

PRWS

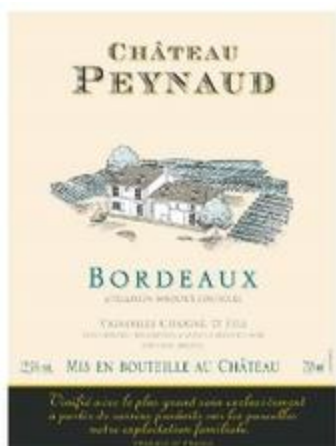
November 2021 Wine Club



(Mostly) New World

I have frequently been accused of being an Old World Wine Snob; this is mostly deserved. But with all the glories of France and Italy, not to mention Spain, Portugal, Greece, Armenia, et al, sometimes it's hard to focus on New World wines. Also, these regions have been making wine for so many more centuries than North and South America, Australia, etc. It's difficult to catch up. But this month, 3 lovely New World wines presented themselves and voila: an (almost) all-New World Wine Club! Enjoy.

White #1) Chateau Peynaud Bordeaux Blanc 2019



Bordeaux Blanc is the Rodney Dangerfield of its region; it just doesn't get respect. The focus is firmly on the reds. And even amongst Sauvignon Blanc lovers, you don't see much Bordeaux. New Zealand, yes. Sancerre, definitely. Other Loire styles, too. But Bordeaux Blanc, where Sauvignon Blanc is mixed up with Semillon and sometimes a touch of Muscadelle-nobody asks for that.

You should. Because the wines-like this one-can be a delicious little revelation.

Melon and kiwi fruit flavors blend with citrus zest. The Semillon adds floral, apple, and beeswax notes. Accents of green herbs and fresh-cut grass are the perfect counterbalance to all that vibrant fruit. Break out some fish or shellfish and see if you don't agree.

White #2) Stoneburn Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2021



I am not the biggest fan of NZ Sauvignon Blanc. It tends-in my opinion-to go way past the citrus zest and green herbs that you expect from Sauvignon Blanc and veer into the grapefruit juice and cat pee genre. Plus, some inexpensive brands leave so much residual sugar that the wine tastes frankly sweet.

Stoneburn was a delightful surprise. Founded in 1989, the Stoneburn vineyards are situated in the heart of the Wairau Valley in Marlborough on a stony riverbed site. The wines-they also make a delicious Pinot Noir- are fresh, lively, well balanced and sealed with a Stelvin closure to preserve their full character. And they control the pyrazines, so the wine doesn't take on those over-the-top aromas and flavors. Green herbs, grapefruit zest, melon, and the merest hint of grassiness. No unwanted sweetness, no grapefruit juice, and absolutely no cat pee, either.

Red #1) Puntí Ferrer Carmenere Reserva 2018



Carmenere is—depending upon who you’re speaking to—either an irrelevance or THE great lost grape of Bordeaux. Before phylloxera struck, it was widely planted throughout Bordeaux. But as good as the wine was, the marshy conditions of the Medoc and the heavy clay of the Right Bank were not the ideal conditions for a grape that is susceptible to mildew and rot. When vineyards were replanted with vines grafted unto American rootstocks, almost nobody replanted Carmenere.

But the grape had already migrated to Chile, where high-altitude, bone-dry vineyards made a much better home for the finicky Carmenere. Then it experienced a new problem: Carmenere was confused with Merlot. Harvested with the earlier-ripening Merlot, it tasted green and weedy. Chilean vintners assumed it was an inferior clone. Then the great enologist Emile Peynaud visited Chile, properly identified Carmenere, and cleared the way for making a raspberry, sour cherry, and peppercorn-laced beauty like this one. Vanilla, oak, and cinnamon accents add complexity, as does the long mineral-laden finish.

Red#2) Puntí Ferrer Cabernet Sauvignon Reserva 2018



Antonio Puntí Ferrer always dreamt of dedicating his life to the production of fine wines, just as his father did when he arrived in Chile from Manresa – Spain. With his wife Andrea Lagos, he settled in the high, dry, Curico Valley, and began to concentrate on making pure, varietally correct, fruit-driven wines.

Sourced from 2 estate vineyards , given a long, cool fermentation, and aged in new French and American oak, the Cabernet Reserva is a study in charm and elegance, overflowing with black cherry, blackcurrant, and spice. Grace notes of saddle leather, tobacco, vanilla, and smoke just gild the lily.