



Grapevine

March 2020

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Celebrating Renewal as Winter Transitions to Spring

Blooms are sprouting from the earth, days are stretching their light-filled limbs and our tastes, too, are recalibrating. Whites and rosés are calling for our attention, as are lighter reds. Let's greet the season of transition with a ready heart and an eager palate.

Grapes for the **2019 Gérard Bertrand Côte des Roses Rosé** come from a stretch of vineyards along the Mediterranean coast in the Languedoc region. The warm, windy climate, coastal cooling during sizzling summers and the mild winters allow the grapes to ripen slowly and fully. Grenache, Cinsault and Syrah grapes are harvested separately, according to each varietal's ideal ripeness, then fermented at controlled temperatures for 15 to 30 days. The result is a pale, salmony, pink hue with aromas of pink grapefruit and roses, and a clean, dry palate. \$14.49

The **2018 Richter Mulheimer Sonnenlay Zeppelin Riesling** is from Germany's Mosel region. With south and southwest facing, steep slopes, the vineyards are privileged with ample sun and optimal ripening, while the plentiful slate allows for efficient drainage and heat retention, important for healthy grapes. This is an



elegant wine tinged with minerals and juicy layers of apple and lemon. The rich texture and bright fruit character of this white embody the still-cool days and abundant sunshine of early spring. \$13.59

From the mountainous region of Upper Galilee in northern Israel comes the **2018 Galil Mountain Winery Viognier**, sustainably produced and Kosher. Eighty percent of the wine underwent cold fermentation in stainless steel, while the remainder was fermented in new French oak and saw sur lie aging for four months. The combination of steel and oak nurtures preservation of the wine's fruit while allowing a subtle yet rich oak presence to emerge. Versatile and food-friendly,

this would be a stellar addition to your Passover table next month. \$15.99

From the largest of Italy's islands, Sicily comprises the toe of the boot. Topographically diverse, it claims a swath of the Mediterranean, hills, mountains and volcanoes, the ash of which enriches vineyard soils. The **2017 Murgo Etna Rosso** is made from Nerello Mascalese and is fermented and aged exclusively in stainless steel, enabling the grape's strawberry and herbal flavors and its excellent acidity to shine. It has gemstone translucence, letting the light pass through in the glass, then entrancing the palate with its leanness and light body. This ruby is a must for

those evenings when you're still hungering for a red while welcoming spring's bright beginning. **91 W&S \$12.99**

We fell hard for the **2016 Bodegas del Rosario Estratos** from Bullas, Spain. An 80/20 blend of Monastrell, aka Mourvedre, and Syrah, it opens with strawberry, blueberry and floral aromas and continues to entice with juicy, berry fruit, balanced acidity and a pleasingly dry, stony character. Medium-bodied with light tannins and a vibrant finish, it was heavenly with a pesto-ricotta pizza, crowned with roasted reds. With a just-right cellar chill, this red will rock your table from now into the warmer temps ahead. **90 JS \$10.99**

From cold and snow to rain and blossoms, this is the season for change; so roll with us and embrace the tilt toward more light with a selection of spring wines. *Here comes the sun.* ♦

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

Did you know... Grapes in the southern hemisphere are picked during the northern hemisphere's spring, so a wine from the Pacific Rim, South Africa or South America will be six months older than a US or European wine of the same vintage.

Wine Tastings Fridays, 4-7 & Saturdays, 2-5

Days not mentioned will feature New Arrivals.

Fri 3/6: Stellar new arrivals

Fri 3/13: March staff picks...a lucky day, indeed

Fri 3/20: Whites and reds for Lenten fish dinners and longer, light-filled days

Sat 3/21: Wines from the article on page 1 to celebrate the first official day of spring

Fri 3/27: Portuguese and Spanish wines, plus a Bin 27 Port tasting with chocolates and cheeses

Sat 3/28: Three-fer wines!

Early Spring Pasta Primavera

It's early to expect fresh peas in March, so use frozen until you get those first early spring orbs.

16 oz dry casarecce or penne pasta

½ cup packed fresh basil leaves, roughly chopped

½ cup pine nuts, roughly chopped

½ cup + 2 Tbsp olive oil, divided

juice of 1 lemon

pinch of cayenne pepper

kosher salt and freshly-ground black pepper, to taste

2 cloves garlic, crushed with the back of a knife and minced

8–10 asparagus spears, trimmed and cut into 1" pieces

1 cup frozen peas

4 scallions, white and light green parts, thinly sliced

fresh chives, snipped, and grated parmesan, for serving

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cook the pasta to al dente, according to package directions. Drain and set aside. Reserve ½ cup pasta cooking water.

Meanwhile, make the pesto. Combine the basil, pine nuts and ½ cup olive oil in a food processor and pulse to combine, then add lemon juice and cayenne, and turn on low speed until the pesto is smooth. Season with salt and pepper to taste.



Heat the olive oil in a medium skillet over medium-high heat. When the oil begins to shimmer, add the garlic and cook until it begins to color, no more than thirty seconds. Add the asparagus lengths and cook until they begin to just soften, but still retain their bright color, about two minutes. Add peas and cook for one minute (two minutes for fresh peas). Add the scallions and pesto, stir to combine and season with salt and pepper, to taste. Toss the pesto-vegetable mixture with the pasta and enough of the reserved pasta water to keep it moist. Garnish with chives and freshly grated Parmesan. Serve with Ian's staff pick (see below).

Parasol Cocktail

Makes 2 cocktails

1 oz Lillet Blanc

1 oz St. Germain

1 oz honey syrup (equal parts honey and water combined)

1 ½ oz lemon Juice

6 oz Prosecco or favorite sparkling wine



Add first four ingredients and ice to shaker and shake for 10 seconds. Strain into two Champagne flutes and top each with Prosecco. Toast to budding blooms and longer days.

March 2020 Staff Wine Picks

Sheila: 2018 Maxville Lake Winery 'Big Max' Chardonnay (Central Coast) **\$16.99** (reg \$19.99) The wine is aged for eight months, two-thirds in stainless steel at a cool temperature and the rest in barrel, then it ages six months in bottle. It is medium-bodied with notes of stone fruits, honeysuckle and a touch of toasty vanilla. **Risotto with crab*

Ian: 2018 Pieropan Soave Classico (Veneto) **\$16.99** (reg \$19.99) An 85/15 blend of Garganega and Trebbiano di Soave sees sur lie aging in glass-lined cement tanks before one month of bottle aging. It is mineral-driven with medium body, excellent acidity and a citrusy palate. **Early spring pasta primavera, see above*

Brian: 2017 Maxville Lake Winery 'Big Max' Red Blend (California) **\$19.99** (reg \$22.99) Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah are fermented separately, then blended and aged 12 months in new and seasoned French oak and six months in bottle. Black cherry, plum and vanilla flavors with soft tannins. **Roasted chicken thighs on a bed of balsamic red onions*

Ted: 2018 Tenuta Viglione Primitivo (Puglia) **\$11.49** (reg \$13.49) Made from 100% Primitivo, aka Zinfandel, grown at the region's highest elevation, the wine is fermented and aged in stainless steel to preserve the fresh fruit flavors. It is medium- to full-bodied with notes of blueberries and plums. **Bucatini pasta with bacon, onion and tomatoes*

Carol: 2018 Westmount Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley) **\$14.99** (reg \$17.99) **90 WE** Light ruby red in the glass, it is a supple, fresh wine with beguiling aromas of berries and cherries. The palate is floral with a bit of earthy spice and a soft, silken finish. **Poached salmon over a bed of wilted baby spinach drizzled with chive butter*

Tony: 2016 Chateau Pascaud Bordeaux Superiore (Bordeaux) **\$10.99** (reg \$12.99) **91 WE** From the district of Fronsac, this classic, sustainably produced Right Bank Bordeaux blend of 90/10 Merlot and Cabernet Franc is full-bodied with soft, full tannins and a licorice finish. **Pan-seared pork chops with thyme and new red potatoes*