



# Grapevine

January 2019

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## A Closer Look at Wines from the Loire Valley

Called the cradle of France, the Loire Valley is the fourth largest region and sits in the center of northern France, southwest of Paris. A mix of chateaux, rivers, gardens, vineyards, fine cuisine and exceptional wine, the grapes grown there are as different as the four seasons. As is so throughout Europe, wines are named for the regions from which they come, not the grapes. Let's look at a few stellar varietals.

While Chenin Blanc is grown throughout the world, from South Africa to California, the Loire Valley has been doing it for centuries and is known for making especially fine Chenin Blancs, often called Vouvray because that is where much of the grapes are grown. Across the Loire River from Vouvray is Montlouis-sur-Loire, which also grows Chenin Blanc. Where the wines of Vouvray are fruity and floral, Montlouis-sur-Loire's show the earthier, more mineral notes of Chenin Blanc. The **2017 Les Rocher des Violettes Touche-Mitaine** is organically produced and aged in 75/25 oak and stainless steel. Racy with a streak of salinity slicing through the restrained fruit, this is Chenin showing its complex best. \$18.99

Not far from where the Loire meets the Atlantic in western



Vineyards at Domaine Martin in Sancerre

France in Muscadet, the sand and clay soils sit atop layers of schist and granite, kissing the grapes with oceanic elements. The grape grown in Muscadet is Melon de Bourgogne, and it makes clean wines well suited for the area's marine cuisine. The organically farmed vineyards of **Domaine Les Hautes Noelles** produce a delicious Muscadet; the 2017, fermented and aged in tank, is crisp and dry, and it's more than worthy of accompanying your next shellfish meal. \$11.99

Located on the eastern edge of the Loire Valley is Sancerre, and tucked inside it is Chavignol, considered its best appellation. One of its most well known wineries is Domaine Martin. Run by Pierre Martin, the vineyard is sustainably farmed. The **2017 Domaine Martin Sancerre Chavignol Blanc** is made from Sauvignon Blanc, fermented and aged

in tank. As Wine Spectator put it, it is "pure and chiseled, with a sleek flint, gooseberry and fleur de sel profile." If you're a Sauvignon Blanc fan — and even if you're not — this exemplifies the wine's far-reaching potential, racy with a mineral streak. **91 WS** \$17.99

Also from **Domaine Martin** is the **2017 Sancerre Chavignol Rouge**. Made from 100% Pinot Noir aged in neutral French oak, the area's cool climate and chalk and limestone soils encourage the grape's acidity, which balances the cherry, black raspberry and rose petal flavors. Dry and spicy with appealing softness, it's elegant and worthy of slow sipping or for savoring with dinner. \$18.99

Inside Anjou is Chinon, a majestic town between the Loire and Vienne Rivers. Lining the narrow streets are churches, mansions

and stone and half-timber homes, behind which, high on a plateau, sits the Château de Chinon. Chinon is known for growing exceptional Cabernet Franc. With trademark herbal and bell pepper flavors, it is dry and light, possessing intense character. The cool climate grape tolerates temperature swings, often to excellent results. Grapes for the **2016 Charles Joguet Chinon Cuvée Terroir** come from the left bank of the Vienne River. The herbal flavors are tempered by black fruit, making it versatile and food-friendly. \$19.99

Now that shopping for others is behind us, at least for the time being, it's the perfect time to look inward at what pleases us and what we've longed to experience anew. These wines provide the perfect opportunity to do just that. Step outside your comfort zone and you'll find a whole new world of *who knew?* in Loire Valley wines. Happy 2019. ♦

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**Did you know...** Located on the bank of the Vienne River, the Château de Chinon is where Joan of Arc visited Charles VII, claiming to hear voices and requesting an army to relieve the siege of Orléans.

## Wine Tastings Friday, 4-7 & Saturday, 2-5

*Days not mentioned will feature New Arrivals.*

**Fri 1/11:** January Staff Picks — always a stellar tasting

**Fri 1/18:** Loire Valley wines from the article on page 1

**Sat 1/19:** Loire Valley varietals — or their closest cousins — from other parts of France and the globe

**Fri 1/25:** Hearty reds and fuller whites for winter

**Fri 2/1:** Value-priced wines from the 90s Club, including one or two from Wine Spectator's Top 100 for 2018

**Sat 2/2:** Wines for the 53rd Super Bowl, featuring Sheila's Kahlua chili, a Super Bowl tasting tradition

### Make-ahead Coquille St. Jacques *Ina Garten*

8 Tbsp unsalted butter, divided  
¼ cup all-purpose flour  
1 ½ cups seafood stock  
1 cup heavy cream  
¼ teaspoon curry powder  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
3 large shallots, peeled and diced, approximately 1 cup  
12 oz cremini mushrooms, cleaned, stemmed, sliced  
¼ cup brandy or Cognac  
1 ½ cups fresh bread crumbs  
¼ cup minced flat-leaf parsley  
5 oz Gruyère cheese, grated  
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil  
2 lbs bay scallops or quartered sea scallops



Set a saucepan over medium heat, and melt 4 Tbsp of the butter in it. When it foams, add the flour, and cook for approximately 4 minutes, whisking constantly. Add the stock, and whisk again, until smooth and thick. Add the cream, curry powder, 1 1/2 tsp salt and 1/2 tsp pepper. Bring the sauce just to a boil, then lower heat and simmer for approximately 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Set aside.

Put 3 Tbsp butter in a large sauté pan set over medium heat. When it melts and foams, add the shallots, and cook, stirring occasionally, until they are clear and tender, approximately 5 minutes. Add the sliced mushroom caps, and cook for 8 to 10 minutes, until they're just starting to brown. Add the brandy or Cognac, and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until the alcohol has mostly

evaporated. Add a tsp salt to the mixture and 1/2 tsp of pepper, and stir again to combine. Add mushroom mixture to the cream sauce, and set aside.

Combine the bread crumbs, parsley and Gruyère in a large bowl, stir to combine, then moisten with the olive oil.

Use last Tbsp of butter to grease 6 1 1/2-cup gratin dishes. Divide the scallops evenly among them and top with equal amounts of the cream and mushroom sauce. Top each gratin dish with a handful or two of the bread-crumbs mixture. Place dishes on a sheet tray, cover gently with foil or plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator for up to a day.

When ready to cook, preheat the oven to 400. Remove cover from sheet tray, and place in the oven for approximately 20 minutes, or until the tops are lightly browned and bubbling and the scallops are cooked through. Serve with Sheila's pick.

### Tanqueray Almond

Adapted from *The Spruce Eats*

2 oz Tanqueray London Dry  
1 oz Amaretto  
2 dashes of bitters  
2 dashes of sour mix  
4 maraschino cherries



Add equal amounts of the Gin, Amaretto and bitters to two snifters filled with ice. Top each with sour mix and garnish each with two cherries. Drink to the warmth inside.

## January 2019 Staff Wine Picks

**Sheila: 2016 La Crema Chardonnay** (Sonoma Coast) **\$16.99** (reg \$19.99) **90 WS** Aged for eight months in seasoned and new French oak barrels, it has flavors of apricots, lemon and sweet apple with just a whisper of oak; it finishes with a velvety texture and lingering finish. \*make ahead Coquille St. Jacques, see above

**Ian: 2014 Sella & Mosca Canonau di Sardegna Riserva** (Sardinia) **\$12.99** (reg \$14.99) Canonau is the name for Garnacha/Grenache in Sardinia. Oak-aged for two years, this wine from one of the world's *blue zones* is food-friendly, with medium body and delightful notes of black licorice, cherries and currants. \*Gnocchi with tomato sauce and sausage

**Brian: 2017 Uko Estate Malbec** (Mendoza) **\$10.99** (reg \$12.99) This light- to medium-bodied wine has fine tannins and a silky mouthfeel with aromas and flavors of red berries and exotic spices. Tastes like an old world wine. \*Grilled steak tips

**Ted: 2016 Ogier Artesis Côtes du Rhône** (Rhône Valley) **\$11.99** (reg \$13.99) **91 WE** A 70/25/5 blend of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre sees cold fermentation maceration to preserve the fruit flavors and is then aged in oak foudres for 12 months. It's spicy and fresh with silken tannins. \*Roast spatchcocked chicken and potatoes

**Bill: Valdo Numero 1 Sparkling Wine** (Veneto/Sicily) **\$8.49** (reg \$9.99) A blend of Garganega, Chardonnay and Pinot Blanc, the wine sees temperature controlled fermentation in stainless steel, three months' Charmat aging in tank, followed by two months in the bottle. Notes of golden delicious apples and white fruits. \*Pan fried cod or haddock with buttery sliced almonds

**Tony: 2016 Vidigal Reserva** (Lisboa, POR) **\$8.99** (reg \$10.99) Made from regional wine varietals — 70/20/10 Aragonez, Castelão and Cabernet Sauvignon — this Portuguese gem is fermented in stainless steel with controlled temperatures; medium-bodied with aromas of leather and tobacco and delicious flavors of blackberries, raspberries and spice. \*Cassoulet