

PEAY VINEYARDS

SPRING 2012

ISSUE 19



2010 VINTAGE: SUPERB, PURE & EXPRESSIVE WINES. ALL 3 CASES MADE!

I am a farmer. Other than during harvest when I spend 40 days straight in my Carhartt workpants, this would not be abundantly obvious by just looking at me. But my accountant knows it. So does my stomach doctor. They witness the ups and downs that befall someone whose livelihood is tied to agriculture. I mentioned in an earlier newsletter that I had attained a Zen state about the weather and its effect on my business. Well, let's just say the 2010 vintage created ripples in the calm of my mind. A ripple shaped somewhat like a tsunami.

The growing season started out wet and cool and stayed that way through flowering. As a result we set only about 60% of our normal crop load - which is on average already frightfully low. Fall temperatures were also cool but interrupted by a heat wave in the middle of September that fortunately did not adversely affect us too greatly and provided much needed ripening. We picked the little fruit we had a few weeks later than normal and our yields came in around 1 ton per acre depending on the variety. As a result our total production dropped in half. Ouch.

So, what does this mean for you (or, more to the point, why should you care?) Well, first there is not much wine to go around this year. We only made 380 cases of 2010 *Pomarium* Pinot noir, for example. This scarcity is compounded by the fact that we made superb wines that I have a feeling will be much lauded. They are pure and focused with energy, depth and freshness. It also means, however, that some favorite wines were not made in 2010. No 2010 Rousanne/Marsanne, I am afraid; it was not even close to getting ripe. Also, we will not make a 2010 *Sonoma Coast* Chardonnay but only a 2010 *Estate* Chardonnay that will be released in the fall. You will have to make do with the 2009 *Estate* Chardonnay you purchased last fall. If stocks are low, we have roughly 10 cases in our inventory. For what it is worth, Vanessa feels the 2009 is the best Chardonnay we have produced and has the depth and character to age beautifully. And, in my experience, Vanessa is seldom wrong.

But, we will weather this vintage. No new tractors (well, actually, our 14 year-old Ford tractor prematurely kicked the bucket so we purchased a used tractor), less travel around the country to meet customers, and the postponement of installing a new fountain at the winery (ha! Just kidding.) This is all okay. We decided to farm on the edge with an awareness of the risks. But, being here enables us to make wines from ripe fruit that nevertheless result in a harmonious balance of flavor, alcohol and acidity. Wines that speak of a place. And if it were easy, every one would do it. My father has a saying that should become my new meditation when the ripples begin to form, "adversity is the stone we sharpen our swords against to make us stronger." En garde!

- Andy Peay

THE 2010 VINTAGE — SPRING RELEASE

2010 *POMARIUM ESTATE* PINOT NOIR

380 CASES

The *Pomarium* ("apple orchard" in Latin) is a blend of 5 clonal selections of Pinot noir grown throughout the vineyard. Stylistically, this cuvée lies somewhere between the high-toned, feminine aromas of the *Scallop Shelf* and the deep fruited masculinity of the *Ama* Pinot noirs. The purity of the vintage shines in the 2010 *Pomarium* making it even more graceful than in previous years. It possesses the aromatic lift of the 05 and 06 *Pomarium* but has the mid-palate depth of the 09. In the 2010, beautiful aromas of orange rind and red fruits are framed by tea, deep forest, and mushroom notes. The flavors in the mouth are similar though a brass and deep, tart, cherry note combine with the earthy, dried pine needle aromas. This is an incredibly well-balanced and appealing wine with low alcohol and focused fruit. The finish is clean and long. Really a superb wine. Age for 3-9+ years.



THE 2010 VINTAGE — SPRING RELEASE

2009 *LES TITANS ESTATE* SYRAH

350 CASES

The *Les Titans* ("the Giants," named after the Old Growth redwoods that stand guard over the Syrah blocks) is a blend of 4 clonal selections farmed in three locations throughout the vineyard. The nose of the 2009 *Les Titans* has the characteristic white pepper, beef blood, iodine and blue fruit aromas often found in this cuvée. The attack on the palate is focused and intense, not broad and rich, with iron/mineral flavors underpinning the fruit and floral notes. The medium tannins frame the fruit and suggest a propitious and harmonious future. The 2009 *Les Titans* is very much in the style of the 2009 *La Bruma* Syrah with a slightly meatier, more masculine and less floral profile. We suggest you age for 5-15 years depending on your stylistic preference (see page 5 for aging discussion.)

2010 *SONOMA COAST* PINOT NOIR

875 CASES

Last spring we released our first Sonoma Coast cuvée of Pinot noir. It was aromatic, bright and very appealing. At \$40 per bottle it was also a steal. The 2010 blend is a step up from the 2009 as it has more depth and ballast while remaining feminine and seductive. The color emits a see-through red hue. The nose is open with engaging aromas of citrus, fruity mushrooms and duck sauce. The mouth is clean and focused with medium weight. The typical Peay Vineyards terroir expression of dried pine needles is supported by cherry, new leather, and cinnamon stick accents. The wine is young and exuberant and will age wonderfully. If you open now, enjoy without a decant. Otherwise, age the 2010 Sonoma Coast for 3-7 years to allow the various components of the wine to integrate and take on further nuance.

2010 *ESTATE* VIOGNIER

80 CASES

Our hilltop is a cold site for Viognier. As a result, our Viognier does not have the lush, tropical fruit aromas common to this variety. Instead, our Viognier is crisp, focused, clean and well-matched with food. This character is what makes it such an exciting and unique wine (and why we decided to corner the Viognier market and plant another acre 2 years ago.) Providence shone in 2010, as we made my favorite Peay Viognier. The nose is exotic with floral white jasmine and apricot notes that speak of the variety. Often this type of nose on a Viognier is followed by an unctuous, flabby palate that disappoints. Not here. The palate is fresh with loads of lemon and iron and a hint of saltiness. The character of the wine in the mouth reminds me of a Chablis as the citrus and lime notes are kept lively by crisp acidity. Enjoy now or hold for 3 years. We opened a 2004 at the Fall Open House and it was a hit. Who knew Viognier could age?

WHO ARE WE AND WHAT ARE WE UP TO

- Peay Vineyards is a first generation family winery. Husband and wife, Nick Peay & Vanessa Wong, grow and make the wine and brother Andy Peay sells the wine and runs the business.
- With minor exceptions, all wines are made from grapes grown on our 51-acre hilltop vineyard located above a river in the far northwestern corner of the West Sonoma Coast, 4 miles from the Pacific Ocean at Sea Ranch.
- We grow 34 acres of Pinot noir (4 Pinots: *Scallop Shelf*, *Pomarium*, *Ama*, *Sonoma Coast*), 8 acres of Syrah (2 Syrah: *Les Titans*, *La Bruma*), 7 acres of Chardonnay (2 Chardonnay: *Estate*, *Sonoma Coast*), 1.8 acres of Viognier (*Estate*), 0.4 acres of Roussanne and 0.2 acres of Marsanne (*Estate* blend).
- Winemaker Vanessa Wong left her position as winemaker at Peter Michael Winery in 2001 to launch Peay Vineyards. Formerly she worked at Château Lafite-Rothschild, Domaine Jean Gros and Hirsch Winery.
- Nick, a UC Davis-trained and veteran Santa Cruz mountains winemaker, is the vineyard manager and works side-by-side with our full-time crew of 8 workers.
- We farm organically and maintain our certifications for fish-friendly farming and integrated pest management. The health of our vineyard dictates these approaches to farming and making wine. We also run on bio-diesel at the vineyard and solar power at both the vineyard and winery.
- The vineyard and winery are not a family heritage. We bought an old apple orchard and sheep ranch in 1996, planted the first 30 acres in 1998, and have dedicated our lives to learning how to make superior wines from it.
- We sell Pinot noir grapes to Williams Selyem and Failla Wineries for vineyard designate wines.



THESE BOOTS ARE MADE FOR WALKING— VANESSA WONG

Yes, I am the winemaker but the other hat that I wear is my self-proclaimed job title of “Assistant Grapegrower.” That is to say, I help Nick in his job of farming our estate grapevines to make wine. His job of “Chief Grapegrower” is often usurped by his job of “Head Equipment Maintenance Person” or should I say “Only Equipment Maintenance Person?” So, during the growing season I regularly check the vineyard to monitor and assess vine growth, health and phenological stages. There is no corner office that goes with the job, actually there is no office unless you count trying to find a bit of space among the irrigation fittings and pruning shears on Nick’s cluttered desk. And the use of the company vehicle is sometimes granted provided you can pull-start the engine on the old ATV. Hence, the job requires a lot of walking. A lot of walking.

During the winter before we start pruning, we look at the length of the canes to assess the overall vine vigor for the various sections of our vineyard. This is easier when the leaves have all dropped off of the vines and we can see their bare canes. From this we can determine how to prune the vines: how long of a fruiting cane to lay down for the next vintage’s growth or how many buds to leave. We check on the pruners’ work to ensure they haven’t left too many buds and that the buds they have chosen are well-positioned to continue the ideal architecture of the vine for future good bud fertility and position. A poor choice in bud position or cane length might result in bad vine shape that could take years to correct. We walk along after our crew and then go over with them the fine tuning of the pruning to match the vigor of each plant, picking out their just pruned vines to use as tutorial examples.

As the winter progresses to spring, I walk the rows of hoar-frosty cover crop getting my rubber boots slick with wet or sticky with mud as I check for signs of budbreak. About this time, Nick embarks on his months-long undertaking of under-vine tilling and he needs to know where my boots get stuck on my walks. Boots are easier to unstuck than tractors. I look for dormant buds swelling and then those telltale signs of imminent buds breaking out: puffy popcorn transforming into little cottony knobs. If I see these, I alert Nick and we discuss which blocks we need to finish pruning, assess which blocks need to be preferentially mowed and weeded as the lengthening cover crop and weeds can pose a frost risk, and figure out which areas have dry enough soil to be tilled under-vine.

The spring season continues and I keep walking and keep checking: assessing shoot growth; looking for thrips; observing the leaf patterns symptomatic of various nutrient deficiencies or the subtle bronzing at the leaf sinus indicating an incursion of mites; at which I whip out my hand lens and peer through the magnifying loop to search for the offending pests. Should I call General Nick for a counter-attack of organic oil spray? I look out for the health of the young plants and mark vines that have died with fluttery flagging tape: blue for re-graft, yellow for replant.

Walk, walk, walk, up and down steep slopes and across side slopes. Flowering begins in late spring and early summer and I help Nick with petiole collection. We snap off fifty leaf stems per sample for the lab to analyze the vine nutrient status. Sometimes I follow a pattern: I head northwest counter clockwise across block 10a, then 9, through and back around block 8, return between the Pinot noir and Syrah of 10b, 11, 12 and 13, and finish by wending my way through the sections of the various clones of Chardonnay in Block 4. Or I try a new path to randomize my data collection a little. Walk, “achoo,” walk. I subject myself to paroxysms of sneezing as I meander through the heady scent of the grape flowers and their invisible clouds of allergenic pollen. It is an occupational hazard. I shun the steroid nasal spray the doctor prescribes me as it interferes with my sense of smell. He advises me to try saline nasal rinses instead and, in general questioning of my health, asks me if I exercise. “Hmmm...I do yoga... er...occasionally the elliptical thing-y at the gym.” The doctor arches an eyebrow, reproachfully. “Oh and I walk. A lot...for hours...on hills!” If he only knew.

Everything I observe I report back to Nick: locations of broken drip hose and ruptured irrigation pipes; outbreaks of dreaded blackberry or bindweed among the vines; or the discovery of mole tunnels whose underground network collapses underneath my weight causing me to twist my ankle. With what I observe, we prioritize the work that needs to be done: “We need to shoot thin in block 7.” “Block 5 need shoot tucking into the top wires.” “Vertebrate feeding in block 8, it might be a bear!!!!” Thus, we move our crew accordingly to the viticultural tasks that need to be done. Can I add “Stat!” to the “do something about the bear in block 8?”

Sometimes on sunny, summery days I get lulled by the warmth of the mid-day sun shining down on my faded floppy hat

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THESE BOOTS ARE MADE FOR WALKING...CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

and the sound of the dragonflies humming in my ears. I pause to take rest from all this walking and crouch in the shade of a vine row's shadow. Every so often I am attracted to a bird call and I prick up my ears. I follow the song to find the singer. When I spot the bird I try to creep ever so closer to it. Close enough to observe it and perhaps snap its picture with a little camera I carry with me to record my vineyard observations. I track the bird until I realize I have veered from my task of taking viticulture notes. I shake myself from my reverie à la David Attenborough and resume my vineyard walk.

Walk, walk, walk. Berry set, count clusters, estimate crop load. Mid-summer I count clusters on ten vines for every acre and a half. That's about 340 vines or upward of about 7,500 clusters. Thus, I enlist Nick to help me. I cannot wait until my oldest son learns to count (reliably) for I will enlist him to do this counting, too! I crunch numbers on my computer spreadsheet to estimate out how much fruit we will get at harvest time based on this mid-summer sample. Summer marches on and I observe the grape berries changing color. Time to tell Nick to get the nets up to keep those birds I keep gazing at from eating our grapes. Bird watching is not my only distraction. Sometimes I find myself inadvertently studying all manner of bugs, not just the ones that are grapevine pests. Really, all of nature's bounty catches my eye; lizards, snakes and frogs, even flowers. Then I snap back into it and say to myself, "I am supposed to be working!" and keep walking on.

Summer turns to fall and my vineyard walks are faster paced with my stride brisk and more purposeful. I have to keep moving to collect grape cluster samples pausing only briefly to clip the clusters and to taste the grapes. I taste a whole lot of grapes while jog walking through the vineyard. Tasting the grapes is how I determine when the grapes are ready to pick, perhaps the most important winemaking decision I make. The whole vineyard and winery crew is waiting for me to let them know which blocks we will be picking the next day. No time for vineyard distractions. Every so often, however, I do stop walking after I climb a hill to pause and catch my breath. I stand on a hill and look out over the vineyard, facing west to feel the breeze on my face. I can hear the wind rustling in the grasses and the trees and marvel to myself, "How beautiful this place is." I feel fortunate for having such an amazing view to inspire me in work and in life. I stand mesmerized taking in the view of the vineyard and the air and the quiet for a long while. Then I remember I have more samples to gather and I scurry back to my truck with my bags of grape clusters in hand. I have to keep on walking!



Checking Off the Bird List and Other Vineyard Distractions

Birders are a quirky lot, never without a pair of binoculars and often zealous with that bird list. Nick and I compiled for your birding pleasure our own bird list containing the birds we have spotted here at Peay Vineyards:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White-tailed Kite <i>Elanus leucurus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Flicker <i>Colaptes auratus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Cedar Waxwing <i>Bombycilla garrulus</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Red-tailed Hawk <i>Buteo jamaicensis</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Acorn Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> European Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rough-legged Hawk <i>Buteo lagopus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Downy Woodpecker <i>Picoides pubescens</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Western Tanager <i>Piranga ludoviciana</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Kestrel <i>Falco sparverius</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Hairy Woodpecker <i>Picoides villosus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Dark-eyed Junco <i>Junco hyemalis</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Pileated Woodpecker <i>Dryocopus pileatus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Red-winged Blackbird <i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wild Turkey <i>Meleagris gallopavo</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Red-breasted Sapsucker <i>Sphyrapicus ruber</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Horned Grebe <i>Podiceps auritus</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California Quail <i>Callipepla californica</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Stellar's Jay <i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Duck <i>Aix sponsa</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Coot <i>Fulica americana</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Common Raven <i>Corvus corax</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Common Goldeneye <i>Bucephala clangula</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Killdeer <i>Charadrius vociferus</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rusitca</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Bufflehead <i>Bucephala albeola</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Band-tailed Pigeon <i>Columba fasciata</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Western Bluebird <i>Sialia mexicana</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Merganser <i>Mergus merganser</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Dove <i>Zenaidura macroura</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Varied Thrush <i>Ixoreus naevius</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruddy Duck <i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> American Robin <i>Turdus migratorius</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Vulture <i>Cathartes aura</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anna's Hummingbird <i>Calypte anna</i> | | |

AGING PEAY WINES?



2012 DINNERS, EVENTS & TASTINGS

There may be a few more tastings and dinners in the fall. Please contact the restaurants or organizations to buy tickets and/or to make reservations.

Yes. Do it. You will be rewarded.

We are often asked how Peay wines age. To include you in the discovery, we often pour older wines next to current release wines when hosting a wine dinner. Without fail, people who love the current wines are amazed by the complexity of the older wines. The vines were not very old when those wines were made but they have held up well due to their balance; the tannins and acidity have allowed them to become more nuanced, complex and compelling with time. Just like all of us!

Here are recommendations on when we think these wines will hit their peak moment. One caveat, these recommendations show a bias toward aged aromas. We like the subtle, dried flower, nutty, waxy, less fruity and integrated aromas that often arise after time in the bottle. If you like power and fruit, drink them young!

Viognier: 2001-2007 Drink 2008: Drink/Hold 2009: Drink/Hold	Pinot noir (Scallop): 2005: Drink/Hold 3 years 2006-2007: Hold 4+ years 2008: Hold 3 years 2009: Hold 5-10 years
Roussanne/Marsanne: 2001-03: Drink 2004-07: Drink/Hold 2008-09: Hold 5 years	Pinot noir (Ama): 2009: Hold 3-7 years
Chardonnay (Estate): 2003-05: Drink 2006-07: Hold 2-3 years 2008-09: Hold 5-7 years	Pinot noir (SC): 2009: Drink/Hold 3 years
Chardonnay (Other): 2006 Hirsch: Drink/Hold 2 2009 SC: Drink/Hold 5	Syrah (Estate): 2001-02: Drink 2003: Drink/Hold 3 years
Pinot noir (Estate): 2002-03: Drink. Yum. 2004: Drink/Hold 2 years	Syrah (La Bruma): 2004: Hold 2-3 years 2005: Drink/Hold up to 5 2006: Hold 5-10 years 2007: Hold 3 years 2008: Hold 5-9 years
Pinot noir (Pomarium): 2005: Drink/Hold 3 years 2006-2007: Hold 4 years 2008: Hold 5 years 2009: Hold 5-10 years	Syrah (Les Titans): 2009: Hold 5-7 years 2004: Hold 3 years 2005: Drink/Hold up to 5 2006: Hold 5-10 years 2007: Hold 3-5 years 2008: Hold 5-9 years

Peay, Hirsch, Failla Tasting—Napa Premier at Failla Winery	St. Helena, CA	February 22nd	RSVP: Kathy@ fail-lawines.com
Central/Michel Richard Dinner	Washington D.C.	March 13th	202-626-0015
In Pursuit of Balance—SF	San Francisco, CA	March 19th	inpursuitofbalance.com
Aria Restaurant Dinner	Atlanta, GA	March 26th	404-233-7673
Atlanta High Auction Tasting	Atlanta, GA	March 31st	atlanta-wineauction.org
Peay Vineyards Open House	Cloverdale, CA	April 7th	RSVP: andy@ peayvineyards.com
Statebird Provisions Dinner	San Francisco, CA	April 10th	415-795-1272
In Pursuit of Balance—NYC	Manhattan, NY	April 18th	inpursuitofbalance.com
NYC Dinner—TBD	Manhattan, NY	April 19th	Contact Andy
SF Guardsman Auction	San Francisco, CA	April 21st	guardsmen. org/sfauction
Soif Tasting	Santa Cruz, CA	April 28th	831.423.2020
Houston Dinner—TBD	Houston, TX	May 2-3rd	Contact Andy
Fire Food & Drink Dinner	Cleveland, OH	May 14th	216-921-3473
Dry Creek Kitchen Dinner	Healdsburg, CA	May 24th	707-431-0330
Sun Valley Wine Auction	Sun Valley, ID	July 19-21st	sunvalleycenter.org
IPNC: Seminar & Tastings	McMinnville, OR	July 26-28th	ipnc.org
West of West Peay Dinner	Occidental, CA	August 3rd	westsonomacoast.com
West of West Wine Festival	Occidental, CA	August 3-5	westsonomacoast.com

W.O.W: WEST OF WEST WINE FESTIVAL

Last August the inaugural West of West Wine Festival was held in Occidental, CA. It was a huge success. Not only was it a great time for the attendees and wineries but it also sold out a month in advance and went off without a hitch. **We would love to have you come out for the WOW festival on August 3-5th this year.** We have an amazing line-up of winemakers, media and wine personalities for the Saturday seminars. The Grand Tastings (Saturday and Sunday) will feature over 40 winery members; pretty much everyone you would want to taste from the West Sonoma Coast plus a few wineries so small you have never even heard of them. And, this year, we plan to have pigs on spits roasting away all day so we can sit down to a west county Whole Hog Feast on Saturday night. If you'd like to learn more, please head to our web site www.westsonomacoast.com. We look forward to seeing you there.



NICK'S VANILLA DUCK RECIPE

We like to cook. When we host a guest for dinner, there is sometimes an unspoken competition among Vanessa, Nick and myself for who will cook what dish (and which appeared to please the guests the most, of course). Vanessa cooks refined, multi-step dishes adapted from cookbooks intended for testing coffee table strength not for instruction. I tend to use the grill or the long braise method for meat dishes and like my vegetables crunchy. Nick is the dessert specialist who cooks Asian and has a slew of dishes in his arsenal that he whips up at a moment's notice. Duck is Nick's forte. He not only makes his own duck confit (see recipe online from a previous newsletter), but he also knows how to prepare it in all its glorious, pinot-friendly, manifestations. This is a very quick and simple dish that always satisfies.

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup grated ginger
- 1 clove
- 1 vanilla bean, sliced in half lengthwise
- 1/2 cup red wine
- 2 shallots, peeled and minced
- 2 magrets of duck, about 12 ounces each. Magret is the breast of a Moulard which is famed for its fat liver. Moulard are sterile and their parentage are Muscovy (above) and Pekin ducks.

Preparation

1. To make the marinade, combine the ginger, clove, vanilla bean and wine in a saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat. Add the minced shallots. Set aside until cool. Place the duck breasts in a large bowl. Add the cool marinade. Cover. Marinate in the refrigerator for 2 hours, turning once. Remove duck, strain marinade and save.
2. Heat 1 TBS high oleic canola oil or duck fat in a cast-iron skillet. Add the duck, fat side down, and cook over medium-high heat until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Turn the duck over and cook about 2 more minutes. Remove the duck and set aside. Pour off fat from the pan (into a heat tolerant vessel). Pour the marinade into the pan. Simmer over high heat, scraping the brown bits off the bottom, until reduced by 1/2.
3. Slice 1/4" slices across each breast, fan out over polenta and top with the pan sauce. We recommend you try Anson Mills' Artisan fine polenta from South Carolina. You can find Anson Mills products at gourmet stores or at www.AnsonMills.com.

MUSCOVY DUCK

Cairina moschata

- Has a body like a duck
- Behaves like a goose
- Roosts like a chicken
- Has a breast like a turkey



A SIDE DISH: HAVEN'S BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Haven is Daniel Patterson's new restaurant in Oakland. I love simple Brussels sprouts baked with oil and salt. The final step makes them insanely good.

Ingredients:

- 20 Brussels sprouts
- 1 Tbs fish sauce
- 3-4 mint leaves, diced
- 1 Tsp honey
- 1 Tbs Balsamic vinegar
- Chili flakes or minced red chilies (optional)

1. Set oven at 450 degrees. Trim off bottom of sprouts and halve. Oil sprouts, put them cut-side down on a sheet pan and sprinkle generously with rock salt. Bake for 10-15 minutes until cut side is browned.
2. Meanwhile, in a serving bowl, combine fish sauce, mint, balsamic vinegar, honey, and chilies.
3. Remove sprouts from oven, drop them in 3 inches of high temp oil like canola oil and fry for 2-5 seconds until edges turn brown and crispy.
4. Remove sprouts and place in serving bowl. Mix with the sauce. Season. Serve.

