

The Butcher's Pour

February 2025

Curated with Patrick Farrell, Lanterna Distributors

Lago, Vinho Verde Rosé (2023)

What better occasion is there to be “tickled pink” by Rosé than Valentine’s Day? Direct pressing of the Vinhão grape imbues this wine with seductive, soft, pink hues and delicate flavors of wild strawberry, gooseberry, and pomegranate ideally suited for light fare ranging from Margherita pizza to sushi. Winemaker João Cabral Almeida adheres strictly to the precepts of Portuguese Integrated Sustainable Agriculture, which follows the guidelines defined by the International Organisation for Biological and Integrated Control (IOBC). And consider this a bonus: Lago Rose comes in at a remarkably low 80 calories per glass! Enjoy the buoyant flavors of this beautiful icebreaker without the hassle of an extra trip to the gym.

Bliss Family Vineyards, Chardonnay Estate Bottled Mendocino (2020)

In the late 1930s, Irv Bliss first visited Mendocino County and spotted a picturesque ranch among the rolling hills and unspoiled land. Years later, when Irv learned of a Mendocino property for sale, he gathered all his savings and placed a bid -- sight unseen. As fate would have it, the plot Irv purchased was the original 450-acre estate that had captivated his imagination years before. 70 years later, Irv’s grandchildren entice us to fall in love again with their Chardonnay, whose aromas of pear and melon dance on the nose, accompanied by delicate orange water notes, creating a captivating sensory experience. The first sip envelops your palate with vibrant citrus notes and the refreshing essence of melon, beautifully complemented by a subtle hint of vanilla. The finish is gracefully balanced, showcasing gentle acidity that lingers with tropical notes and the delectable freshness of ripe kiwis. Proof positive that Chardonnay loves California like a flower loves sun and rain!

La Maialina, Chianti DOCG Dry Red Wine (2020)

Light the candles, toast the garlic bread, and crumble a little extra Parmigiano-Reggiano over the Fettucine Alfredo! This textbook Chianti has everything you need to kindle a romantic Italian dinner for two (minus the straw basket, or fiasco). The earliest documentation of a “Chianti wine” dates back to the 13th century when viticulture was known to flourish in the “Chianti Mountains” around Florence. The name ‘La Maialina’ (little pig) references the Cinta Senese heirloom breed that originated in the Siena area during the 1300’s and is the only Tuscan native pig to survive extinction. Fermented and aged in stainless steel vats, this lean, bone-dry classic illustrates precisely why Sangiovese was made to marry with creamy pastas, cured meats, and rich cheeses. Tart cherry, cranberry skin and tomato leaf swirl amid fine, dry herbs, all adorned by vivacious acidity that will have you breaking into a chorus of “That’s Amore!” as the bottle empties.

Bodegas Care, Cariñena Garnacha Nativa Viñas Viejas Old Vines (2022)

Winemaker Nacho Lázaro at Bodegas Care subtly reminds us this Valentine’s Day that “sharing is caring” with this luscious, oak-scented Garnacha, redolent of crushed blackberry, Damson plum, and a pinch of mocha. Likewise, a kiss of toasted coconut and dill bears witness to the wine’s coming-of-age through eight months of maturation in American oak barrels. The wine’s primitive label, inspired by artist Enrique Torrijos, harkens to Garnacha’s timeless appeal as one of Spain’s primordial, “native” grapes. Sourced from vines with an average age of 60 years and producing fewer but far more concentrated grapes than its younger counterparts, Care Garnacha Nativa is like an old love: richer because it has stood the test of time. Enjoy a glass or two with barbequed spare ribs, cumin-and-cayenne rubbed pork tenderloin, or a classic bacon cheeseburger.