



Willamette Valley: Wines for Food, Friends and Poetry

West of the Cascade Mountain range, Oregon sits on the same parallel of latitude as Burgundy, France and shares similar climate conditions. Its esteemed Willamette Valley is noted for Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris, but Chardonnay comes from Oregon, too, among many other wines. Those three are our focus here because they are exceptional, thanks to the cool climate and long growing season. The 2014s and 2015s are excellent, thanks to the warm Spring, sunny days and cool nights both years, which allowed for long ripening. Both vintages were called an *embarrassment of riches in quantity as well as quality*.

With origins in Burgundy, Pinot Noir has been likened to Cary Grant: romantic, urbane, charming, seductive, sophisticated. Its flavor characteristics meld harmoniously, challenging the wine drinker to *think* about the wine and savor it. While Pinot Noir is made in myriad styles, Oregon produces wine similar in style to Burgundy — elegant and intriguing.

Firesteed is a certified sustainable winery in production since 1993, located in the Eola Hills, in the heart of the Willamette



Cristom Vineyards in Salem, Oregon, in the breathtaking Willamette Valley

Valley. **Firesteed's 2014 Pinot Noir** was fermented in stainless steel tanks and underwent malolactic fermentation to give the wine roundness. A bit of barrel-aged wine was added later, lending it complexity. \$11.99

Primarius, Latin for *distinguished*, makes a Pinot Noir befitting its name. Hailing from Dundee in Willamette Valley and aged in French and American oak for 15 months, the **2014 Primarius Pinot Noir** was called an Extreme Value by Wine Spectator. Fruit forward with black cherry and cocoa notes, and culminating in a lingering finish, this is a well-balanced wine. \$12.99

Cristom Vineyards practices sustainable farming. Pruning the vines in early and then mid-summer, when the grapes begin to change color—*veraison*—encourages

optimal ripening. The **2015 Cristom Mt. Jefferson Cuvée Pinot Noir** is whole-cluster fermented with native yeasts and aged for 12 months in French oak, yielding a nose of wild strawberries and milk chocolate. Medium- to full-bodied, this Pinot has spice, tangy acidity and firm tannins. **95 JS** \$25.99

Pinot Gris—a mutation of its ancestor, Pinot Noir—also thrives in Oregon's climate, which is similar to that in Alsace, Northeast France, where Pinot Gris has long been made. Sourcing grapes from the Willamette Valley, the **2015 Joel Gott Pinot Gris** sees a long fermentation in stainless steel to preserve the grapes' natural acidity. With aromas of apples and peaches, the crisp palate of pears and cantaloupe leads to a balanced finish. \$13.69

Though Oregon is largely known for Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris, the climate is

ideal for Chardonnay. Made in the Burgundian style, Oregon Chard exercises restraint, allowing the terroir and inherent qualities of the grape to shine through. Brick House Wines, a former hazelnut orchard, is now a biodynamically farmed, organic vineyard.

Brick House's 2014 Cascadia Chardonnay from Willamette Valley's Ribbon Ridge sub-appellation is outstanding. Fermented in oak for one year, then moved to stainless steel tanks for six months, it has aromas of flowers and yellow pears, and the palate is fresh, crisp and vibrant. **92 RP** \$24.99

Each of these wines is a testament to the prevailing sensibility of respect for the land and the grapes grown on it. Food-friendly, they inspire thoughtfulness and poetry, and they are as much a *reason* as they are a way to celebrate. Please try them with us. Cheers. ♦

Incredible Savings!
15% off all Wine —
Every Bottle,
Every Day!!!

Did you know... Oregon is the fourth-largest producer of wine in the US, and it is second only to California in the number of wineries.

Wine Tastings Fri, 4-7 & Sat, 2-5

Days not mentioned will feature New Arrivals.

Sat 2/3: Wines for Super Bowl 2018

Fri 2/9: February Staff Picks

Wed 2/14: Valentine's Eve Dinner Wines

Fri 2/16: 90s Wines

Fri 2/23: Oregon Wines from the Article on Page 1

Fri 3/2: Unheralded Gems...Unrated, but Spectacular

Chicken Cordon Bleu

Adapted from Tyler Florence

2 chicken breasts skinless and boneless
2 thin slices prosciutto di Parma
¼ pound Gruyere, grated
⅓ cup all-purpose flour
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
½ cup panko bread crumbs
2 sprigs fresh thyme, leaves only
1 clove garlic, peeled and finely minced
1 T unsalted butter, melted
1 egg, lightly beaten
Extra-virgin olive oil



Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Lay the chicken breast between 2 pieces of plastic wrap, and pound the chicken to 1/4-inch thickness. Remove the top sheet of plastic and lay 2 slices of prosciutto neatly over the top to cover the breast and sprinkle a quarter of the cheese over the prosciutto.

Tuck in the sides of the breast and roll up tight like a jellyroll inside the plastic wrap. Squeeze the log gently to seal and twist both ends tight to form a nice log. Repeat with remaining chicken.

Put the flour, eggs and bread crumbs in separate bowls. Beat the eggs, lightly. To the bread crumbs, add thyme, garlic, kosher salt, pepper, and melted butter.

Lightly dust the chicken with flour, dip in the egg mixture and coat in the bread crumbs. Coat a baking pan with olive oil and carefully transfer the roulades onto it. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes until browned and cooked through. Cut into pinwheels and serve with Sheila's staff pick. Happy Valentine's Day!

News & Events

Ode to Oregon

This past January, two of Wine & Spirits of Slingerlands' friends — one, our newsletter writer — had the opportunity to visit Portland, Oregon, land of some of the loveliest wines produced in the US.

If you've never been, please try to go. Oregonians are proud of their wines, and for good reason. Shops stock large sections of Oregon Only, and some have tasting bars for the later hours.

Though January is a bit rainy, providing much needed soil moisture, the rain slows down a bit, welcoming soft sun and mild temps for a long ripening season. Willamette Valley is only about an hour out from Portland, making it a must-see. The trip has reignited our passion for exploring Willamette Valley's wines. We hope you'll join us.

Kir and Kir Royale

Adapted from thespruce.com

The Kir became popular in French cafes in the middle of the 19th century and was further popularized by Felix Kir after World War II. We prefer love to war, so enjoy it with your loved one on Valentine's Eve while you cook dinner.



½ ounce Crème de Cassis
5 oz dry white wine, like Pinot Gris, for Kir
or 5 oz sparkling wine or Champagne for Kir Royale

Pour the Crème de Cassis into two white wine glasses for Kir, or into Champagne flutes for Kir Royale. Slowly add the white wine or sparkling wine, then toast to the one you love while you prepare a lovers' feast.

February 2018 Staff Wine Picks

Sheila: 2014 Brick House 'Cascadia' Chardonnay (Willamette Valley) \$24.99 (reg \$29.99) 92 RP A 'best barrel' selection from two of the estate's four blocks, it sees new and seasoned oak, yielding a complex wine with notes of citrus, Autumn fruit and floral notes. It is round, with a French accent. *Chicken Cordon Bleu, see above

Max: 2016 Pascal Jolivet Sancerre (Loire Valley) \$18.99 (reg \$22.99) 90 WS Made from all Sauvignon Blanc, it is tangy, with a mix of thyme and lime up front, backed by gooseberry and flint notes on the finish. *Duck tacos with salsa verde

Ian: 2016 La Mondianese Ruché (Piedmont) \$13.99 (reg \$15.99) Ruché is a rare grape, thought to have come from Burgundy in the 18th Century and now thriving in Northwest Italy. Aged in stainless steel, it tastes of red berries and green herbs, with a soft, spicy finish and a medium ruby red color. *Tagliatelle with porcini mushrooms

Carol: 2014 Antigal Uno Malbec (Mendoza) \$12.99 (reg \$14.99) 90 WS Delicious plums, strawberries and blackberry flavors with enticing hints of violets, vanilla, and milk chocolate. Brightened by natural acidity, this violet-red intense wine is surprisingly versatile at the dining table. *Spicy Asian Barbecued Beef Ribs

Brian: 2014 Cantina Zaccagnini Montepulciano d'Abruzzo (Abruzzo) \$14.49 (reg \$16.99) 91 JS Copious amounts of berry fruit plus hints of chocolate and vanilla, yet there's a freshness and edge to this wine that keeps it lively and delicious. *Spaghetti Bolognese and garlic bread