

Wine Club Tasting Notes

St. Francis Merlot

The grapes in this Sonoma County Merlot come from St. Francis's Certified Sustainable Estate Wild Oak vineyard, located in the heart of Sonoma Valley, as well as from top growers throughout the region. Merlot thrives in Sonoma's picturesque valleys where warm days are cooled by evening breezes and fog from the Pacific Ocean. Each carefully selected vineyard contributes distinctive and individual qualities to the finished wine. All grapes are gently destemmed before cold-soaking for two days to extract optimal color and flavor. The fruit is fermented in separate lots, allowing each lot to be individually and distinctly crafted before being aged in French oak barrels. The wines are kept for approximately 16-18 months in barrel before final blending and bottling.

This Merlot shows off deep, rich color and structure. Layers of aromas and flavors of cassis, plum, dried currant and savory spices introduce a long, silky finish in this classic wine.

*Varietal: 100% Merlot
14.8% ABV*



May 2024

THE WINE VAULT

Wine Club Food Pairing

Grilled Flat Iron Steak with Blue Cheese-Chive Butter

- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon cracked black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary leaves
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup Olive and Vine Olive Oil
- 1 ½ pounds flat iron steak
- 3 tablespoons softened unsalted butter
- 1 ounce crumbled blue cheese
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives
- ⅛ teaspoon cracked black pepper
- Whisk olive oil, vinegar, garlic, 1 t black pepper, rosemary, oregano, and kosher salt together in a bowl and pour into a resealable plastic bag. Add steak, coat with the marinade, squeeze out excess air, and seal the bag. Marinate in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.
- Preheat an outdoor grill for medium-high heat. Remove steak from the marinade. Allow steak to stand at room temperature as the grill warms.
- Mash butter, blue cheese, chives, and 1/8 t of black pepper together until combined.
- Cook steaks on the preheated grill until firm and reddish-pink and juicy in the center. Allow steak to rest in a warm place for 10 minutes before slicing thinly across the grain. Serve with a dollop of blue cheese-chive butter.

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Wine Club Tasting Notes

Marques de Caceres Deusa Nai Albarino

Marques de Caceres Deusa Nai Albarino is a pale straw color. Citrus bouquet with hints of grapefruit and lime that refresh the palate. These lively flavours linger on a subtle herbal and leafy undertone suggestive of bay leaves, resulting in a delicate wine. Its freshness and gentle acidity flow on the palate leaving a long and enveloping aftertaste.

Light straw to the eye, this wine has aromas of grapefruit and orange blossom. It is bright on entry, offering flavors of pineapple, lemon zest and dried apricot alongside shimmering acidity and a hint of chalky minerality.

*Varietal: 100% Albarino
13% ABV*



May 2024

THE WINE VAULT

Wine Club Food Pairing

Cheesy Crab Tostadas

- *8 corn tortillas*
- *Non-stick cooking spray*
- *12 oz crab meat (2 6-oz cans)*
- *½ cup jicama, diced*
- *½ cup red bell pepper, diced*
- *⅓ cup celery, diced*
- *2 scallions, chopped*
- *2 tablespoons jalapeño, seeded and minced*
- *½ cup plain Greek yogurt (or ⅓ cup mayo)*
- *Juice of 1 lime*
- *Salt and pepper*
- *Shredded cheese (Mexican 3-cheese blend)*
- *Toppings: pico de gallo, diced avocado, cilantro*
- Preheat oven to 400.
- Spray the tortillas with nonstick spray on both sides. Place in a single layer on one or two sheet pans. Bake for 5 minutes on one side. Flip tortillas and then bake for an additional 3 to 5 minutes.
- While your tortillas are baking, combine crabmeat, chopped vegetables, yogurt, lime juice, salt, and pepper in a bowl.
- Top your tortillas with crab salad mixture and shredded cheese. Bake for 3 to 5 minutes.
- Serve tostadas with pico de gallo, avocado slices, cilantro, and lime wedges.

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THE WINE  VAULT

Wine Club Tasting Notes

St. Francis Red Blend

Five distinctive varietals were chosen for this blend. After harvest and delivery to the crush pad, the grapes were sent to separate tanks for a cold soak to develop optimal color and flavor. The Syrah and Mourvedre fermented in open top tanks while the Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot went to closed-top tanks. Destined for this blend, the small percentage of Malbec co-fermented with some of the Cabernet Sauvignon before all varietals were aged in French oak barrels and masterfully blended for taste and balance before bottling.

A luscious and vibrant blend of rich red varietals, this wine offers enticing aromas of dark berries with a touch of wild herbs and a hint of toast. Layered flavors of raspberry, dark cherry, roasted plum, black olive and savory spices merge for a balanced, quenching wine with a long, silky finish.

*Varietal: 31% Cabernet Sauvignon; 22% Merlot, 20% Syrah, 18% Mourvedre, 9% Malbec
14.7% ABV*



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THE WINE VAULT

Wine Club Food Pairing

Baked Ziti

- *1 pound ziti (or penne)*
- *3 cups marinara sauce*
- *1 large egg*
- *1 cup ricotta (whole or part skim)*
- *¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese*
- *¼ teaspoon fine sea salt*
- *¼ teaspoon black pepper*
- *½ cup fresh parsley, minced*
- *1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese*
- Fill a large sauce pan with water and a generous amount of salt. Bring it to a boil and cook the pasta according to the package's al dente directions.
- Drain the pasta
- Add the sauce to the pasta, stir to combine well, and set aside.
- In a small mixing bowl whisk together the egg, ricotta, Parmesan cheese, salt, pepper and parsley.
- Spoon half the pasta into the bottom of a 9 x 13" baking dish. Then spoon 6 dollops of the ricotta mixture onto the pasta. Sprinkle half of the mozzarella over the pasta and repeat all steps to make a second layer.
- Bake the pasta uncovered for 30 minutes at 400 degrees or until the cheese is bubbly.
- Allow to cool for 10 minutes

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Wine Club Tasting Notes

Austin Chardonnay

A beautiful golden hue anticipates bright tropical notes on the nose. This wine shows riper warm-climate qualities that are harmoniously balanced with the brisk acidity and lemon zest notes of the cool-climate fruit. The entry is clean and fresh, gaining midpalate weight with layered tropical and honeydew flavors, all finishing with a crisp flourish. A wine that begs for another sip.

On the palate, layers of flavor unfold, revealing a harmonious balance of fruit, acidity, and texture. Juicy pineapple and ripe pear dance alongside flavors of vanilla bean and caramel, while a touch of citrus zest adds brightness and freshness.

*Varietal: 100%
Chardonnay
13.5% ABV*



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THE WINE VAULT

Wine Club Food Pairing

Pasta with Zucchini Pesto

- 1 lb. rigatoni or other short pasta
- 1 lb. green beans
- 1 medium zucchini
- 1/4 c. sliced almonds
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 c. fresh parsley
- 1/2 c. fresh tarragon
- 1/3 c. plus 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 c. grated parmesan cheese
- Black pepper, to taste
- 1 lb. yellow summer squash
- 3/4 c. heavy cream
- Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook according to the package directions, adding the green beans during the last 2 minutes. Reserve 1 cup cooking water.
- Meanwhile, slice the zucchini in half lengthwise. Use a spoon to scrape out the seeds. Chop the zucchini into 1/2-inch pieces.
- Make the pesto: Place the almonds and garlic in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Add the parsley, tarragon and zucchini and pulse until finely chopped. With the machine running, slowly drizzle in 1/3 cup olive oil and process until fairly smooth. Scrape into a bowl and mix in the parmesan and season with salt and pepper.
- Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the yellow squash, season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring, until browned.
- Add the heavy cream to the skillet and stir. Reduce the heat to low and let thicken slightly. Mix in the pesto until evenly distributed.
- Add the pesto mixture to the pasta and green beans and toss, adding the reserved cooking water as needed to loosen.

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