



THE EDUCATED GRAPE

~ Your Personal Guide to Wine Appreciation ~

Weekly Wine Musings

*Sharing Wine Experiences &
Lasting Impressions*

May 11, 2020; Issue 5

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Prosecco...No, the Real Deal!

The Impression: I have long been an advocate of making wine selections based on the season. As we enter into the warmer weather (can't come soon enough), there are many wine options for us. On a recent Zoom call with friends, my wife and I enjoyed a wonderful bottle of dry Prosecco. **At its best, Prosecco is "frizzante" and a perfect aperitif, possessing tart apple, apricot with a touch of minerality.** We enjoyed it with **Gruyere** and **Stilton cheeses** before dinner. The bottle we had was one we had brought back from Milan last Fall; **Adriano Adami Prosecco Valdobbiadene Superior di Cartizze DOCG.**

Facts: Superiore di Cartizze is the zone that identifies an area of 260 acres in the region of **Valdobbiadene** which is widely considered the **finest area for Prosecco in the Veneto region of Northeast Italy.** It is a **DOCG** which is the highest designation in Italy's wine law classification. Yields here are restricted to less than 5 tons per acre which means the wines will contain a **greater level of intensity and concentration.** The grape varietal used to make Prosecco is **Glera.**

Ideal food pairing: While we enjoyed ours with cheese prior to dinner, this expression of dry Prosecco would also be **great at the end of a meal with lighter desserts** such as fruit tart or almond cookies.



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Bordeaux Blend from the Southern Hemisphere

The Impression: It was cold outside and I was in the mood for a rich, expressive full-bodied red wine that I could enjoy with my wife over the course of the evening. My focus on this wasn't necessarily the ideal food pairing (I did grill spicy pork sausage), but to just **submerge myself into a wine to see how it evolves over a period of several hours**. The wine, 2011 Rustenberg "John X Merriman", Stellenbosch, was a true Bordeaux-blend. Those of us who enjoy Cabernet-based wines tend to gravitate to Bordeaux, California and Washington State which are all wonderful. **Two things made an impression from me;** firstly, I was reminded that these varietals can be outstanding from top producers in the Stellenbosch and Paarl regions of South Africa. Secondly, this 9 year-old wine was at its absolute prime, and served as a great reminder that being patient on opening and enjoying certain wines will create a lasting memory.

Facts: What is a Bordeaux blend? There are 5 red grape varietals whose origins are rooted in Bordeaux and are used in producing wines from that region. The main two are Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. This wine was a blend of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon; 37% Merlot; 4% Petit Verdot; 2% Malbec; 2% Cabernet Franc.

Ideal Food Pairing: Beef and Lamb, specifically grilled. As Bordeaux blends age, they often take on tertiary aromas and flavors of cedar, tobacco and still possess some pepper and savory flavors. All of these attributes partner well with these foods and grilling as a cooking method.



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Amazing Burgundy Value

The Impression: As is tradition, I am lead chef in Mother's Day menu planning and execution. This year, I chose fish and roasted a loin of Atlantic Salmon and Cod, seasoned with fresh ginger, garlic, oregano, salt and pepper. Sides were roasted beets and mushrooms and my son sauteed broccoli with a slight char (well executed). With this myriad of subtle and intense flavors, I chose red a Burgundy, 2015 Michel Sarrazin

Sous La Roche Givry. The combination of tart cherry, red plums, subtle spiciness, silky tannin, medium body with perfect! Pinot Noir, especially from cooler growing regions like Burgundy and Willamette Valley, are ideal wine pairings with fish such as salmon and cod.

Facts: Burgundy can sometimes be an expensive proposition if you are delving into Premier and Grand Cru level wines. **Some of the best values in Burgundy**, especially red, are in the **Cote Chalonnaise region** where this wine came from, specifically in the village of **Givry**. Cote Chalonnaise is home to **38 Premier Cru vineyards** so the **Village level wines like this one will often over deliver for the price.**



Share your Favorite Wine and Food Experience that made a Lasting Impression

I am always inspired to see the many interesting wines that you enjoy and share on social media platforms. Share your weekly wine musings on *The Educated Grape* [facebook page](#) under the *Weekly Wine Musings* thread and bring our wine and food community closer together.



Tip of the Week...

Explore Rose... 'tis the Season!

It is mid-Spring and the weather is starting to warm up which means more outside activity (all within Covid-19 guidelines). Lunches and dinners on the patio or deck, lighter foods, fresh ingredients. **When connecting this to wine appreciation, dry Rose immediately comes to mind.** The 2019 vintage Roses are quickly occupying shelf space in your favorite wine shops. **These wines are fresh, light, and possess intense tart red spicy fruit. Great on their own while cooking or relaxing or with foods such as grilled chicken, scallops, shrimp or even pork tenderloin.** I suggest selecting a Rose from a few different regions and see what style you prefer. Over the weekend, I had one of my favorite Roses, **2019 Olga Raffault Chinon**. Try the following regions as they are known for producing high quality, dry Roses:

- Provence, Chinon and Cotes du Rhone (France)
- Austria
- Tzakoli and Rioja (Spain)
- Willamette Valley (Oregon)
- Sonoma (California)



Did You Know...

You Can Get it All in the Wines of the Loire Valley!

The theme of my last virtual wine class covered the wines of the Loire Valley in France. It served as a refresher for me (and I hope all of those people who participated in the class and tasting), that this region, which does not get the notoriety than many others do, produces such a **wide array of high quality wines that:**

- 1. Represent amazing value at all price points**
- 2. Produce great white, red, rose and sparkling wine (Cremant) at a high level**
- 3. Their high acid, elegant, balanced wines are ideal for warm weather enjoyment**

What I have pictured are the key wines/varietals from the Loire (listed lightest to fullest in body): Muscadet, Sancerre, Vouvray, Chinon Rose and Chinon (both made from Cabernet Franc).



The Educated Grape Upcoming Live Virtual Wine Classes...

Thursday, May 14 at 7pm EST:
"Why is Cab King?"

[More information](#)

[Register now](#)

Thursday, May 21 at 7pm EST:
"Exploring Tuscany...Italy's Wine Paradise"

[More information](#)

[Register now](#)

Thursday, May 28 at 7pm EST:
"Laurel Glen Vineyards"

Masterclass with Bettina Sichel-Partner/General Manager"

[More information](#)

[Register now](#)

Previous Virtual Wine Class
["Great Tastes of Spring...Assyrtiko & Gamay"](#) a free class that aired on Facebook Live on Thursday, April 9



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