

Vault Masters Wine Club Tasting Notes

Masseria Altemura Fiano 2019

Masseria Altemura lies in the heart of the Salento Peninsula, halfway between the Seas that lie off Puglia's shores, the Ionian and the Adriatic, and benefits from the breezes of the one – more open towards the Mediterranean – and the salinity of the other.

The result is a zone that is extremely luminous: it almost dazzles one, in every sense, to look at it, seeing that in the sunniest periods the white rock that crops out to the surface between one row of vines and the next acts as a mirror for the sun's rays. These are the same rays that contribute to the ripening of the grapes, because in this area everything is in harmony.

The estate lies within the production zone of the Primitivo di Manduria D.O.C., one of the terroirs most suitable for making top-quality wines in Italy. Here there are 130 hectares of vineyards, a paradigm of authenticity and of the Salento winemaking tradition: only indigenous grape varieties are used to make wines whose role is to give voice to their region of origin.

The grapes are machine harvested, crushed, and de-stemmed. The must is extracted in soft bladder presses. Then, after being culled, it is fermented and kept at temperatures between 64° and 68°F. The wine is aged for six months in stainless steel tanks, followed by three months in the bottle.

James Suckling 91 pts

The wine has a light straw color with green hues. The bouquet is intense and fruity with fresh hints of almond blossoms, peach, and honey. Dry, medium-bodied, and crisp, on the palate, revealing perfectly ripened apricots, stone minerals, and a rich texture that leads to a refreshing finish.

Varietal: 100% Fiano



The Wine Vault
230 N. Burkhardt, Evansville, IN



September 2021

Vault Masters Wine Club Food Pairing

Linguine and Clams

- 2 tablespoons kosher salt, plus more
- 12 garlic cloves, divided
- 4 ounces sourdough or country-style bread, crusts removed, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons plus ¼ cup olive oil, plus more for serving
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
- 2 oil-packed anchovy fillets (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, plus more for serving
- 1/3 cup dry white wine
- 2 pounds littleneck clams (about 24) or cockles (about 32), scrubbed
- 12 ounces linguine or spaghetti
- ½ cup finely chopped parsley
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter

Bring salt and 10 cups water to a boil in a large pot.

Meanwhile, pulse 3 garlic cloves in a food processor until chopped. Add bread and pulse several times until fine crumbs form.

Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high. Add breadcrumb mixture and cook, stirring often, until crumbs are golden and crisp, 5–7 minutes. Transfer to a medium bowl. Add lemon zest, season with salt, and toss to combine; set aside.

Wipe out Dutch oven. Using a mandoline if you have one (if not, use a really sharp knife), very thinly slice remaining 9 garlic cloves. Heat ¼ cup oil in Dutch oven over medium. Cook garlic, stirring often, until golden around the edges, about 3 minutes. Add anchovies, if using, and ½ tsp. red pepper flakes and cook, stirring, until garlic is golden all over and anchovies are dissolved. Quickly stir in wine and simmer until only a couple of tablespoons of liquid are left in pot. Add clams and toss to combine. Cover and cook until clams are open, 5–7 minutes (about 4 minutes for cockles). Uncover pot and transfer clams to a medium bowl, leaving liquid in pot. If any clams are still closed, cover pot again and cook a few minutes longer, then transfer to bowl with others (discard any that have not opened at this point). Tent clams with foil.

Cook pasta in boiling water 5 minutes. Using a ladle or heatproof measuring cup, scoop out about 2 cups pasta cooking liquid. Using tongs, transfer pasta to pot with clam liquid. Add 1 cup pasta cooking liquid and bring to a boil. Cook, tossing constantly and adding more pasta cooking liquid a splash at a time if needed, until pasta is al dente and sauce is glossy and thick enough to cling to noodles, about 5 minutes.

Remove from heat. Add parsley and butter and toss until butter is melted. Sprinkle about one-third of breadcrumbs over pasta and toss to combine (you can add more or less depending on how much liquid is in bottom of pot—you want them to absorb some of the sauce but not make it dry). Give pasta a taste; you probably won't need additional salt, but you can add some if you'd like. Divide pasta among shallow bowls and top with reserved clams, more breadcrumbs, red pepper flakes, and a drizzle of oil.

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Rebellious Red Blend 2018

Nature is unpredictable, unforgiving... and unapologetic. Everything must fight to survive. But it's precisely this challenge that inspired the creation of Rebellious, a new red wine blend. Rebellious roots dig deep in their search for water, a struggle that yields the best grapes.

Rebellious pays homage to the winemaker's art of blending, with each varietal thoughtfully chosen for a final, generous, and balanced blend. The fruit is fermented in separate lots, allowing each to be distinctly crafted before aging and blending.

In 2018, grapes were selected from prestigious grape growing regions throughout California, including the North Coast Appellations of Sonoma and Mendocino. A cool spring with some much needed rainfall was followed by a moderate summer to set the stage for a slow and consistent harvest. Fruit came in after Labor Day and the long growing season allowed the vines to develop complex flavors, good color and balanced acidity.

Aromas of dark cherry and strawberry jam, brown sugar, dark chocolate, and cola with hints of cardamom, black pepper, sandalwood and licorice. The bright and vibrant entry accentuates flavors of fresh blueberries and allspice that linger into a creamy, rich mid-palate and ends with a luxurious finish.

Varietals: 44% Zinfandel, 23% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 7% Syrah, 7% Mourvedre, 7% Petite Sirah, 3% Malbec, 1% Sauvignon Blanc



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Dark Chocolate Sauce w/ Fresh Berries

- 8 ounces semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup half-and-half
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 pint blackberries
- 1/2 pint blueberries
- 1/2 pint raspberries

Melt the chocolate in a double boiler. Once melted, add the sugar and half-and-half, and stir until well blended. Stir in the butter and vanilla extract until the sauce is smooth and glossy.

Line up four small bowls or glasses, and place a dollop of the chocolate sauce in each. Evenly divide the blackberries, blueberries and raspberries between the four bowls. Top each with 2 tablespoons of the chocolate sauce, and serve.

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Bodega Norton Reserva Malbec 2018

Founded in 1895, Bodega Norton is one of the most awarded Argentinean wine brands in the U.S. with more than 150 international wine awards to date. Bodega Norton combines a modern, state-of-the-art facility with rich heritage and old world charm.

Specially reserved due to its exceptional features, Reserva wine is characterized by its elegance and complexity. It is made from carefully selected grapes from vineyards aged between 30 and 50 years old. The wine is then aged in French oak barrels and then additionally in bottles before release. The harmonious coexistence of fruit and wood over time has made this a great wine, characterized by elegance and complexity.

The 2018 vintage was marked by higher volumes, but with optimal ripeness. The quality of the grapes was on par with previous very good-rated vintages. The summer started out warm but then cooled off during the harvest months of February, March and April. This, in addition to the low rainfall, gave rise to early ripening in the fruit, with beautiful natural acidity. The aromatic expression and smooth tannins show clearly that the 2018 vintage wines are excellent representations of the unique terroirs of Mendoza.

Bold wine showcasing ripe, concentrated flavors. Aged in 100% French Oak followed by 3 months of bottle aging. Made from vines that are 30 to 50 years old.

Intense red color with purplish hues. In the nose, it is an expressive wine with ripe black fruits, violets, spices and tobacco. In the mouth, it is wide and fleshy with a lingering finish.

Varietal: 100% Malbec



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Grilled Lamb Chops with Chimichurri Sauce

- 8 lamb chops
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- chimichurri sauce - plus more for serving
- 1 tbsp olive oil

Chimichurri Sauce

- 1 small shallot - or ½ cup of red onion, roughly chopped
- 2 garlic cloves
- 3 tbsp red wine vinegar
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 1 ½ cup fresh parsley
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- A pinch of red pepper flakes - optional
- ¾ cup olive oil

Chimichurri Sauce

In a food processor, add shallot, garlic, red wine vinegar, salt and pepper. Pulse or chop button, stopping and scraping down sides occasionally until everything is finely minced.

Add in parsley, oregano and red pepper flakes. Pour in olive oil while pulsing several times until all is minced.

Lamb Chops

In a freezer bag or silicone bag, add lamb chops, salt and pepper and ¼ cup of chimichurri sauce. Close the bag and shake until lamb chops are coated with the marinade sauce. Set aside for about 1 hour on the kitchen counter top.

Preheat cast iron pan or grill over medium heat. I like to use my cast iron because my lamb chops were small.

Pour olive oil to pan if using pan and place lamb chops on it.

Cook for about 3 minutes on every side of the lamb without touching or flipping. Lamb chops will be cooked when chops get the internal temperature of 140°F in the thickest part.

Transfer the chops to a platter and drizzle with the rest of the chimichurri sauce over them. Serve with tomato sauce and grilled veggies. Enjoy!

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