

Wine Club Tasting Notes

Wente Southern Hills Cabernet Sauvignon

Wente Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon Southern Hills is a rich, approachable red wine from California's Livermore Valley, crafted by one of the state's oldest family-run wineries. It showcases classic Cabernet character with aromas of dark cherry, blackberry, and subtle oak spice. On the palate, it's full-bodied yet smooth, offering layers of ripe fruit, cocoa, and vanilla with balanced tannins and a lingering finish. Aged in a mix of French, American, and neutral oak, this wine delivers depth and warmth without being overly heavy.

The Wente Vineyards Southern Hills Cabernet Sauvignon opens with inviting aromas of blackberry, cassis, and dark cherry layered with hints of cocoa, cedar, and baking spice. On the palate, it's smooth and medium-bodied, showcasing ripe black fruit, plum, and touches of vanilla and mocha from oak aging. Polished tannins and balanced acidity create a supple texture, leading to a warm, lingering finish with notes of spice and toasted oak.

*Varietal: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
13.5% ABV*



November 2025

THE WINE VAULT

Wine Club Food Pairing

Tuscan Herb Chicken with Tomato-Olive Ragù & Creamy Polenta

- 4 bone-in chicken thighs, skin on
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 can (14 oz) crushed tomatoes
- ½ cup Kalamata olives, halved
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- Salt & freshly cracked black pepper

For the Polenta

- 1 cup polenta (coarse cornmeal)
- 4 cups chicken stock (or vegetable stock)
- 2 tbsp butter
- ½ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
- Salt to taste
- Heat olive oil in a large skillet or Dutch oven. Season chicken with salt and pepper, then sear skin-side down until golden brown and crisp. Flip and cook the other side for a few minutes. Remove and set aside.
- In the same pan, sauté onion, garlic, and bell pepper until softened. Stir in crushed tomatoes, olives, rosemary, oregano, and red pepper flakes. Season with salt and pepper.
- Nestle the chicken thighs back into the sauce, skin side up. Cover and simmer gently on low heat for 35–40 minutes, until chicken is tender and infused with flavor.
- While chicken cooks, bring stock to a boil. Whisk in polenta, then reduce heat to low, stirring often until thick and creamy (about 30 minutes). Stir in butter and Parmigiano, and season with salt.
- Spoon creamy polenta onto plates, top with chicken and tomato-olive ragù, and garnish with fresh rosemary.

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Wine Club Tasting Notes

Ferrari Carano Chardonnay

Ferrari-Carano Chardonnay is one of Sonoma County's most recognized Chardonnays, crafted with a style that balances California richness with Burgundian elegance. Sourced from Ferrari-Carano's own vineyards in Sonoma County, this wine reflects the winery's meticulous approach to vineyard care and winemaking, delivering consistency and refinement vintage after vintage. This Chardonnay is both luxurious and versatile, making it a beautiful partner to rich dishes like lobster with drawn butter, roasted chicken, creamy pastas, or crab cakes, while also refined enough to enjoy on its own. It represents the signature Ferrari-Carano style: opulent fruit, integrated oak, and a seamless balance that makes it approachable yet complex.

This wine is rich and round, opening with aromas of Meyer lemon, pear, golden apple, toasted marshmallow, and vanilla bean. The palate shows incredible depth with layers of Bartlett pear and graham cracker leading to hazelnut and baking spice on the finish.

*Varietal: 100% Chardonnay
14.5% ABV*



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THE WINE  VAULT

Wine Club Food Pairing

Seared Scallops with Corn Purée & Crispy Pancetta

For the Scallops

- 12 large sea scallops, patted dry
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp butter
- Salt & freshly cracked black pepper

For the Corn Purée

- 2 cups fresh or frozen corn kernels
- 1 cup chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 small shallot, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp heavy cream
- Salt to taste

For Garnish

- 4 thin slices pancetta (or prosciutto), crisped in a skillet
- Fresh chives, chopped
- Lemon wedges
- In a saucepan, melt butter and sauté shallot until soft. Add corn and stock, simmer 5–7 minutes until tender. Transfer to a blender, add cream, and blend until smooth. Season with salt. Keep warm.
- In a skillet over medium heat, cook pancetta slices until crisp. Drain on paper towels, then crumble.
- Heat olive oil and butter in a skillet over high heat until just shimmering. Season scallops with salt and pepper. Sear 2 minutes per side, until golden with a tender center.
- Spoon corn purée onto plates, top with seared scallops, sprinkle with pancetta and chives, and serve with a squeeze of lemon.

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Wine Club Tasting Notes

Banshee Pinot Noir

Banshee Pinot Noir is a benchmark example of California Pinot that combines approachability with depth. Crafted primarily from cool-climate vineyards in Sonoma County, it reflects the balance between ripeness and restraint that defines the region. The winemaking philosophy behind Banshee is to showcase Pinot Noir's natural elegance without heavy-handed oak or extraction, resulting in a wine that feels both expressive and refined. With its combination of vibrancy, finesse, and character, Banshee Pinot Noir is as enjoyable for casual sipping as it is for thoughtful pairing at the table.

A textbook Sonoma County Pinot Noir, the 2023 opens with a bouquet of violet, pomegranate, bright cherry, and nuanced graphite with a touch of forest floor and bay leaf. This is an elegant, smooth-textured wine, with a burst of energetic acidity. Dark cherry flavors coat the palate and linger long after the last sip.

*Varietal: 100% Pinot Noir
13.9% ABV*



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Wine Club Food Pairing

Herb-Roasted Salmon with Mushroom & Thyme Farro

For the Salmon

- *4 salmon fillets (skin on)*
- *2 tbsp olive oil*
- *1 lemon, thinly sliced*
- *2 tbsp fresh dill, chopped*
- *1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped*
- *Salt & freshly ground black pepper*

For the Mushroom Farro

- *1 cup farro (or barley)*
- *3 cups vegetable or chicken stock*
- *2 tbsp olive oil*
- *2 cups mixed mushrooms (cremini, shiitake, or oyster), sliced*
- *1 shallot, minced*
- *2 garlic cloves, minced*
- *2 tsp fresh thyme leaves*
- *2 tbsp butter*
- *¼ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano*
- *Salt & pepper to taste*
- Rinse farro and simmer in stock until tender but slightly chewy.
- Heat olive oil in a skillet. Add mushrooms and cook until golden and caramelized. Stir in shallot, garlic, and thyme, cooking until fragrant. Season with salt and pepper.
- Stir cooked farro into the mushroom mixture, then fold in butter and Parmigiano. Adjust seasoning.
- Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Place salmon on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Brush with olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and top with lemon slices, dill, and parsley. Roast for 12–15 minutes, or until just cooked through.
- Spoon mushroom farro onto warm plates, top with roasted salmon, and garnish with a sprinkle of fresh herbs.

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Wine Club Tasting Notes

Villa Pereire Bordeaux Blanc

Villa Pereire Bordeaux Blanc, also styled L'Éclat (“brilliance” in French), is a refined white blend from Bordeaux, proudly imported by the C. Mondavi & Family team, and showcases the elegance of old-world winemaking with a modern, food-friendly appeal. Its balance of acidity, oak nuance, and cleansing minerality makes it versatile enough to enjoy effortlessly on its own or paired with a broad range of lighter, herbaceous, or subtly spiced fare.

On the palate, it is balanced and approachable, presenting crisp acidity paired with a pleasing roundness—a hallmark of Bordeaux Blanc’s blend of structure and smoothness. The nose is expressive, offering bright citrus (think lemon or grapefruit zest), fresh mineral nuances, and exotic fruit hints like white peach or tropical undertones.

*Varietal: 85% Sauvignon Blanc; 15% Semillon
12% ABV*



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Wine Club Food Pairing

Seared Scallops with Fennel-Citrus Slaw & Saffron Cauliflower Purée

For the Scallops

- 12 large sea scallops, patted dry
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter
- Salt & freshly cracked black pepper

For the Fennel-Citrus Slaw

- 1 small fennel bulb, thinly sliced
- 1 small blood orange, segmented
- 1 small grapefruit, segmented
- 2 tbsp fresh mint, chopped
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp olive oil
- Salt & pepper to taste

For the Saffron Cauliflower Purée

- 1 small head cauliflower
- 1 cup vegetable stock
- Pinch of saffron threads
- 1 tbsp butter
- Salt & white pepper to taste
- In a saucepan, simmer cauliflower in vegetable stock with saffron until very tender (about 15 minutes). Blend until smooth, then stir in butter and season with salt and white pepper.
- In a bowl, combine sliced fennel, citrus segments, and chopped mint. Whisk together honey, olive oil, salt, and pepper, then toss with the fennel and citrus. Let sit to meld flavors.
- Heat olive oil and butter in a skillet over medium-high heat. Season scallops with salt and pepper. Sear 2–3 minutes per side until golden brown and just cooked through.
- Spoon saffron cauliflower purée onto plates, place seared scallops on top, and garnish with a portion of the fennel-citrus slaw. Drizzle a touch of olive oil over the scallops for shine.

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