



Grapevine

February 2020

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Warm Up February With Fun Holiday Occasions

Oh, these cold, dark days; how ever will we perk up our waning spirit amidst these bone chillers? We have a simple solution. February is peppered with fun holidays. Let's celebrate.

February 9th is Pizza Day, which begs for an Italian red. The **2015 Villa Puccini Toscana** is considered a super Tuscan, meaning that it contains non-indigenous grapes, in this case ten percent Merlot, to make high quality wines that don't conform to the strict laws of Tuscan winemaking. Further, most super Tuscans' geographic designation status is IGT rather than DOC, which sets them apart from lesser quality wines that do not have DOC status. With captivating aromas of ripe olives and cherries and a medium body, this wine would harmonize with your favorite pie, from sausage and mushroom to a classic Margherita. **91 JS \$9.99**

For **Valentine's Day**, romance your sweet with **Domaine de la Taille aux Loups' Triple Zero Pétillant Rosé**. Made mostly from Gamay with five percent Grolleau, it is called Triple Zero for the zero additions of yeast, sugar or wine sometimes added to sparkling wines to balance flavors. This wine sees one long fermentation — instead of two, as is often the case — with no malolactic and is



aged on the lees for 24 months. Elegant and soft with aromas of raspberries and strawberries, it would be a graceful addition to your romantic Valentine's night. **We'll taste it on Friday, the 14th**, along with other special wines \$28.99

Tuesday, February 18th is National Drink Wine Day, the purpose of which is to share the love of and respect for the dignity wine brings to one's table. Having played a revered, centuries-old role in all matters of life, public and private, wine presents us the opportunity to embrace special moments with friends, potential health benefits and the elevation of food and everyday living. Sean Minor wines were the realization of a goal to bring quality, approachable wines to tables everywhere, wines that make you stop and savor, wines that invite you to settle in and feel comfortable.

We suggest giving **Sean Minor Wines** a try, from the **2018 Chardonnay 90 WE** \$12.99 and **Sauvignon Blanc** \$11.99 to the **2017 Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon**, both \$15.99. They are refreshing with notes of clean fruit and elegant body, reasonably priced and created to be paired with any occasion.

While its provenance is unknown and is said to have stemmed from drink requests from the 1930s and 40s, **February 22nd is National Margarita Day**. In its most traditional dress, the cocktail is made from Tequila, Triple Sec and lime juice, and it's served frozen or on the rocks. What's not to love? To bring some spirit to our month of celebrating, we suggest **Patrón Tequila**. Handcrafted in small batches in Mexico, Patrón has a range of Tequilas with a variety of aging techniques

and times. We'll have a **Patron Margarita tasting Saturday, February 22nd**.

To finish off the month, let's celebrate this leap year with **Open That Bottle Night on Saturday, February 29th** — always the last Saturday in February. This is a way to encourage people to reconnect with each other over a bottle. Consider the **2016 Stags' Leap Cabernet Sauvignon**, made with 85 percent Cab blended with Malbec, Merlot and various Rhone varietals. Aged in French oak for 20 months, it has aromas of lilacs and cedar with a long, mineral-laden finish. In honor of Leap Year, **we'll taste this gem on the 29th**, along with other Stags' Leap Wines. **94 RP \$46.99**.

This is how we make cold days and nights warm, how we extend a hand to friends when we might otherwise clam up under the covers. We invite you to celebrate with us all month long. Santé. ♦

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

Did you know... Established in 1893, Stags' Leap Winery is one of the oldest wine estates within the acclaimed Stags Leap District on Silverado Trail in Napa...not to be confused with Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, a completely different winery, on Silverado Trail in Napa, also excellent. What a difference an apostrophe can make.

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

Days not mentioned will feature New Arrivals.

Fri 2/7: Mixed bag of treasures

Fri 2/14: Triple Zero Sparkling Rosé and special wines for a romantic Valentine's Day...make it a date night at home.

Sat 2/15: We'll pour Sean Minor wines in honor of 'Drink Wine Day' on February 18th, see page 1.

Fri 2/21: February Staff Picks

Sat 2/22: In honor of National Margarita Day, we'll have a Patrón Tequila Margarita tasting and a wine tasting.

Fri 2/28: Wines from the 90s Club

Sat 2/29: We'll pour Stags' Leap wines in honor of Leap Year and to celebrate 'Open that Bottle Night,' see page 1.

Bacon and Caramelized Onion Tart

2 Sheets frozen puff pastry
3 large egg yolks
1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
8 oz thickly sliced smoked bacon, cut into 1" pieces
3 medium white onions, sliced thinly
2 Tbsp fresh thyme leaves
3/4 cup whole milk ricotta, drained
1/3 cup creme fraiche
4 oz Gruyère cheese, shredded
salt and pepper to taste



Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Defrost puff pastries for ten minutes on two baking pans lined with parchment paper, then gently unfold. Meanwhile, in a small bowl mix together one egg yolk and a half teaspoon of water. Score a ¼-inch border around the edge of each dough. Brush borders with the egg yolk mixture and place in refrigerator.

Heat a large sauté pan with olive oil, add the bacon and sauté over medium high heat for 5 to 7 minutes. Bacon should be crisp, but still tender. Remove bacon to a paper towel-lined plate and drain off all but two tablespoons oil from pan. Turn heat to medium-low and add the onions, one tablespoon thyme and half a teaspoon salt. Sauté until onions are wilted, about

two minutes. Turn heat to low, cover and let onions get meltingly soft, about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat.

In the bowl of a food processor, mix until smooth the ricotta and remaining two egg yolks. Transfer mixture to a small bowl and fold in creme fraiche. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Spread a thin layer of the ricotta mixture on each puff pastry dough within the scored borders. Sprinkle with the Gruyère cheese and top with the onions and bacon.

Bake for 25 minutes, rotating pans half way through baking time. Cool slightly and sprinkle with fresh thyme leaves. Serve with Tony's pick, below.

Tequila Sunrise

Makes 2 cocktails

4 oz tequila
8 oz orange juice
1 oz grenadine
2 orange slices for garnish
2 maraschino cherries for garnish



In each of two highball glasses filled with ice, pour in half each of the tequila and orange juice. Slowly pour one tablespoon of grenadine into each glass over the back of a spoon, allowing it to settle at the bottom. Garnish each cocktail with an orange slice and maraschino cherry. Toast to sunrises and sunsets.

February 2020 Staff Wine Picks

Sheila: 2016 St. Huberts 'The Stag' Chardonnay (North Coast) \$13.59 (reg \$15.99) 90 WE Aged in new and seasoned oak for ten months with partial malolactic fermentation, this is an elegant Chard with white peach and floral aromas followed by a palate of citrus and baking spices and a plush texture. *Chicken salad on a buttery croissant

Ian: 2017 Canoe Ridge 'Expedition Merlot' (Columbia Valley) \$12.99 (reg \$14.99) 91 WS From Horse Heaven Hills comes this Merlot, blended with 19 percent Syrah and aged ten months. An intense fragrance of raspberries and blueberries precedes the silken palate of crushed berries and leather. *Sliced filet mignon and crumbled bleu cheese on ciabatta

Brian: NV Lini 910 'Labrusca' Lambrusco (Emilia-Romagna) \$15.49 (reg \$17.99) Made with Lambrusco Salamino and Lambrusco Ancellotta, this deliciously dry sparkling red sees a long second fermentation, allowing the bubbles to fully develop in this well balanced wine with a slightly tannic finish. *Minestrone with focaccia for dunking

Ted: 2015 Carpineto Chianti Classico Riserva (Tuscany) \$19.99 (reg \$22.99) 94 WS Made from 100% Sangiovese, the wine is oak-aged in casks and barrels for over a year, then another ten months in bottle before release, resulting in a bouquet of currants and violets, with berry flavors and supple tannins. *Ricotta, roasted red pepper and basil pizza

Carol: 2016 Ron Rubin Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley) \$16.99 (reg \$19.99) 91 WE The Valley's cool Pacific breezes allow for longer hang time, resulting in fully ripened grapes that retain their natural acidity. Hand picked and sorted, the wine was aged in French oak, resulting in aromas of berries and herbs with mouth-filling, soft tannins. *Fig and goat cheese crostinis

Tony: 2017 90+ Cellars Lot 75 Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley) \$14.99 (reg \$17.99) Aged nine months in French and American oak barrels, this Pinot has alluring flavors of juicy black cherries, licorice and a skim of toasty oak, culminating in a dry finish with a hint of lingering earthiness. *Bacon and caramelized onion tart, see above