pairing event every December. This year the event is scheduled for Sunday, December 14, from noon to 5 pm. The winery presents cookies from their unique family recipes and pairs them with Schmidt wines.

Here are other Applegate Valley wineries with December events:

- Troon Vineyards will be pouring their wines at Ray's in Merlin on December 3 starting at noon, at Ashland's Shop'n Kart on December 1 at 4 pm, and at Harry and David's store in Medford on December 2 starting at 11 am.

- Wild Wines will be at the Grants Pass Growers' Market every Saturday in December.

Most Applegate Valley tasting rooms have reduced hours or are closed during December and January, so call for hours.

Have a happy and safe holiday season. If you are going to be out enjoying our wonderful wines here in the Applegate Valley, please don't drink and drive.

Debbie Tollefson

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Top photo: Judy and Cal Schmidt, owners of Schmidt Family Vineyards.

Bottom photo: Jocelyn Schmidt and Easton Schmidt.



Correction to last issue's Grape Talk article: Serra Vineyards on Missouri Flat Road, Grants Pass, is owned solely by Scott and Krissa Fernandes.



Winter health: Tips for increasing immunity and supporting seasonal wellness

BY ASHLEY GRANDKOSKI

Winter is upon us, and with it comes the first round of colds and flus. While no one enjoys being sick, most people don't spend a lot of time thinking about the many ways their lifestyle choices affect their immune function and overall health. The good news is that there are many simple ways to support your health and decrease the severity and duration of illness. Below are a few tips that can make a lot of difference in the strength of your immune system, while also setting the tone for wellness on an ongoing basis.

Decrease your stress level

Stress is a major cause of many diseases and also works effectively to shut down your immune system. There are many ways to counteract the effects of stress in your life, from taking a day off to going to a yoga class. Consider the fact that, seasonally speaking, winter is the time to slow down, work shorter days, and even hibernate a little. At the very least, try to stop and take some deep breaths once in awhile. Any of these activities can help control stress and alleviate the physical effects it has on your body.

Consider a few dietary improvements

'Tis the season for overeating and indulgence, right? Well, here are a few things to keep in mind before going overboard.

First, sugar is a strong immunosuppressant (in addition to just generally not being good for you). Consider limiting your intake of sweets over the winter, especially if you think you may be getting sick or are feeling run down. Instead of sweets, why not something rich? Research has shown that some types of fats are actually beneficial to immune function. So think about adding healthy fats to your diet over the winter (which is also very appropriate, seasonally speaking). These could include unrefined coconut oil, ghee, or butter. For health purposes, however, make sure they are high quality and, preferably, organic.

Also important to immune function is strengthening defenses in your gut. A great way to do this is by including fermented foods or probiotics in your diet. Probiotics strengthen the health of intestinal flora, aiding both immune function and digestion. Probiotic capsules can be found at most health-food stores, while probiotic foods, such as fresh sauerkraut and lacto-

fermented veggies, are widely available in the Applegate Valley (check out Whistling Duck on Williams Highway, Grants Pass).

Include a few immuno-supportive supplements

While there is a plethora of supplements available on the market today, there are a few that are particularly valuable for supporting the immune system. First and foremost, elderberry syrup! Research has shown that elderberry has significant antiviral properties, preventing the severity of many flus and colds. It can be purchased pre-made, but is also very simple and much less expensive to make yourself (see recipe).

Vitamin D has also been shown to be helpful in prevention of the flu and other viruses. Wintertime doses help prevent the winter blues as well. This supplement is widely available but, to reap the benefits, it's important to get a high-quality product.

Let someone else care for you!

Many types of natural therapies have great immune benefits and help decrease

stress and increase energy at the same time. Research has shown that even one massage can increase the functioning of your immune system. Also, many people don't realize that acupuncture and Chinese herbs are very effective at increasing immunity as well as treating colds and flus. In addition, acupuncture and Chinese herbs contribute to relaxation and overall wellness.

I hope this information is helpful for you and your health this winter and in the future. Happy holidays and be well!

Ashley Grandkoski, L.Ac., LMT

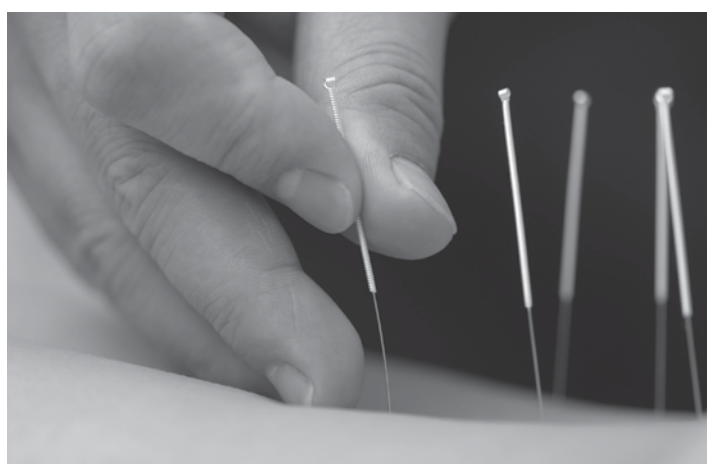
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Ashley is a local acupuncturist and massage therapist and proprietor of "little a acupuncture + herbs."

Simple Elderberry Syrup Recipe

1 cup dried elderberries (available for bulk ordering from Pacifica or Mountain Rose Herbs)
1/4 cup rose hips (optional for added Vitamin C)
4 cups water
1 cup raw honey

Simmer elderberries, rose hips and water in a saucepan until liquid has been reduced by half. Strain out fruit, pressing them to get out juices. Allow liquid to cool until warm, then add honey and stir well. Store in refrigerator in a sealed container. Take daily—Adults: 1 tablespoon; Kids: 1 teaspoon. Also delicious as a topping on pancakes, yogurt, etc. Increase dosage with symptoms of illness.



Acupuncture can help increase your immunity.