

PRWS

July 2020 Wine Club



Wines to Beat the Heat

Yikes, it's hot! I went to a beach (properly socially distanced) last week, and there was literally nobody ON the beach. Everyone was standing in waist deep water, in little groups, talking. It was that hot. Leaving in the afternoon, I thought my flip-flops might actually melt on the hot sand. To counteract all that, we've sourced 2 whites so refreshing they could function as liquid AC, 2 grill-worthy reds (because you definitely don't want to cook inside), and a zesty-crisp little Yakima Valley Rosé, too. Enjoy, and STAY COOL!

White #1) 2017 Ferraton Pere et Fils CDR Blanc 'Samorens



The Ferraton family started farming their piece of the Northern Rhone in 1946. Pioneers of the area, they were among the first to bottle their own Hermitage, Crozes-Hermitage, and St Joseph. Dedicated to the local grapes, they were careful to maintain the 'typicity' of each plot and each wine. In 1998, they entered into a partnership with their neighbor Michel Chapoutier, bringing them additional technical expertise and the opportunity to fairly quickly transition their vineyards to first certified organic and then certified biodynamic.

Their CDR Blanc is typical of a northern grower: more elegance and lithe fruit than power. 60% Grenache Blanc blended with 40% Clairette grown on clay and limestone yields honeysuckle, peach, apricot, and lime zest in a crisp, thirst-quenching style.

White #2) 2018 M. Chapoutier 'Marius' Vermentino



Born into one of the most famous winemaking families of the Rhone Valley, Michel took over the domaine at the age of 26. Not content with the existing high quality, he has literally never stopped pushing for 'more'. Organic, biodynamic, an enduring pledge to employ the handicapped, and-of course-considerable expansion into other regions-these are the guiding principles of Chapoutier under Michel's leadership.

Marius by Chapoutier is a new line of wines, made in homage to his great-grandfather Marius and utilizing vineyards outside of their ancestral estates in the northern Rhone. The website for these wines is at best curious, including short stories 'that Great Grandfather Marius might have written'. And they make the odd choice to call this wine Vermentino, the grape's Italian name, rather than the French Rolle more appropriate for a wine from the Languedoc. No matter, though., because the wine is terrific. Exotic floral aromas and vibrant tropical and citrus fruits are balanced by refreshing acidity, making this the ultimate summer sipper!

Red #1) 2017 Chateau Pech-Latt Corbieres



Chateau Pech-Latt is located near Lagrasse, a medieval village high in the heart of Corbieres. Vines were first planted here circa 784, AD, by the monks of Lagrasse Abbey then under the control of Charlemagne. Spread over 340 hectares across garrigue covered hills, Pech-Latt benefits from abundant sun and disease-preventing wind. The name of the estate comes from 'Pech', local dialect for the cap of a hill, and Latt, from the Latin word Latum, meaning 'large'.

Pech-Latt was among the very first estates in the Languedoc to convert to certified organic production; they believe that preserving organic life in the soil leads to more vibrant, interesting wines. 'Also, our children live here.'

A blend of Syrah, Grenache, Carignan, and Mourvedre, their Corbieres is boldly fruity and spicy, like a spoonful of blackberry jam, swapping out the sugar for black pepper and licorice. Goes with: anything with grill marks.

Red#2) 2018 Mission La Caminade Cahors



Cahors is the original Malbec. Contrary to popular belief, Malbec did NOT spring, fully formed, from Argentina. No, its origin is here in deep SW France, where the 'black wines of Cahors' were famous over 1000 years ago. In fact, vineyards were first planted over 2000 years ago, and the wines were much admired by Roman Emperor Domitian. The domaine belonged to the clergy until the Revolution; the Resse family has farmed it since approximately 1895.

The vineyards are along the banks of the River Lot, which over several millennia carved through a limestone plateau, exposing deposits of pure limestone amidst the clay and shale. 85% Malbec and 15% Merlot, the wine is both fermented and aged in large concrete vats, to tame Malbec's somewhat fierce tannins. Supple and charming, with deep blackberry and plum flavors, it's the perfect complement to steak. Or burgers. Sausage. Really anything at all from the grill.

Rosé Option) 2019 Thirsty Owl Yakima Valley Rosé



LONE BIRCH
2017 | YAKIMA VALLEY
ROSÉ
ESTATE GROWN

The Yakima Valley AVA is Washington State's oldest recognized viticultural area. The Miller family has farmed their plots in Yakima for 4 generations, and named their winery for one spectacular, solitary 70 year old birch tree that rises in the center of one of their vineyards. Yakima's dry climate is inhospitable to grape diseases-including phylloxera-so the Millers are able to plant ungrafted grapes. This is a rare opportunity to drink wine made from own-rootstock vines.

Their rosé is a blend of Syrah and Sangiovese, given a light press and short whole cluster maceration, then fermented and settled in stainless steel vats to preserve its freshness. Floral, strawberry, and raspberry flavors dominate. A dry, crisp finish makes you wish the bottle wasn't empty.