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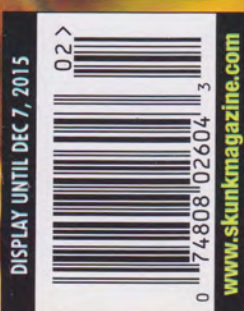
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THE FUTURE OF ARTISANAL HASHISH IN CALIFORNIA PART 2

WORDS FRENCHY CANNOLI

PICS KIM SALLAWAY

I want to delve deeper into the origins and historical evolution of wine and cannabis consumption to bring to light their similarities and disparities. My goal is to illustrate a major point -- the historic concept of "terroir" and the system of *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* (AOC - "Registered designation of origin" in English) that is used in the wine industry could be replicated, to the community's benefit, in an effort to protect California's heritage cannabis.

I want to show how the amazing marketing "tour de force" that was used to create and protect the wine industry, as we know it today, could be

used similarly in the development of the local cannabis industry.

To do this topic total justice I'd need to write a whole book, so for the sake of brevity I'll focus on wine history and compress over 10,000 years into a thousand-word introduction!

THE ORIGINS OF WINE AND CANNABIS

The history of wine and cannabis offer unexpected and insightful similarities starting with a potential common origin. The earliest archeological evidence of grape cultivation occurs in Eastern

■ (right) Bubble hash up close



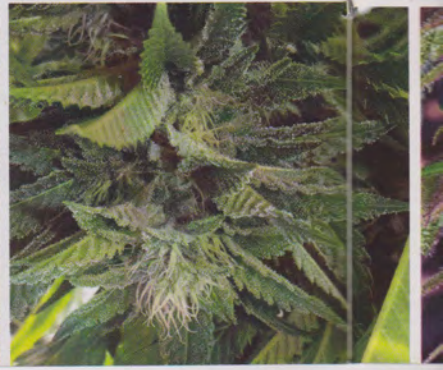
Turkey, dating back to 10,000 BC. Parallel to this, the birth of agriculture in the Fertile Crescent of Central Asia is also considered the most likely region of the origin of cannabis. Homo Erectus migrated from the African continent around 2.5 million years ago and would have encountered wild grapes and wild cannabis sometime during their wanderings throughout Central Asia. The discovery of those plants may have been analogous to a point.

FERMENTATION: A DIVINE GIFT

The plant family of the grapevine, the *Vitaceae*, can be traced back a conservative 50 million years or a more speculative 300 million. The fermentation process is spontaneous and solely dependent on the grape juice sugar coming into contact with the yeast living on the fruit. Breaking the skin of the fruit is all that is necessary for the magic to happen. As Paul Lukacs stated in his book *Inventing Wine*, "whenever grapevines first emerged in the botanical history, fermentation must have followed soon after."

Fermentation was born without any human intervention and as such was godly by definition because of the miraculous aspect of its natural metabolic process. You have to give our distant ancestors to this natural phenomenon: the history of wine would not have been written without human "intervention" upon the spontaneous discovery of grape juice fermentation.

Wine rapidly became a needed alternative source of nourishment, a medicine, an escape from a brutal daily life, as well as the safest drink available and the only way to sterilize drinking water. These ancient wines would have tasted extremely odd at best to a modern palate. The use of boiled tree resin,



spices, honey, numerous herbs, gypsum, mineral lime and other additives was mandatory to the preservation process of the wine at that time. The majority of wine was just one step better than vinegar for thousand of years but business was booming; everybody in the known civilized world from toddlers to elders on their deathbed drank wine by the gallons.

The Christian Church of early medieval times brought a major spiritual adjustment to earlier beliefs about wine's Godlike empowerment; only consecrated wine used during sacrament was considered divine. Ironically, the Christian Church also played an important secular role in the history of wine when its monks became some of the most skilled propagators of grapevines, expanding the knowledge of viticulture and simply taking care of the production in times of war or peace from medieval times to the Renaissance.

Varietals⁵ and geographic distinction were not yet considered important to the final product; preservation was the only concern.

Wine, with high levels of alcohol, lasted longer due to the preserving nature of alcohol; it also tended to taste better and sweeter over longer periods. These wines originated in warmer climate countries around the Mediterranean Sea where grapes have higher sugar levels and are also often dried to make the sweet and syrupy wines that were in high demand during late medieval times. These first imported wines of the late eleventh century are symbolic of the birth of modern wine trading; they were the first wines in over 10,000 years worth the effort and cost of transportation.

WINE IN A TIME OF WAR

Let's fast-forward to the Renaissance (14th to 17th century); Europe has been in a constant state of war but conflict has somehow been beneficial to commerce with wine becoming

more diversified, and viticulture more specialized.

Wines from numerous countries were traded all over Europe during these three-centuries, which brought a gradual recognition to the existing differences between wine and their various provenances. Specific wine types were for the first time connected to their specific points of origin.

WINE INDUSTRY REINVENTS QUALITY STANDARDS TO SURVIVE

In the late 16th and early 17th century, wine had to face competition for the first time in its long history with the emergence of new beverages on the market like beer, hard liquor, coffee, tea and chocolate. People could substitute the mandatory vinegary wine for alternative drinks that were also safe for consumption. The exotic aspects of those drinks made them really appealing after ten thousands of years of fermented grapes!

The very concept of wine quality had to be reinvented to face competition; the fermentation process being yet unknown, quality came primary from human craftsmanship but also from the burgeoning understanding of the science of soil, climate and varietals chemistry. Wines were acquiring an identity for the first time. That means specific attributes and characteristics of a wine produced in a precise region would appear in the vintage season after season, the notion of "terroir"⁶ was born.

The recognition that certain varietals expressed specific characteristics in different regions and vineyards within the regions proclaimed the birth of estates and domains classification.

(right, clockwise from top) Grapes, greenhouse-grown marijuana, a field of dreamy marijuana, a Sonoma County vineyard and dry-ice-tumbled hash



HOW INNOVATIVE TECH TRANSFORMED THE WINE INDUSTRY

Three innovations brought the wine industry into the modern age: Louis Pasteur's discovery of the process of fermentation in 1860, the birth of glass bottles and the use of cork. Wine could now be aged without spoiling; the benefits of transformation by aging would be discovered gradually throughout the 19th century.

A new generation of wines was born, some frivolous like the first wines made of bubbles, Champagne, but also the first true vintages of domains from Bordeaux. People were not drinking wine to simply quench their thirst anymore -- wine was literally reinvented, or more precisely its consumption and history were.

The birth of public eating places, called restaurants, and the rise of modern gastronomy brought a timely revival and a new intellectual appreciation for food and wine guided first by food, and second by wine critics. The publication of the first book dedicated to wines and their classifications in 1816 by Andre Julien, *The Topography of All Known Vineyards (Topographie de tous les vignobles connus)*





(clockwise from bottom left) A beautiful close up, a cultivated cannabis plant in hand is worth two in the bush, OG Kush, plants galore and, fresh hash

served to legitimize the development of the emerging classification system.

The virtues of a great wine had to be represented by its history of quality and referential taste identity, a difficult task when signature wines were in their infancy.

BIRTH OF A WINE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

A classification system and the use of a title to position a wine in the beverage markets of the future was created. The term "Chateau", castle in English, was born to impart a sense of heritage and history to the wine and the region it was grown in. Big estate mansions were built on the most famous vineyards to help establish this sense of history.

The Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce and the region Vintners Association established new traditions by creating a hierarchic classification listing fifty-eight red wines that focused on three points:

- 1 The long-standing reputation for quality in a producing region
- 2 The constancy of the defining characteristics of the wine from the specific domains in the region
- 3 The continuity of a wine's identity over time and its public recognition





This system has seen only two official changes in over 160 years; it has been replicated in every wine producing country and has created a multi-billion dollar industry worldwide.

This marketing approach, centered on quality, heritage and tradition, helped stabilize the viticulture industry. The publication of the list of the fifty-eight wine classifications gave it an instant worldwide recognition and legitimacy, so the cultural approach to wine changed from necessary consumption to pure appreciation under the guidance of the elite and the wine industry.

Modern wine was born.

APPELLATION ZONES PROTECT SMALL AND BIG VINEYARDS

Two world wars later, facing a large amount of fake wine flooding the market, the French government issued the first official definition of wine as an alcoholic fermentation of fresh grapes or the juice of fresh grapes to fight fraud and give wine a modern identity. The official designation of specific regions (terroir) producing particular wines was born in the early 1900s. This designation was created to regain and protect the legitimacy of the existing but forgotten wine classification that had been so successful.

The registered designation of origin (AOC) became not only a means to control, protect and enhance quality in the wine industry,

the AOC also sheltered viticulture from market fluctuations by lowering production to focus on quality at all levels of the production.

The first ever-made fine vintages of the early 1800s from Bordeaux became the standards of quality in this new classification system. The uniqueness of these wines was directly related to the varietals, the region, and the growing and winemaking methodology -- a guide to greatness.

The AOC classification system protects small vineyards and enterprises with standards that simply cannot be met by big production. Such protection is the end result of a long quest for quality and recent legitimacy in the wine industry.

This wine classification system has been so successful in promoting the production of quality and protecting small enterprises that it has been adopted worldwide and has been customized to other agricultural products.

CANNABIS APPELLATION ZONES TO PROTECT HERITAGE PRODUCTION

The AOC is a perfect fit for the cannabis industry in California; we meet all the prerequisites.

- The uniqueness of the land and the climate of California will never be debated.
- The quality of the genetics and the expertise of our farm-

ers, know the world over, are impossible to contest.

- Finally the protection of an existing economy based on the production of small farmers is vital to the local state economy, even if federally illegal at the moment.

The obvious success of this system in the wine industry and the far-reaching economic repercussions it had on the world economy is a logical benchmark for the nascent legal cannabis industry.

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