



Grapevine

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Falling in Love with Portuguese Wines

This month, a love letter to Portuguese wines. A country of varied climates and topography, it is one of the oldest wine producing countries in the world, with 13 wine regions. Let's look at a few.

Portugal's Vinho Verde region is in the country's northwest corner. Bordered to the west by the Atlantic Ocean, the Douro River runs through its southern tip, while the north and east are bordered by mountains and the Minho River, all of which results in a cool, breezy climate.

Borges' **NV Gatão Vinho Verde DOC**, made from a blend of Azal, Pedernã, Trajadura, Avesso and Loureiro is medium-dry with soft fruit flavors and a subtle effervescence. This is a summer sipper and tastes as fresh and clean as the region is lush and green. \$8.66

Tejo is in the heart of Portugal, not far from Lisbon, on the Tejo River. The region has been planted with olive trees and vineyards since the Middle Ages, with winemaking going back to 1170. Nearly half the world's cork production comes from Portugal, with 30,000 acres of cork forests in Tejo. The Fiuza family estate grows both indigenous and international varietals, bringing tradition and a



modern sensibility together. **Fiuza's 2019 estate bottled Rosé** is a 50/50 blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Touriga Nacional. Undergoing temperature-controlled fermentation in tank, it has aromas and flavors of strawberries, blackberries and flowers, with a clean, fresh finish. \$10.99

Another estate-bottled gemstone from **Fiuza is the 2016 Premium Alicante Bouschet**. Aged for eight months in new oak, followed by an additional six months in bottle, this wine is at the gorgeous intersection of fruit and spice. Intensely aromatic and flavorful, it has alluring notes of blackberries, peppercorns and dark, rich chocolate, with excellent structure and

a lingering finish. **91 WE/ Top 100** \$15.99

Northwest of Tejo on the coast of the Atlantic is the Lisboa wine region in Portugal's hilly capital, known to us as Lisbon.

The **2018 Vidigal Reserva** from Lisboa is a 70/20/10 blend of Tinto Roriz, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon. This laidback wine with juicy fruit flavors is balanced by its rich, leathery notes. \$8.99

The Douro Valley runs along the Douro river, which starts in Spain and goes to the Atlantic coast, arriving at the city of Oporto, known for Port. A roundup of Portuguese wines would not be complete without Port. There are numerous categories: Vintage,

Single-Quinta Vintage, Late Bottled Vintage (LBV), Crusted, Tawnies and more; but we're going to look at LBV, which was developed as an informal alternative to Vintage Port. Whereas Vintage Port's year is declared and must be approved within a specific timespan, LBV is wine from a single year bottled between four and six years after aging and can be enjoyed right away.

Taylor Fladgate's 2014 Late Bottled Vintage Porto

is a blend of Touriga Franca, Touriga Nacional, Tempranillo, Tinto Fino and Tinta Roriz. It has berry and cigar box aromas with an elegant palate of cassis, raspberries and apricots. A glass of this gorgeous Port would elevate any evening to fine living. **90 WE** \$24.49

From patio sipping to dinner and a late night toast under the stars, take a tasting spin through Portugal and enjoy these August days. ♦

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Did you know... Just as true Champagne must come from France's Champagne region, Port wine can come only from Portugal's Douro region, where it has been produced for more than 2000 years.

Enjoying the Saratoga Races Virtually

If you can manage a television on a patio, you're on your way to enjoying the 2020 Saratoga races. If not,

bring your laptop outside and watch the races online. Gather with a few horse-racing-fan friends, keeping your distance.

Set up a bar with frozen margaritas (see recipe below) and wine, of course. The Vinho Verde and Rosé on page 1 would be just the ticket. Set out plates,

napkins and silverware and an array of apps. Individual shrimp cocktails on ice, an antipasto and a selection of olives would be perfect. Then sit back and watch.

Chicken Milanaise

Serves 4

2, skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut in half crosswise and pounded to ¼" thickness
¼ cup whole milk
3 large eggs
½ cup all-purpose flour
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 cup panko breadcrumbs
2 Tbsp butter
2 Tbsp olive oil
Arugula, for serving
Balsamic vinegar, for drizzling
1/2 cup freshly shaved Parmesan
1 lemon, cut into wedges



In a dish, whisk together the milk and eggs. Place the flour in another dish, add salt and pepper, stir. Place the breadcrumbs in a third dish.

Sprinkle salt and pepper on both sides of the chicken; dredge in the flour, then the egg mixture, then in the breadcrumbs.

Heat 1 Tbsp butter and 1 Tbsp olive oil in a skillet over medium-low heat. When it's melted and bubbling hot, add 2 pieces of the chicken and cook, flipping once, until the breading is golden

brown and the chicken is cooked, 2 to 3 minutes per side; transfer the chicken to a clean plate. Add the remaining butter and oil to the skillet and cook the other 2 pieces of chicken.

To serve, place 1 piece of cooked chicken on each plate alongside the arugula. Top with a spray of kosher salt, a drizzle of balsamic vinegar and a few Parmesan shavings. Serve with a lemon wedge on the side and Sheila's staff pick, below.

Frozen Margarita

Makes 2 cocktails

Coarse Kosher salt
4 oz Patron Blanco Tequila
2 oz freshly squeezed lime juice
1 ½ oz (3 Tbsp) Cointreau
2 lime wheels



Place the Kosher salt on a small plate. Wet the rims of two chilled Margarita glasses, press the rims into the salt and set aside.

Add the remaining ingredients to a blender and top with one cup of ice. Blend until the mixture is smooth and frothy. Divide the mix into two salted Margarita glasses.

Garnish each with a lime wheel and toast to deliciously warm summer days.

August 2020 Staff Wine Picks

Sheila: 2018 Brick & Mortar Chardonnay (Anderson Valley) **\$16.99** (reg \$19.99) **92 WE** Grapes are whole-cluster pressed, then fermented for upwards of six months and aged for ten months, both in neutral French oak barrels. It has aromatic notes of lemon zest, melon and juniper with a citrusy palate and excellent structure. **Chicken Milanaise, see above*

Ian: 2017 Roth Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Alexander Valley) **\$22.99** (reg \$26.99) Blended with 4% Petit Verdot, it undergoes malolactic fermentation and is aged on the lees in French, American and Hungarian oak for 18 months. It is full-bodied and rich with mocha and blackberry flavors. **Grilled porterhouse steak*

Brian: 2018 Turley Juvenile Zinfandel (California) **\$21.99** (reg \$25.99) Grapes from Turley's best vineyard sites are fermented with natural yeasts and then aged in seasoned French and American oak for 12 months. It has flavors of black peppercorns, blueberries and cherries, with balanced acidity. **BBQ baby back ribs*

Tony: 2019 Pine Ridge Chenin Blanc + Viognier (California) **\$11.99** (reg \$13.99) Grapes from Clarksburg and Lodi were harvested at low sugar levels to capture the fresh fruit flavors of the Chenin Blanc and the floral spiciness of the Viognier, then cold-fermented and aged in stainless steel. Crisp and bright with honeysuckle flavors. **Shrimp and avocado tostada*

Carol: NV Cruset Blanc de Blancs (France) **\$15.99** (reg \$18.99) Made from Airén, Chardonnay and Muscat grapes, this sparkling wine has aromas of pears and lemon meringue, flavors of brioche and white peaches, with a crisp, dry and light finish. **Connecticut style lobster roll*

Ben: 2018 Ciacci Piccolomini d'Aragona Rosso di Montalcino (Tuscany) **\$19.49** (reg \$25.99) **92 WE** Made from 100% organic Sangiovese Grosso, the wine is fermented in stainless steel and concrete vats then aged for 12 months in Slavonian oak casks. Cherry, raspberry and licorice notes with polished tannins. **Grilled sausage and mushroom pizza*