

GROWERTALKS

Corr on Cannabis

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Wacky Words for Wine & Weed

Dr. Brian Corr

As I write this, the Illinois (U.S.) state legislature has sent legislation to the governor for signature legalizing recreational marijuana in the state of Illinois. Included in this legislation are provisions to expunge some past convictions for minor marijuana offenses. The governor is expected to sign this into law.

Also this week it was announced millions of square feet of greenhouses formerly used for production of ornamental plants will now be used for production of hemp (by U.S. definition, cannabis with less than 0.3% THC).

But enough of that serious stuff—with so many serious and weighty things in the news, now seems as good a time as any to take a look at the non-serious, not weighty and slightly wacky side of cannabis.

I've always been fascinated by the names and descriptions of cannabis "strains" (cultivars). Naming of cannabis strains has had no oversight and some names ended up causing trouble because of infringement on intellectual property (Gorilla Glue and Girl Scout Cookies are two strain names that come to mind). There are also some strain names that aren't at all family-friendly and cannot be printed in this publication.

Of course, cannabis isn't alone in having strange names for products—some wines have strange names (e.g., Ménage à Trois), and certainly, the ornamental horticulture industry isn't immune from attaching an unusual cultivar name to a new plant (Bad Hair Day is a fun, descriptive name for a panicum with seed heads blowing in the wind).

To provide a little education (very little), and perhaps a little bit of fun (I hope you think so), I offer some info on cannabis names and descriptions.

First, names. Study the list below. One name on each line is a cannabis strain and the other the name of a wine. Can you guess which is which?

<i>Buddha's Sister</i>	or	<i>Middle Sister</i>
<i>Cat's Pee on a Gooseberry Bush</i>	or	<i>Cat Piss</i>
<i>Toasted Head</i>	or	<i>Headband</i>
<i>Frog Fart</i>	or	<i>Frog's Piss</i>
<i>Naked Grape</i>	or	<i>Grape Ape</i>
<i>Moondance</i>	or	<i>Dark Side of the Moon</i>
<i>Plungerhead</i>	or	<i>Deadhead</i>
<i>Tesla Tower</i>	or	<i>Black Tower</i>
<i>Pinot Noir</i>	or	<i>Pinot Green</i>

Much like strain names, the descriptions of the strains can be interesting, to say the least. The writers describing cannabis strains can wax poetic, in the same way that wine experts become rhapsodic as they describe wines.

Which of these descriptions (slightly edited to remove obvious clues) are of cannabis strains and which are descriptions of wines? (Answers below.)

A ... complex flavor profile and aromatic palate ... scents of berries and fruity sweetness ... tastes of berry, fruit, sweetness, lemon and vanilla will be detected

B ... moss, wet stone, gentian, buddleia, coriander, pepper, piquant yet rich nut oils and a saline clam broth savor that milks the salivary glands

C ... musky earthy aroma, chocolatey, dark, cedar and sandalwood

D ... sweet, fruity undertones; It can be a bit harsh at times, but when done right, it is deliciously piney and fruity

E ... incredibly sexy nose of smoke, black fruits, cappuccino and toasty wood

F Loud, ripe berry aroma that expands into a sweet citrus medley of mandarin and tangerine

G Vibrant aromatics of wild berry and spice give way to cedar and mocha flavors, complimenting the lingering sweet notes of vanilla bean and caramel

H ... the flavour, while not as sweet as the aroma, is sweet and almost earthy. Due to its complex genetics, a variety of tastes and smells ... but the sweet, creamy caramel aroma overpowers all

I ... extremely sweet, and somewhat resembles a purple

Over the years, I've contributed to naming a few plants and writing catalog descriptions of them, but I never came close to the creativity (or wackiness?) found in cannabis and wine. Maybe the committee naming the next petunia should get some advice from the cannabis or wine industries? **GT**

Dr. Brian Corr is a consultant with more than four decades of experience in the greenhouse industry. He has advised legal cannabis producers for the last three years. You can reach him at Brian.Corr@SycamoreHortConsulting.com.

ANSWERS: *Buddha's Sister, Cat Piss, Headband, Frog Fart, Grape Ape, Moondance, Deadhead, Tesla Tower and Pinot Green are all cannabis strain names. The rest are wines.*

ANSWERS: *A) Haze Berry cannabis; B) Nikolaihof Riesling wine (though I wonder what whoever wrote that was smoking!); C) Mighty Glue cannabis; D) Diesel Wreck cannabis; E) Pride Mountain Merlot wine; F) Gummo*

cannabis; G) Ferrari-Carano Cabernet Sauvignon; H) Honey Cream cannabis; I) Green Ribbon cannabis
("resembles a purple"?!)