

Wine Of The Month: Combining An Unusual Grape and Aging Vessel

Lana Bortolot Contributor @

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Mira's Estate Ovum Aureum is made from Sauvignon Gris and fermented in a unique wooden egg. MIRA

Mira Estate Ovum Aureum, Sauvignon Gris, 2021, Napa Valley. Here's a wine that combines an unusual grape and an unusual fermentation method. Mira's Estate Ovum Aureum ("golden egg") is made from 100% Sauvignon Gris, a pink-berried mutation of Sauvignon Blanc thought to originate in Bordeaux, but also is cultivated in limited quantities elsewhere—

in Chile, New Zealand, Switzerland and in Mira vineyards. “Gris” moves away from the green, gooseberry/hedge-like aromatics of its SB cousin, leans toward richer tropical fruit notes and can produce plush wines.

Mira winemaker and co-founder Gustavo Gonzalez says, “I had tasted Sauvignon Gris from some French producers and absolutely loved it. I enjoyed what it offered as a blend component with Sauvignon Blanc, but also what it was like on its own. When given the opportunity to develop our vineyard, I didn’t hesitate to select [Gris] and have something relatively unique in Napa Valley, but delicious as well.”

For you geeks out there, the grapes were whole-cluster pressed, then fermented and aged in an wooden egg-shaped vessel called [the Ovum](#)—the only such one in the Americas crafted by the esteemed French tonnellerie, [Taransaud](#), whose founding dates to 1672. The wine is aged on its lees for 10 months with no stirring during fermentation and finishes at 14.5% abv.

Of the equally unique fermenter, Gonzalez says it was “love at first sight.”



Fine wines are fermented here. The French tonnellerie, Taransaud, makes this wooden egg. BRYAN GRAY PHOTOGRAPHY

“I had worked with concrete eggs in the past but I never grew fond of concrete as a tool for my style of winemaking. When I saw this not only beautiful, but also French oak egg, I thought I absolutely must have one. It not only transmits the craftsmanship and attention to detail that goes into my wines but also imparts unique organoleptic elements that I wouldn’t otherwise have.”

“I’m always looking to do something innovative and the decision to use both of these tools—the Ovum and the Gris variety—stems directly from this mindset.”

On the nose, this wine starts with pretty notes of yellow fruit, followed by rich umami, rich parmesan cheese rinds and brown spice. The ripe fruit notes—tropical, yellow plums, quince and baked pear—are carried onto the palate of this voluptuous wine and elevated by bright herbal notes. This is glossy-textured, very exotic and a real conversation

starter. Indeed, this wine started off a private guided tasting for collectors of 24 wines themed “Off the Beaten Path,” and quickly became the one people came back to for more. The tasting party enjoyed this with both soft and hard

cheeses and charcuterie, but it would also be a good match with roasted white meats.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/lanabortolot/2023/06/27/wine-of-the-month-combining-an-unusual-grape-and-aging-vessel/?sh=1ea1edac6a4e>