



# Grapevine

July 2020

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## Sultry Summer with a Kiss of Sauvignon Blanc

**S**auvignon Blanc is for many the essence of summer. Full of personality, it can differ widely, depending on the climate that rears it. Originally from Bordeaux, it ranges from grapefruit to grassy or herbal, with plenty of other supporting cast members and is known for its acidity. Whether a lover or skeptic, this half-dozen is an eye-popper to just how complex Sauvignon Blanc can be.

**Klein Constantia** has been making wine since 1685. Elinor Dashwood from Jane Austen's novel *Sense and Sensibility* proposed a glass of it to an ailing character instead of a cup of tea. That's our kind of cure. Grapes on South Africa's Cape Peninsula are nurtured by the cool, kind climate, resulting in low yields and robust flavors. Fermented in tank with mostly wild yeasts, the 2018 has melon flavors, lending roundness, and a citrusy, flinty finish. **92 TA** \$16.99

In Chile's Casablanca Valley, **Veramonte** produces delicious, organic wines. The 2018 Sauvignon Blanc is cold-fermented in stainless steel with indigenous yeasts. Lime, tangerine and mango flavors are complimented by a floral presence, softening the wine. Clean and of distinct personality, it would go well with any summery salad, from simple to grilled, composed creations. **91 JS** \$9.49



New Zealand is notorious for excellent Sauvignon Blanc with classic grapefruit character, prevalent thanks to plentiful sun to ripen the grapes and cooling sea breezes that develop Sauv Blanc's signature aromas. The 2019 **Avra** from Marlborough, New Zealand's most prestigious wine region, is a stellar example. Its bright, bracing acidity and vibrant fruit aromas and flavors make it an exceptional choice for New Zealand fans and for those who haven't yet fallen in love with the region's 'no apologies' citrusy profile. **91 IWR** \$12.99

France's Graves appellation in Bordeaux and Sancerre in the Loire Valley are both noted for producing excellent Sauvignon Blanc. **Château Graille-Lacoste** in Graves, known for meticulous winemaking, has a cool microclimate that allows the

grapes to ripen fully. The 2018 Graves Blanc is a blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon with a touch of Muscadelle, then aged in stainless steel for six months. Crisp and clean with divine flavors of peaches and cantaloupe, it would be heavenly with crab or chicken salad. \$16.99

Sancerre, in the northeastern party of the Loire Valley, is the region's most famous appellation; and within it, Chavignol is the most lauded village for the wines and goat cheeses that come out of it. **Domaine Pierre Martin's**, made from 100% Sauvignon Blanc and aged in tank, will offer an opportunity to experience how different two French Sauvignon Blancs can be. While the blended Graves possesses weighty character, the Sancerre's pure mineral expression is another kind of beautiful, with

notes of mint, citrus, grass and almond. It would make an excellent partner to Chavignol's goat cheese. \$19.99

**Duckhorn Vineyards** in Napa Valley is known for exceptional wines. Founded in 1976, they started with Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, making their first Sauvignon Blanc in 1982. The 2018 has 15% Sémillon, added for complexity, and is aged in stainless steel and French oak barrels. Elegant and balanced, it has ripe citrus and tropical flavors, refreshing acidity and a silken finish. \$25.49

Picture this: a group picnic with blankets six feet apart, each with plates, glasses, silverware, napkins and one of these Sauvignon Blancs. A wine tasting fête, complete with friends and summer fare. Now that's connection. Swans, optional. *Hello, sunshine.* ♦

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**Did you know...** Fumé Blanc, popularized by Robert Mondavi in the 1970s, is Sauvignon Blanc aged in oak, giving it a toasty, smoky quality. It was Mondavi's successful attempt to introduce the wine to the American market.

## Summer White Wine Sangria

1 cup strawberries, sliced  
1 mango, cubed  
1 peach, sliced  
1/4 c granulated sugar  
1/4 c Grand Marnier  
1 orange, sliced  
1 lime, sliced  
1 750-ml bottle dry white wine, chilled  
1 c seltzer  
1 cup green grapes, frozen

In a medium bowl, combine the first five ingredients. Refrigerate for 1 hour. To a large, chilled pitcher, add chilled fruit mixture and the orange and lime

slices. Pour in white wine and seltzer, and stir to combine. Add a couple 'grape cubes' to each chilled glass before serving and toast to good days.

### Pan-seared Scallops with Brown Butter and Capers

It's worth the expense to seek out dry scallops to avoid preservatives, optimize browning and avoid liquid in the pan.

*Serves 2 as a main course*

1 lb dry sea scallops, uniform in size  
Salt to taste  
1 Tbsp grape seed oil or other neutral, high burning point oil  
3 Tbsp unsalted butter  
1 scant Tbsp capers, rinsed well  
1 lemon, halved, one half sliced for garnish



Heat oven to 200 degrees. Rinse scallops gently to avoid breaking and dry between several layers of paper towels to dry completely. Lightly shower with salt.

Heat oil over medium-high heat in a well-seasoned cast iron skillet or non-stick pan large enough to hold all scallops without crowding, or cook in two stages. When oil is shimmering and beginning to smoke, add scallops, resisting the urge to move them around.

After two minutes, check to see if scallops release from the pan with no resistance and have acquired a deep, burnished crust. If

they aren't ready, give them another minute before flipping. Cook the second side for one to two minutes, stopping when there is still an opaque band of white at the center. Don't worry, they will continue to cook.

Wipe out pan and add butter, swirling and stirring as it turns a deep brown and develops a nutty aroma, two to three minutes. Add capers and sauté for about a minute. Juice lemon half into pan, remove from heat and drizzle brown butter over scallops. Serve with Sheila's staff pick, below.

### Bee's Knees

*Makes 2 cocktails*

4 ounces gin  
2 oz fresh lemon juice  
1 oz honey syrup\*  
Lemon or lime twists for garnish, optional



Add all ingredients to a chilled shaker with ice and shake. Strain into two chilled cocktail glasses. Garnish each with a lemon or lime twist, if using. (The lime twist adds a delightful perfume note.)

\*Honey syrup: Add 1/2 cup honey and 1/2 cup water to a small saucepan over medium heat. (Use less or more honey to taste; the more honey you use, the thicker the syrup and stronger the flavor it will be.) Stir until blended, strain into a jar and seal tightly. Keeps for up to a month in the refrigerator.

## July 2020 Staff Wine Picks

**Sheila: 2019 Domaine de Grisy Bourgogne Blanc** (Burgundy) **\$12.99** (reg \$14.99) From the Côtes d'Auxerre appellation, grapes were sustainably farmed and saw minimal oak, resulting in light to medium body with elegant flavors of lemon zest, apple and minerals with lean acidity. \*Pan-seared scallops with brown butter and capers, see above

**Ian: Ian: NV Paolo Scavino Vino Rosso** (Piedmont) **\$11.99** (reg \$13.99) **92 WS** Considered a 'Super Piedmont,' this blend of Dolcetto, Barbera, Nebbiolo and Merlot, is aged in stainless steel, allowing the fresh fruit aromas and flavors to develop. It is light, bright and supple with a soft, spicy finish. \*Grilled, skewered chicken breasts and cherry tomatoes

**Brian: 2018 Grounded Cabernet Sauvignon by Josh Phelps** (Mendoza) **\$11.99** (reg \$13.99) **90 WE** Ninety percent North and Central Coast Cabernet Sauvignon was blended with 10% Rutherford Merlot and aged in oak. It has flavors of cherries, raspberries and blackberries with polished tannins. \*Grilled skirt steak with salsa verde

**Tony: 2018 Jean Marc Lafont Morgon Cote du Py** (Beaujolais) **\$13.59** (reg \$15.99) Made from Gamay grapes, this sustainably produced wine is aged in tank and seasoned oak. It is intensely perfumed with raspberries, roses and allspice and has a palate of cherries and dark berries with a supple finish. \*Grilled Gruyère, chard and tomato sandwiches on sourdough

**Damian: 2019 Francois Childaine Touraine Rosé** (Loire Valley) **\$13.59** (reg \$15.99) Made from organic Grolleau, Pinot Noir and Gamay grapes, this light-bodied, zesty wine is dry and floral with refreshing flavors of maraschino cherries, field strawberries and fresh herbs and a finish of green peppercorn. \*Roasted beet salad with goat cheese and crushed pistachios

**Ben: 2018 Marques de Caceres Garnacha** (Cariñena) **\$12.99** (reg \$14.99) **90 IWR** Made from 100% Garnacha, this ruby gem undergoes malolactic fermentation in stainless steel tanks and six months' aging in bottle before release. It is aromatic of red fruits, licorice and orange zest with bright acidity. \*Grilled harissa chicken with tomato salad