



# Grapevine

February 2019

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## The Stunning Wines of Portugal

Sharing a border with Spain to its north and east, Portugal is the westernmost country in continental Europe. Known mostly for its capital of Lisbon and the city of Porto, the entire country is an explorer's dream, with dazzling beaches, architecture that reflects its rich history and incredible fish-centered cuisine. And if the surfing, sardines, and sunsets over the Atlantic aren't enough for you, the wine and Port are fantastic and happen to be incredible values. Let's take a look at some of the wines—and a beautiful Port—worthy of attentive sipping.

Though *Vinho Verde* translates to *green wine*, it is in fact a winemaking region in northwest Portugal and the country's largest DOC. The wine is light, fresh and meant to be enjoyed young. From Minho, north of the Douro Valley, the **NV Vinha das Margaridas Vinho Verde** vines are encouraged to grow up trees and other structures to higher ground to promote air circulation and preserve the health of the vines. Fermented in stainless steel, the citrus and floral aromas are inviting and are ideal for easy sipping



or as a pairing to shellfish and salads. \$8.49

The **2014 Vinha das Margaridas Red Reserva** from the Douro, south of Minho, is a blend of Touriga Franca, Tinta Roriz and Tinta Barroca. While the majority of the wine is aged in stainless steel or concrete tanks, a small portion is aged six months in French and American oak. Beautifully balanced, it has aromas of ripe red cherries and vanilla and makes a striking partner to chicken or pork. \$12.99

The **2017 Fiuza Rosé** is from Tejo in the heart of Portugal, not far from Lisbon. Made from Touriga Nacional and Cabernet Sauvignon, this Wine Enthusiast Best Buy gets its rosy hue from leaving the juice in contact with

the grapes' skins for 24 hours, before a slow, cool fermentation. Fragrant and elegant, it has flavors of red berries and is a terrific partner to light hors d'oeuvres. \$10.99

Sandwiched between Minho to the north and Tejo to the south are Dão, Bairrada and Lisboa—regions from which grapes used to make the **2015 Silk and Spice Red** come. Named for the Portuguese explorers who discovered the spice route to the East Indies, this blend of 40% Touriga Nacional and 20/20/20 Baga, Syrah, and Alicante Bouchet sees malolactic fermentation and spends six months in American oak. The spicy warmth, soft tannins and juicy finish would make it an exceptional pairing for

barbecued ribs. **90 WE #75/**  
Top 100 2017 \$9.49

Port comes exclusively from Portugal's Douro Valley. A recognized name in Port production, Fonseca makes an exceptional one by blending wines from its own estates with those made from independent farmers' grapes. **Fonseca's NV Bin 27 Ruby Port Reserve** is rich with black fruit flavors and a smooth, velvety texture. A blend of reserve wines selected for their full body and intense fruit character, the wines are matured in large seasoned oak vats for four years before bottling to provide smoothness and complexity. Try it with Stilton and walnuts or dark chocolate. **90 WS** \$16.99

Warm this frigid winter with a taste exploration of Portugal's delicious wines and allow yourself to be transported. ♦

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**Every Day!!!**

**Did you know...** Portugal has a long and strong winemaking heritage and claims more than 250 native varietals. Though there are some familiar varietals from other countries, most typically in the south, the Portuguese are fiercely determined to preserve the use of their native grapes.

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

*Days not mentioned will feature New Arrivals.*

**Fri 2/8:** Wines and sparklers to pair with Valentine's Day dinner at home

**Sat 2/9:** Unrated wine gems... Unrated lovely wines we want you to try

**Fri 2/15:** February Staff Picks

**Sat 2/16:** American wines to celebrate Presidents' Day

**Fri 2/22:** Portuguese wines from page 1 of the newsletter

**Fri 3/1:** Wines from the 90s Club

### Braised Short Ribs

*Adapted from*

Food and Wine Magazine

2 Tbsp canola oil

6 flanken-style short ribs with bones, cut 2" thick (about 4 lbs)

Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper

1 large onion, finely chopped

2 carrots, sliced

3 celery ribs, sliced

3 garlic cloves, thickly sliced

One 750-ml bottle dry red wine, such as Cabernet Sauvignon

4 thyme sprigs

3 cups chicken stock



In a large skillet, heat the oil. Season the ribs with salt and pepper. Add them to the skillet and cook over moderate heat, turning once, until browned and crusty, about 18 minutes. Transfer the ribs to a shallow baking dish in a single layer.

Add the onion, carrots, celery and garlic to the skillet and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until very soft and lightly browned, about 20 minutes. Add the wine and thyme sprigs and bring to a boil over high heat. Pour the hot marinade over the ribs and let cool. Cover and refrigerate overnight, turning the ribs once.

Preheat the oven to 350°. Transfer the ribs and marinade to a large, enameled cast-iron casserole. Add the chicken stock and bring to a boil. Cover and cook in the lower third of the oven for 1 1/2 hours, until the meat is tender but not falling apart. Uncover and

braise for 45 minutes longer, turning the ribs once or twice, until the sauce is reduced by about half and the meat is very tender.

Transfer the meat to a clean shallow baking dish, discarding the bones as they fall off. Strain the sauce into a heatproof measuring cup and skim off as much fat as possible. Pour the sauce over the meat; there should be about 2 cups.

Preheat the broiler. Broil the meat, turning once or twice, until glazed and sizzling, about 10 minutes. Transfer the meat to plates, spoon the sauce on top and serve with Ian's pick, below.

### My Funny Clementine

*Adapted from liquor.com*

1 1/2 oz The Botanist Gin

4 clementine segments

1/4 oz lemon juice

1/2 oz simple syrup

2 dashes orange bitters

Prosecco or your favorite sparkling wine, to top

1 clementine or orange wedge or twist, for garnish



Add all the ingredients except the prosecco or sparkling wine to a shaker and fill with ice.

Shake, and strain into a Champagne flute.

Top with sparkling wine and garnish with a clementine or orange wedge or twist. Serve to your sweetheart.

## February 2019 Staff Wine Picks

**Sheila: 2017 Raeburn Chardonnay** (Russian River Valley) **\$14.49** (reg \$16.99) **90 JS** Fermented and aged in stainless steel (25%) and French and Hungarian oak (75%) and undergoing partial malolactic fermentation and six months' sur lie aging, graceful, bright fruit flavors mingle with toast and vanilla notes. \*Crab bisque with floating croutons

**Ian: 2016 Educated Guess Cabernet Sauvignon** (Napa) **\$21.49** (reg \$24.99) Blended with a small percentage of Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc, it is a focused Bordeaux-style blend brimming with toasty oak, milk chocolate and blackberries — a vinous puzzle that begs for a thoughtful pairing. \*Braised Short Ribs, see above

**Brian: 2016 Jean-Luc Colombo 'Les Abeilles' Côtes-du-Rhône** (Rhône Valley) **\$10.19** (reg \$11.99) A 60/30/10 blend of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvedre, it was named for the bees that contribute to the biodiversity of the vineyard. It is medium-bodied and velvety with silken tannins and flavors of red berries and licorice. \*Fontina-topped lamb burgers

**Carol: 2016 Jasci & Marchesani Montepulciano d'Abruzzo** (Abruzzo) **\$10.19** (reg \$11.99) **91 LM** Organically grown and produced, the wine is aged in oak for six months, yielding just the right balance of body and acidity with 'another sip, please' notes of plums and juicy raspberries. \*Spinach ravioli with roasted tomato sauce

**John: 2015 Villa Antinori Rosso** (Toscana) **\$16.99** (reg \$19.99) **93 JS** A stellar blend of Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot, Syrah and Merlot sees malolactic fermentation and is aged one year in French, Hungarian and American oak; it is supple and velvety, with flavors of cherries, plums, mint and vanilla. \*Lasagna Bolognese

**Tony: 2017 Cosentino Cigar Old Vine Zinfandel** (Lodi) **\$12.99** (reg \$14.99) Zinfandel combined with touches of Petite Sirah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot was oak-aged for eight months. The result is rich and lush with flavors of peppercorn, mocha, dizzily ripe berries and leather with a full-bodied finish. \*Slow-cooker brisket and onions