

Vault Masters Wine Club Tasting Notes

Diora La Splendeur du Soleil Chardonnay 2018

Diora is the culmination of a thirty-year vineyard-to-bottle journey at the Santa Lucia Highlands and our family-owned San Bernabe estate in Monterey. Specific blocks at San Bernabe were replanted in the early 1990s in a unique wind orientation to allow the vines to thrive off the Monterey Bay's cool ocean breezes and thicken the skins to heighten the luscious, round textures on the palate. The elevated positioning of the Santa Lucia Highlands helps produce Diora's underlying structure and mouth-coating texture,

About two-thirds of this blend comes from our San Bernabe Estate Vineyard which has a range of soils from ancient aeolian sand dunes to calcareous soils. These sandy soils are free draining, allowing the vines to develop deep root systems developing healthier vines. The climate is much warmer during the day and cools down in the afternoon as the prevailing afternoon winds funnel down from the Monterey Bay allowing for the development of more apple and tropical characters such as pineapple, guava, and stone fruit. About one third of the blend comes from vineyards in the Santa Lucia Highlands which is cooler than our San Bernabe Estate Vineyard, providing more citrusy characters such as orange and grapefruit. Only our best blocks with specific clones, mostly Dijon, made it to the finished blend. From our San Bernabe Vineyard blocks 43B (clone 17), block 41B (Clone 95, 76), block 218A have more calcareous soils adding minerality. From our Santa Lucia Highlands vineyard blocks 1BS, 1BN, and 1AS with predominately clone 4 and 95 were selected for the final blend adding the rich tropical notes.

Wine Enthusiast 91 pts

Aromas of smoked apple, red pear and chamomile show on the nose of this bottling. There's a flashy sizzle of acidity on the palate, where pineapple, Asian pear, toast and white peach make for a rich, creamy expression.

Varietal: 100% Chardonnay



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230 N. Burkhardt, Evansville, IN



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Vault Masters Wine Club Food Pairing

Easy Coquilles Saint Jacques

- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, divided
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups seafood stock or clam juice
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 teaspoon curry powder
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup small-diced shallots (4 large)
- 12 ounces cremini mushrooms, caps brushed clean, stems discarded
- 1/4 cup Cognac or brandy
- 1 1/2 cups fresh bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup minced fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 5 ounces grated Gruyère cheese
- 1/4 cup good olive oil
- 2 pounds fresh bay scallops, drained, side muscles removed

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees and place six (1 1/2-cup) gratin dishes on 2 sheet pans.

Melt 4 tablespoons of the butter over medium heat in a medium saucepan. Add the flour and cook for 2 minutes, whisking constantly. Add the seafood stock and whisk until it is smooth and thickened. Whisk in the cream, curry powder, 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Bring the sauce to a boil, lower the heat, and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Set aside.

Heat the remaining 4 tablespoons of butter in a large (12-inch) sauté pan over medium-low heat. Add the shallots and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes, until tender. Slice the mushroom caps 1/2 inch thick, add to the shallots, and cook for 8 minutes, stirring often. Add the Cognac and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until most of the liquid has evaporated. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper and set aside.

Combine the bread crumbs, parsley, Gruyère, and olive oil in a medium bowl and stir to moisten the crumbs. Set aside.

Add the mushrooms to the cream sauce. Add the scallops and 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, mix well, and divide among the gratin dishes. Sprinkle the bread crumb mixture evenly on top and bake for 20 minutes, until the scallops are cooked and the sauce is lightly browned and bubbly. Serve hot.

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Diora La Petite Grace Pinot Noir 2018

Named for the golden hills of the Santa Lucia Mountain Range that frames our family-owned San Bernabe Vineyard in Monterey, Diora is inspired from d'Or, the French phrase meaning golden and bestowed on beautiful, sun-filled regions. No effort has been spared along Diora's 30-year journey from vineyard-to-bottle. The results are expressive wines overflowing with flavor, depth, personality and a devotion to indulgence.

The 2018 Monterey growing season had cool and moderate weather return to Monterey County and made harvest more aligned with a typical coastal winegrowing timeline. Mild temperatures, overnight fog and afternoon winds provided extra hang-time desired for great phenolic development which this region typically enjoys. With no real significant heat spikes, the grapes were allowed to slowly ripen and create intense fruit flavors. This was a harvest of excellent quality.

About two thirds of the fruit for this Pinot Noir comes from Santa Lucia Highlands and about one third from our Estate Vineyard in San Bernabe. The prevailing afternoon winds in the Santa Lucia Highlands funnel down from the Monterey Bay allow for faster cooling in the early afternoons – cooler late afternoon and nighttime temperatures result in beautiful acidity. The San Bernabe Estate sandy soils are free draining, allowing the vines to develop deep root systems, these rows were intentionally planted in a unique wind orientation allowing the vines to thrive and for the grapes to thicken their skins and heighten the luscious, round textures on the palate.

Wine Enthusiast 90 pts

This is a boldly ripe and oaky wine, offering rich comfort to those in search of such elements. The barrel influence on the nose is strong, with loads of vanilla and caramel over the baked cherry core. The palate shows the same, picking up nutmeg, mace and clove, with a smooth cherry paste flavor.

Varietal: 100% Pinot Noir



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Crisp Roast Duck w/Plum Apple Sauce

- 1 (5- to 6-lb) Long Island duck (also known as Pekin)
- 2 cups boiling-hot water
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper

Plum Applesauce

- 2 lb Gala or McIntosh apples, quartered and seeded (left unpeeled)
- 2 lb red or black plums, quartered and pitted
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup sugar

Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 425°F.

If necessary, cut off wing tips with poultry shears or a sharp knife. Remove and discard excess fat from body cavity and neck, then rinse duck inside and out. Prick skin all over with a sharp fork. Fold neck skin under body, then put duck, breast side up, on a rack in a 13- by 9- by 3-inch roasting pan and pour boiling-hot water over duck (to tighten skin). Cool duck, then pour out any water from cavity into pan. Pat duck dry inside and out, reserving water in pan, then rub duck inside and out with kosher salt and pepper.

Roast duck, breast side up, 45 minutes, then remove from oven. Turn duck over using 2 wooden spoons, and roast 45 minutes more. Turn duck over again (breast side up), tilting duck to drain any liquid from cavity into pan. Continue to roast duck until skin is brown and crisp, about 45 minutes more (total roasting time: about 2 1/4 hours). Tilt duck to drain any more liquid from cavity into pan. Transfer duck to a cutting board and let stand 15 minutes before carving. Discard liquid in roasting pan. Serve with plum applesauce.

Plum Applesauce

Cook all ingredients in a 4- to 5-quart heavy pot, covered, over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until fruit is very tender and falling apart, 1 to 1 1/4 hours. Force mixture through a large medium-mesh sieve using a rubber spatula, discarding peels.

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Château Malbec Bordeaux 2016

Château Malbec is delightful property dating back to 1860 and located in the village of Sainte-Eulalie, just outside Bordeaux. It was acquired by the Castel family in 1991. From their mainly South facing position, the vines enjoy optimal sun exposure. Château Malbec boasts a wide variety of terroirs and varietals, lending its wines their delicate balance, boldness and sophistication. The property's archetypal Bordeaux blend is testament to the region's winemaking tradition.

A late, but very promising vintage. A mild, very wet winter. 6 months of constant rain made growers understandably anxious. Spring was cold and damp, and with it came the threat of mildew. Budbreak arrived early, in mid- March, followed by rapid, abundant flowering. From June onwards, the weather was very dry. 3 months without a drop of rain saw off any risk of fungal disease, but also slowed vine growth. The threat of hydric stress was offset by good reserves of ground water retained in our clay soils, ready for the vines to use when they needed it. Bunch closure was complete by July 20th. Towards the end of the season, days remained relatively warm while nights were cool, encouraging grapes to reach their optimum ripeness. Light rainfall promoted a good balance of sugar to acidity. Harvesting was late (around the beginning of October) and lengthy, but went off without a hitch.

Wine Enthusiast 90 pts

Rich, fruity and full bodied, this spicy wine has a good future. Its tannins and structure are still firm and upfront, but the black fruits are ripe and generous. Drink this attractive wine from 2021.

Varietals: 75% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec



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Steak Tartare à l'Italienne

- 1 pound beef high quality beef filet
- 2 lemons (juiced)
- 2 cloves garlic (peeled and slightly crushed)
- 1/3 cup olive oil (approximately)
- Sea salt to taste (fine)
- Black pepper to taste (freshly ground)
- 1 anchovy (salted anchovy, rinsed, boned and minced)
- Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 1 white truffle (or fresh wild mushroom) (optional)

Gather the ingredients.

In a hot pan, quickly sear the filet on all sides. This will kill any bacteria that may be on the surface of the meat. Do not cook the filet. Remove from the pan, trim away the seared sections.

Chop the meat very finely with a sharp, 8-inch chef's knife. Do not use a food processor or meat grinder because the texture will suffer.

In a medium bowl, combine the meat with lemon juice and garlic cloves.

Season abundantly with olive oil (as much as the lemon juice or perhaps more), salt, and pepper. If you are using the anchovy, add it now.

Let the meat sit for 10 minutes (minimum) to 2 hours (maximum). The longer it sits, the less pink it will become because the lemon juice cooks the meat. Before serving, remove and discard the garlic cloves and arrange the meat in small mounds on serving dishes. Sprinkle each serving with finely shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese and paper-thin shavings of white truffle (optional).

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