

GRAPEVINE WINE & SPIRITS'

FALL 2009

drinks[®]

THE MAGAZINE OF FINE
WINE, SPIRITS, AND LIVING

BY
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WINE REVIEW
SECTION!

PAIRING PERFECTION

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5 SPICY FALL COCKTAILS
WATER OF LIFE: IRISH WHISKEY

STAFF SELECTIONS



John Fields

Bouchard Pere & Fils Bourgogne (Pinot Noir) 2006



France is working diligently to try and inform the American consumer that their “red Burgundy” is Pinot Noir, which is not common knowledge among most wine shoppers. Good, entry-level Burgundy starts in the mid-\$20s per bottle, and goes up from there. This is a great example

of one producer’s attempt to show us what Burgundy is all about. While it looks light in the glass, this is powerful, aromatic, and quite dry, which is a common trait. Bright cherry, smoke, and a nice, abrupt acidity make this an enjoyable foray into French Pinot Noir. Expect to see many more like it on our shelves—I’m hooked! **\$24.99**

“75” Wine Company Cabernet Sauvignon Amber Knolls Vineyard 2005



This new release from Mr. Tuck Beckstoffer, of the famed grape growing family in California, is going to be a hit with Cabernet fans this fall. I really enjoyed this and found that it continues to show new flavors as it “opens up.” My second glass was tremendously fruitier than

the first, and gained a nice, “velvety” texture. Its tannins are youthful yet elegant, and I was surprised at the character for such an inexpensive wine. I typically like “monster” Cabs, but the elegance of this wine at such a reasonable price makes it certainly worth a try! **\$19.99**



David Hanes

Bell Big Guy Red Wine 2005



I always get excited about wines coming from small, family owned wineries—quality and not quantity is a must and Bell exceeds the standard. This was once a “winery only” bottle presented by the winemaker at dinner parties and shared with the winery’s

very own Wheaton Terrier named Ty (who is known as “Big Guy”). It’s easy to drink and offers a lot of flavor. From BBQs to your cool weather dinners, this wine is a perfect addition. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Syrah blend balancing dark fruit flavors with a medium body and good acidity. I drank this wine with a grilled sirloin marinated in an Asian sauce and served over rice—loved the combo! **\$19.99**

La Chasse du Pape Côtes du Rhône Prestige Blanc 2008



French wines are not only known for their quality, but for their long names. Luckily, you can find out a lot in the name though. “La Chasse” comes from a chest that held relics of certain popes during the 14th century. “Côtes du Rhone” is the region in France where

the grapes come from. And “Prestige Blanc” is their white wine option, blending classic varietals from that region: Grenache Blanc, Bourblanc, Clairette, and Roussane. The wine is not complex but it makes up for that with juicy fruit and a fresh, acidic finish. Easily enjoyable at a great price. **\$14.99**



Shannon Modesto

Villa San-Juliette Petite Sirah 2007



This is a new winery in Paso Robles, but you may have heard of it due to its owners: Nigel Lythgoe and Ken Warwick. Sound familiar? They are household names from their involvement with the hot TV show *So You Think You Can Dance*, and more. Head winemaker Adam LaZarre spent the last

eight and a half years honing his winemaking craft at Hahn Vineyards. We recently tasted and started carrying nearly the entire portfolio including Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot, Petite Sirah, and Cabernet Sauvignon. All of them are superb, but it is the Petite Sirah that especially grabbed my attention. It will not disappoint—and deserves America’s vote. **\$14.99**

Cheapskate Surly Chenin Blanc 2005



Surly is a play on the phrase “sur lies,” which means “on the lees.” Lees are the remaining yeasts in contact with the wine after fermentation, and often impart a creamy mouthfeel and hints of vanilla and malt. Surly also is created in the vision of the winemaker that great wines should

not cost too much. This has an aroma of watermelon rind and starts light with peach and pear flavors, opens to the “sur lies” creaminess, with a surprise finish of minerality and lime zest. A wine this complex could easily cost almost twice as much, and that is the winemaker’s point. The consumer wins every time while sipping on Surly. **\$9.99**



Dan Dixon

For my choices this time around I selected two red wines that could easily straddle the division between summer and fall. Here are great reasons to give these a try:

Razor’s Edge Shiraz 2006



I’ve always enjoyed this juicy wine from the McLaren Vale in South Australia. It starts with heady aromas of dark berries and spice. This translates to full flavors of blackberry on the palate. It is big and jammy and surprisingly full bodied for the price. The finish is nicely balanced

with a bit of toast that offsets the berry fruit. This is the wine that would be great with a barbecue in late summer. It’s spicy notes would complement many a grill creation. At the same time, it would be nice and warming on a fall day after raking the leaves. **\$12.99**

Tres Ojos Old Vine Garnacha 2007



From the Calatayud region in north central Spain, Tres Ojos produces some great wines for the price. This would be good for Merlot lovers who want to be adventurous. Its aromas are spicy and fruity with a good deal of cherry. Its fruit is very bright on the palate but also has a bit of

earthiness that I have come to love in Spanish wines. It finishes with a pop of acidity that makes it great with food. This wine would love a hamburger on the grill or would be great with roasted meats in the kitchen. **\$9.99**

STAFF SELECTIONS

(L-R): Christine Larkin, Jared Myers, Rich Stevens, Jake Myers, Becky Little, and Zeb Barron.



Zeb Barron

Dawn Candelore

Christine Larkin

Becky Little

Lurghall Mead 2006



Lurghall's honey wine is an all-around winner! Thought to be the oldest fermented beverage on the planet, mead can be used as an aperitif or alongside a fruity dessert. I suggest trying it with your favorite cigar.

\$12.99 375ml

Strong Arms Shiraz 2007



This shows good fruit throughout. It gives the notion of a big wine without the rough tannins, making it incredibly smooth and balanced. I like it because it's an impressive wine at a great price.

\$12.99 750ml

Clean Slate Riesling 2008



This complex, yet easy-to-drink wine shows stone fruit on the palate and a nice, crisp finish. While definitely on the sweeter side, Clean Slate is not cloying and has a lovely, rich mouth feel. Pair this with anything from cheese and fruit to spicy food.

\$11.99 750ml

Layer Cake Shiraz 2007



I love the Layer Cake Shiraz! It is jammy, flavorful, full-bodied, and has nice acidity. It's perfect to enjoy by itself or along with food.

\$17.99 750ml

Brad Myers

Jake Myers

Jared Myers

Rich Stevens

The Formula 2007



"Wow! This wine rocks!" These are thoughts that crossed my mind when I tasted The Formula Cabernet Shiraz blend. This is a delicious, deep, dense full bodied red wine with lush aromas of dark cherry for a good price. Bravo!

\$16.99 750ml

Schneider Aventinus Eisbock



This beer is one of my favorites. It's spicy and has a ton of fig flavor. I'm the new guy at the GV, so I'm still learning. My favorite lessons will be in the world of high gravity beer!

\$4.49 11.2oz

Jason Stephens Syrah 2006



The first glass was good, but I came back to this wine the next day and it was even better. It's earthy with tobacco flavors combined with dark red fruits. This is an awesome buy; you get a lot of flavor and depth without breaking the bank.

\$16.99 750ml

Justin Obtuse 2007



A port-style wine made from 100% Cabernet fruit, this little bottle packs a much fuller body than many tawny or ruby selections. I love a good port style wine that's not so syrupy sweet, and the Obtuse delivers.

\$14.99 375ml

PIGSKIN PICKS

Wine teams up with football party fare for a winning combination.



For many of us red-blooded Americans, fall means good food, friends, and football. And just like Thanksgiving doesn't feel quite right without turkey and cranberries, a football party seems a little off without certain beloved stand-bys—from spicy chili and zesty chicken wings to burgers and pizza. This year, though, why not pass on the keg and bring wine to the party? Football party fare serves up a wide range of flavors that can match just as well with wine as it does with the usual beer selection.

Karen Page and her husband, Andrew Dornenburg, James Beard Award-winning co-authors of *What to Drink with What You Eat* and *The Flavor Bible* help you tackle pairing wine with a selection of football party favorites that will make you forget whether your team won or lost.

CHICKEN WINGS (Buffalo and BBQ): There are few things better than bubbles to cleanse your tongue of spice and heat. But this isn't the time for fine Champagne. Try an ice-cold Prosecco instead.

CHILI: Try a relatively lighter-bodied, fruity California Zinfandel, a Côtes du Rhône, or a Syrah-based red wine.

CHIPS AND SALSA/QUESADILLAS: Especially if guacamole is on the table,

pair your tortilla chips and salsa with a chilled Torrontes from Argentina. Or go with a nice, cold Spanish Cava.

DEVILED EGGS: Sparkling wine often goes well with eggs—try either Cava or Prosecco on game day. A nice Sauvignon Blanc will do the trick, as well.

HAMBURGER/CHEESEBURGER: All-American hamburgers go well with all-American wines like Zinfandel. With cheese and bacon, consider a Spanish Rioja.

MEATBALLS/SAUCE: Tomato sauce calls for an acidic red—from Italy, better yet. Go for Chianti or another Sangiovese-based wine.

PIZZA

- **Pepperoni/Sausage:** Go with an Italian Barbera or a classic like Chianti.

- **Veggie:** If you like your pizza with peppers and onions, try a Cabernet Franc-based red wine, or a Sauvignon Blanc if you prefer white.

- **Supreme:** When you've got everything but the kitchen sink on your pizza, consider an Italian Prosecco, especially a pink (rosé) Prosecco if you can get your hands on one! It goes with virtually everything.

SAUSAGE/HOT DOG: Pour a slightly chilled Beaujolais—or if you'd like a white, try an off-dry Riesling.

SUBMARINE SANDWICHES: Consider a chilled rosé wine—it's an incredibly flexible style that can make peace with virtually any meat, cheese, or condiment on a sub.

VEGGIES AND DIP: Try a Sauvignon Blanc, especially if it's an herb-based dip—the herbs in the dip will cancel out those in the wine, playing up the wine's fruitiness.

If the game-day table includes a selection of these dishes, guests will certainly want to sample a variety of tasty tidbits, so what wines can play nice with a plateful of these foods better than others? "We'd go with a chilled Prosecco or a rosé wine. They're both incredibly versatile," says Page and Dornenburg. "And if you can find a rare pink Prosecco—all the better!"

GRAPEVINE RECOMMENDS

Segura Vuidas Brut Reserva Cava
\$9.99

Hahn Cabernet Franc 2006
\$16.99

Spinnaker Pinot Noir Rosé
\$11.99

Falesco Sangiovese 2006
\$14.99

MY FAVORITE THINGS

Fall is my favorite season. While it's still hot in September, when kids are back in school, football season is in full swing, and pumpkins appear, that first cool evening takes us by surprise. For my fall birthday I'm treated to this favorite meal with wines pairing each course and my palate sings! Bon appétit! —Shannon Modesto



FIRST COURSE: LOBSTER CEVICHE WITH CILANTRO AND JALAPEÑO WINE: MUMM CUVEE

There is nothing more tantalizing than lobster and sparkling wine served together. It is a classic first course pairing, but I like to jolt my taste buds with extra spice and acidity. The lobster tail and claw meat is marinated and cooked in lime juice then tossed and served chilled with cilantro, jalapeño, red pepper, and jicama. Mumm Cuvée is a semi-dry sparkling wine from California with peach, pear, and rose aromas and flavors. A little yeast is detected on the finish and while it is a creamy sparkler, it is not heavy. The mild sweetness of the cuvée calms the jalapeño bite, and the stone fruit brings out the freshness of the cilantro. **\$19.99**

MAIN COURSE: DRY RUBBED AND GRILLED RIB-EYE WINE: HOGUE GENESIS MERLOT 2006

The desire for a thick, marbled steak and a bold wine to match goes back to my days serving at a local steakhouse. My enthusiasm for a perfectly grilled rib-eye never diminished despite the hundreds of plates I sat down in front of eager guests. My dry rub of brown sugar, smoked paprika, garlic, salt, and cracked pepper creates a perfect thick crust every time. This layer keeps in the juices that are just as important to enjoying a good steak as the quality of the juice in the bottle is to having a good glass of wine. For me, the juice has to be Hogue Genesis Merlot. I have tasted every release from 2001 to its current 2006 vintage, and the quality consistency is excellent. Big juicy blackberry flavors make way for firm tannins, which calm down when accompanied by the perfect forkful of medium-cooked rib-eye. **\$14.99**



DESSERT: DARK CHOCOLATE SOUFFLÉ WINE: TAYLOR FLADGATE LBV PORT 2003

This dessert course is destined for a very long "Mmmmm..." moment. Slightly bitter chocolate whipped to a frenzy and a sweet, light-bodied late-bottled vintage (LBV) port is a pairing you should really try. Taylor Fladgate's 2003 LBV sings with red raspberries and hints of almond and vanilla. Silky, warm, and creamy yet light chocolate soufflé melts in the mouth. A small sip of the LBV continues the creamy mouth feel and serves as a slightly tangy counterpoint to the dark chocolate. I hide a chocolate truffle at the bottom of my soufflé ramekin, and pour a second glass of the LBV to celebrate my discovery. Enjoy! **\$25.49**

WINE AND CHEESE PARTNERS

Wine consultants Dan Dixon and David Hanes dish on wine and food that make great matches.



Dan Dixon

Could two foods have ever had a better relationship than wine and cheese? One of the most significant liquids ever put into a bottle and one of the most versatile items to ever cross a plate can make any get-together better.

Cheese plates can be created in a number of ways. You can assemble a variety of cheeses from the same region, such as English cheeses or Wisconsin cheeses. You can try one type of cheese from different locations, such as Bleu D'Auvergne and Stilton. We opted for three distinct styles of cheese. We chose **Stilton**, a pungent blue cheese from England, **Parmigiano-Reggiano** from



Italy, and a typical mild **goat cheese** from the United States. For added fun we included some figs, prosciutto, and honey to drizzle.

A classic pairing with pungent Stilton has always been a sweet wine and the Sauternes we selected did an excellent job. Stilton is one of the world's great cheeses made by only a handful of cheese makers using strict regulations.

It is a strong, creamy cheese with a briny quality that paired very well with the sweetness of the Sauternes.

Parmigiano-Reggiano comes from virtually the same region as Lambrusco, making them easy partners. The fruity effervescence of Antica Cantina Ceci's 2008 Lambrusco was a great backdrop to the salty, nutty cheese.

On a whim, I picked up goat cheese at the market and it had one of the star appearances of the day. We discovered that a little of the goat cheese on top of a fig drizzled with honey paired incredibly with the Sauternes. The cheese's subtle chalkiness was a magnificent mate to the caramel aspects of the wine.

Use this simple, delicious pairing as an appetizer at your next dinner party, or as the main plate and bottle experience at your next gathering of friends.



David Hanes

Château d'Arche Sauternes 2003 \$46.99

If you're a fan of wine and have never had a French Sauternes, it's time to give one a try. Sauternes is a sweet wine from the Bordeaux region in southwestern France. This area is focused on making excellent wine using mainly the Sémillon grape and a process known as noble rot. This means that the grapes are left on the vine to be harvested later in the season than most grapes after a certain mold has taken hold of the clusters and squeezed all the water out, concen-



trating the sugars. If this process goes smoothly, the wine that is produced from these shriveled grapes is nothing short of extraordinary.

Château d'Arche is a second growth château, putting it on a short list of great winemakers in Sauternes. This wine has a strong aroma and complex flavors. As soon as you take a sip, the honey flavor comes rushing in. It is rich and heavy with a long finish that is warm and slightly acidic. The sweet flavors are rich, like the sweetness you get with raw honey, caramel and dried fruit flavors. I've never had such a balanced and complex white wine! There is so much going on in this bottle. Try Château d'Arche Sauternes and experience one of the gems of the wine world.



Antica Cantina Ceci Lambrusco Amabile 2008 \$12.99

In the U.S., Lambrusco is a top selling Italian varietal with a reputation for being cheap and overly sweet. However, this isn't always the case. Grown in the heart of northern Italy, Lambrusco can create simple wines that are fun and vibrant. This region is known for its culinary expertise and Lambrusco is made as a good food pairing option.

It's an example of a great wine with simple qualities. We smelled fragrances similar to balsamic vinegar. It tasted fresh and tart like cherries and pomegranate and the finish was very quick and decently acidic.

Lambrusco is slightly fizzy (*frizzante*) but less so than sparkling wines. These bubbles help give it a little more personality. It's meant to be drunk young so enjoy promptly! ▀

JOSH'S PICKS

As we pay homage to the malty beverage this issue, I have selected two of my favorite heartier brews that I hope you'll enjoy—and they're perfect as the weather cools. I also highlight interesting spirits to help you mix it up this fall, along with cocktail options to add to your list of recipes. Cheers! —Josh Mulholland



LION STOUT

For those of you who enjoy Guinness and other dark beers, this stout's for you! It's a full-bodied beer from Sri Lanka and it is truly a "lion" of a beer. Its 8% alcohol gives it a good amount of weight. There's a hint of sweetness that keeps the oak and chocolate flavors from being overly bitter. The Lion stout is rich, but it's not nearly as filling as many other stout beers. It's creamy and full of flavor with a smooth finish. This brew is made for food and will go great with your football party favorites.

\$9.99 6PK



MORETTI LA ROSSA

Birra Moretti is made in Italy but owned by Heineken. The La Rossa is their high gravity amber beer weighing in at 7.2% alcohol. This Italian lager is made using 100% malted barley. Its malt flavors and creamy texture are extremely well balanced thanks to the use of hops, which give the beer a bitter flavor that keeps it from being too yeasty on the finish. You can smell hints of citrus and mild spices. This beer was great with pizza!

\$10.99 6PK

PRIMO VODKA

There are so many vodkas out there it's hard to know where to start. Too many of them seem to be the exact same product in a different package. This is where Primo sets itself apart. It's made from grapes, but unlike many of the other grape vodkas, Primo's makers use 100% varietals (i.e. Malbec, Chardonnay, etc.). Doing this gives it a flavor all its own. They're using Argentine grapes, and distilling only three times to keep some of the original grape flavor. It's clean, smooth vodka, with warm flavors and a peppery spice. Use this to spice up your next vodka drink.

\$24.99 750ML



LE TOURMENT VERT ABSINTHE

With the reemergence of grand wormwood-based absinthe, we've gotten to taste a lot of the green fairy here at the GV. Most are so hot, as you'd expect with proofs close to 150, you can barely taste anything but the alcohol burn. Le Tourment has toned the proof down a bit. They're only at 100 proof! That may still be warm but it makes their absinthe mellow enough for mixed drinks while holding onto the typical anise flavor—perfect for the original ice water/sugar cube presentation. This is a great all-around absinthe and it's surprisingly affordable.

\$48.99 750ML



VODKA COLLINS

Use Primo's Malbec Vodka to make this Vodka Collins recipe come to life. Have it for starters and then pour your favorite Malbec wine with dinner. It's the perfect transition.

1 1/2 ounces PrimoVodka Malbec
2 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon sugar
Soda water to top
Slice of orange garnish

Shake the lemon juice and sugar. Pour into a Collins glass and add the ice and vodka. Top with soda water and stir well. Serve at once.

SAZERAC COCKTAIL

Try this Sazerac cocktail using Le Tourment's Absinthe. The Sazerac is thought to be the original mixed drink recipe in the U.S.

1 teaspoon Le Tourment Vent Absinthe
1 sugar cube
1 1/2 ounces rye whiskey
3 dashes of bitters
1 lemon peel twist

Chill an old-fashioned cocktail glass. Add the absinthe to the glass; swirl it around and coat the entire sides and bottom of the glass. Discard the excess.

In a cocktail shaker, add 4 or 5 small ice cubes, sugar, rye whiskey, and bitters. Shake gently for about 30 seconds; strain into the prepared old-fashioned glass. Twist lemon peel over the drink and then place in the drink.