



Grapevine

August 2022

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In the Heat of Summer...Let's Picnic!

Oh, these August days. We're caught between sunburn, readiness for cooler temps and ambivalence about the seasonal transition. Summer was meant for picnics. Let's revel in a month of outdoor fêtes.

How about a Track day to keep you cool? Rosé and a charcuterie platter will be simple for you and keep your friends wanting to come back next year. Cured meats, artisan cheeses, nuts, dried fruits and crackers paired with a clean, dry rosé will make a day of wins or losses trackside into a successful afternoon. Consider the **2021 Fleurs de Prairie Rosé** from France's Languedoc, the **2020 Von Winning Rosé** of Pinot Noir from Pfalz, Germany or the **2021 Casanova della Spinetta Rosato** from Toscana, 50/50 Sangiovese and Prugnolo Gentile. Check out our rosé garden, blooming with over 25 wines.

How about a pre-concert fiesta in Saratoga Spa Park with tapas and Sangria? Bring your favorite noshes — tapenade and crostini; thinly sliced Manchego; Marcona almonds — on a pretty platter to serve with pitchers of Sangria. It's simple: a red, white or rosé wine, nothing fancy; we like the **2020 Viña Zorzal Garnacha** with its nose of bright raspberry fruit



and spice; a spirit — we suggest **Cointreau**, France's orange-flavored triple sec liqueur — berries or chopped fresh plums or peaches; a vigorous stir and a chill of at least four hours to let the flavors blend; then pour into ice-filled glasses, topped with sparkling wine or seltzer. You'll have a lavish spread meant to be shared.

Tacos aren't just for Tuesdays. Gather your bounty: grilled steak, pork, shrimp or your favorite protein; red peppers, shishitos, zucchini; homemade guac and salsa; shredded cheeses; and your favorite tortillas. Paired with a pitcher of Margaritas made with **Curamia Tequila Blanco** made from 100% pure Agave, you'll strike a chord, be it jazz, blues or the finest rock 'n roll. Curamia is

owned and operated by hardworking, vibrant Albany native Melissa Del Salvio. Her spirit makes a fine cocktail or straight sipper for the not-so-faint-of-heart.

Southern appetizers paired with icy Bourbon sounds dreamy for a steamy day or eve. Deviled eggs, pimento cheese toasts or crab cakes with iced Bourbon cocktails will not disappoint. The **1792 Small Batch Bourbon Whiskey** was named in honor of the year the state of Kentucky joined the US. Bold yet smooth, it makes a fine Georgia Smash, Manhattan Beach or Whiskey Sour. Intrigued by a Gold Rush or Cowboy Coffee, **Fistful of Bourbon** blends five straight Bourbon Whiskies, aged a minimum of two years.

If you're looking to curb your lusty month of picnic fare and libations while still being festive, go lean and elegant with slow-roasted cod loin or salmon. Slow-roasting can be done in under a half-hour and yields moist, tender fish. With a foil pack of summer vegetables and a vibrant sunset, you'll have stumbled into a beautiful universe. For cod, the **2020 Two Angels Sauvignon Blanc** from High Valley, CA is just right. And for salmon fans, the **2019 Benton-Lane Pinot Noir** from Oregon's Willamette Valley would be delicious.

It's not easy to kiss summer goodbye. A month of picnics to draw it out, however, will help. Together, we can raise our glasses to the sweetest of seasons. Cheers. ♦

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15% off all Wine —
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Every Day!

For more drink recipes...
curamiatequila.com/cocktails — *Piña Picante, Paloma or Estela* and so much more.

For cooling Bourbon cocktails, check out fistfulofbourbon.com/cocktails or 1792bourbon.com/cocktails/

Pan Bagnat

From the French countryside, try this simple, delicious picnic sandwich meant to be shared. It can and should be made ahead, and it's simple to put together.

2 anchovy fillets, minced, optional
1 small garlic clove, minced
1 tsp red wine vinegar
½ tsp Dijon mustard
Pinch of salt and freshly ground pepper
2 T extra virgin olive oil
1 small ciabatta, halved like a hamburger bun
½ regular garden cucumber
1 medium-size, ripe tomato, sliced
½ small red onion, thinly sliced
1 5-6 oz can olive oil-packed tuna, drained
8 large basil leaves
2 T sliced pitted green and black olives
1 hard-boiled egg, peeled and thinly sliced



In a small bowl, whisk together the anchovies, garlic, vinegar, mustard, salt and pepper. Slowly drizzle in oil, whisking constantly.

Peel and halve cucumber lengthwise, scoop out seeds and slice into thin slices. Add to vinaigrette and toss well. Spread half the cucumbers on bottom of bread. Top with tomato and onion slices, then with tuna, basil, olives and egg slices. Top egg with remaining cucumbers and vinaigrette. Cover with second bread half and firmly press sandwich together.

Wrap sandwich tightly in foil, waxed paper or plastic wrap, then place in a plastic bag. Put sandwich under a weight such as a cutting board topped with a cast iron pan or dumbbells. Weight sandwich for 7 to 10 minutes, then flip and weight it for another 7 to 10 minutes. Unwrap, slice

and serve or keep it wrapped for up to 8 hours before serving. Ideal with one of the rosés on page 1 or one of the cocktails below.

Cool as a Cucumber

From curamatequila.com/cocktails, see page 1

1 ½ oz Curamia Tequila Blanco
¾ oz Fresh Lime Juice
½ oz Agave Nectar
Sliced Cucumber
Pinch of Salt
Seltzer



Muddle cucumber slices with salt in shaking tin. Add tequila, lime and agave. Shake and double strain into a highball glass. Add ice and top with seltzer. Garnish with a mandolin slice of cucumber.

La Vie en Rose

The newsletter writer and her husband fell in love with this aperitif, perfect for a summer evening while prepping dinner.

2 oz Lillet Rosé
½ oz St Germain
2 oz Soda Water
4-6 Raspberries
Strip of orange peel, about 5" long



Fill a wine glass halfway with ice. Add Lillet Rosé and St-Germain Elderflower. Top gently with soda water and stir. Garnish with blackberries and a strip of orange zest threaded on to a cocktail skewer. The zest looks like ribbon candy and perfumes the cocktail beautifully.

August 2022 Staff Wine Picks

Sheila: 2019 Joyce 'Submarine Canyon' Chardonnay (Monterey) \$19.99 (reg \$23.99) **90 WE** From Monterey's Arroyo Seco appellation, this Chard has a light- to medium-bodied palate accented by the region's cool marine influences, with plush layers of apples, pears, cantaloupe, peach and lemon, finishing with a subtle streak of oak. *Connecticut-style lobster rolls

Ian: 2021 Simone Santini Teunta le Calcinaie di San Gimignano (Tuscany) \$16.99 (reg \$19.99) Made from 100% organic Vernaccia grapes, fermented and aged in stainless steel, it has intense perfume of white flowers, followed by a fresh and thirst-quenching palate of lemon, mineral and white melon flavors. *Homemade focaccia with Taleggio

Brian: 2018 Domaine Les Clos Maurice 'La Pièce d'Or' Saumur (Loire Valley) \$11.99 (reg \$13.99) Made from Cabernet Franc, a parent grape to Cabernet Sauvignon and a staple Loire red, the wine is dry, medium-bodied, earthy and lean, and its clean profile, bordering on austere, will counter rich dishes beautifully. *Grilled lamb kebabs or eggplant on pita

Bill: 2019 Averaen Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley) \$18.99 (reg \$21.99) **91 AG** Fermented in stainless steel and neutral barrels, then aged 10 months in oak, the wine has lots of juicy fresh fruit and berry flavors with accents of black tea, blood orange and anise, and it finishes ripe and plush with excellent acidity. *Grilled salmon with lemon and dill

Ben: 2016 Castellani Collesano Sangiovese (Toscana) \$10.99 (reg \$12.99) **94 JS** Made with grapes from the Alta Maremma that see a bit of barrel-aging to bring out coffee and vanilla flavors, this easy-drinking wine has rich fruit flavors of plums and strawberries with a chocolatey finish and fine tannins. *Pasta with garden fresh tomato sauce

John M: 2020 Daisy Cabernet Sauvignon by the Bieler Family (Columbia Valley, WA) \$10.99 (reg \$12.99) A 75/25 blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah, the wine was fermented whole berry and whole cluster with native yeasts before nine months' aging in seasoned oak. Notes of blackberries, cassis and tobacco. *Charred burgers with cheddar on brioche