



# THE EDUCATED GRAPE

— Your Personal Guide to Wine Appreciation —

## Weekly Wine Musings

Sharing Wine Experiences &  
Lasting Impressions

May 18, 2020; Issue 6

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### *Texture Takes Centerstage*

**The Impression:** I love the interplay of wine and food and how each has the ability to make the other better. While there are certain principles that can guide us in approaching wine and food, **texture** is an aspect that is not mentioned that often. The tactile sensation of each is very real and is often in the tertiary aspects of the dish, not necessarily in the main food ingredient (ie fish, beef, pork). Last week, I experienced a wonderful textural wine and food experience. My daughter prepared a lovely bowl of Cod, rice, black beans, guacamole, shredded romaine, crispy tofu, and mango salsa. In addition to the amazing flavor intensity, this dish had a rich and oily texture. My wine selection, [2018 Champalou Vouvray](#), **absolutely matched the texture and flavor intensity along with great acidity to provide a "lift" to the pairing.**

**Facts:** The wines from Vouvray, located in Loire Valley, are made the white grape, Chenin Blanc. What makes Vouvray so special is, **in addition to having excellent acidity and minerality, they have a round and rich texture with beautiful depth of fruit.**

**Ideal food pairing:** Fish such as salmon, swordfish, grouper or halibut **that are rich in texture and flavor and slightly oily.** Try sauteeing sliced almonds or pine nuts which add a nice flavor and texture contrast.



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### *Rustic Wine & Food Pairing in the Spring*

**The Impression:** While Spring is here, the cooler than usual temperatures here in the northeast have kept some of our favorite rustic and richer foods in our rotation. **What I like to do is take a rustic, intense protein and give it a seasonal twist. I roasted Spicy Chicken Sausage with sauteed shaved brussel sprouts, carrots, vidalia onions and mushroom polenta.** With this not being a full bodied dish, I was looking for a medium bodied red wine with intense dried fruit and earthy flavors to match up with the sausage. My thought...central Italy and the famed Sangiovese grape. The wine was [2013 Banfi Rosso di Montalcino](#). Both wine and food possessed rustic and intense flavors that were perfect for a cool evening in the Spring.

**Facts:** Sangiovese is the most important red grape variety in Italy (right with Nebbiolo) and serves as the base varietal in the great wines of Tuscany (ie Brunello di Montalcino, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and Chianti). **What makes Rosso di Montalcino so lovely is it is essentially a "baby Brunello", a little lighter in body and depth than its big brother, "Brunello di Montalcino".** It comes from the younger vines in certain vintages or includes the declassified juice from Brunello di Montalcino in other vintages. **Rosso di Montalcino is one of Italy's great red wine values!**

**Ideal Food Pairing:** It is more approachable in its youth than Brunello and is ideal for so many great dishes enjoyed year around. Grilled pork tenderloin, duck, roast or grilled chicken with a spicy red sauce with mushrooms.



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### *The Strong Connection to Being There*



**The Impression:** My wife and I recently celebrated our 30th anniversary. Given the special occasion, I wanted to open a bottle of wine that is not only memorable in quality and pedigree, but in connection to the two of us. I had the perfect wine; [2004 Sori' Paitin Barbaresco 'Paitin'](#). The winery is located in the heart of [Barbaresco](#) in Piemonte, Italy, a little less than 2 hours from

Milan. This family-owned winery produces some of the finest wines from the region. **My wife and I had our most memorable shared wine experience there;** a combination of beautiful wines, warm and welcoming hospitality and a magically special part of northern Italy. We purchased several different wines and vintages there. **When I open and we share one of the Sori' Paitin wines, we are immediately taken back to the timeless memory of our day in Barbaresco and our experience at this fantastic winery.**

**Facts:** The wines of Barbaresco are sensual and elegant and are a perfect partner to its richer more structured Piemonte neighbor, Barolo. The wines are made from the Nebbiolo grape variety, Like Pinot Noir, Nebbiolo is a terroir driven variety, encompassing the earth, soil, and climate. Its flavor profile is cherry, rose petal, tar and anise.



## 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...

### Support Your Virtual Tastings with Coravin!

If you are an adventurous wine drinker who likes to enjoy just one glass of wine, Coravin may be for you. If you save your wine drinking for the weekend and like to taste several different wines and not just one, Coravin may be for you. If you collect and sometimes wonder how your 12 year old Cult Napa Cabernet, 2nd growth Bordeaux or Grand Cru Burgundy is tasting without opening the bottle, Coravin is definitely for you. With Coravin, you are able to drink any wine, in any amount... without pulling the cork. **In this time of shelter at home and an array of virtual wine class and tastings to experience, Coravin is a wonderful tool that will enable you to taste a wide variety of wines without the worry of opening a bottle knowing you do not have to finish.**



## Did You Know...

### Cabernets are Rarely Cabernets...Really

Some grape varietals, white or red, are at their best on their own as their expression is so unique and distinct. Examples of this are Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. **Most grape varietals shine through as part of an ensemble, blending with other varietals to make a wine greater than its parts. Cabernet Sauvignon is just that.** This may come to a surprise to some wine enthusiasts who look at that great bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon from Napa, Sonoma or Paso Robles that they enjoy on a regular basis. How would they know? It just says Cabernet Sauvignon on the label. **In California, if the grape varietal is on the label, it must be at least 75% of that varietal, meaning the remaining 25% can be comprised of any other grape or combination of grapes.** Most Cabernets in California are blended with other varietals, most notably Merlot and sometimes other Bordeaux varietals such as Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot. Red wines of Bordeaux are always a blend, with Cabernet Sauvignon taking the lead in the Left Bank and Merlot in the Right Bank. This art of blending other varietals with Cabernet produces wines with wonderful complexity and character making it the worlds most popular red grape varietal.



## The Educated Grape Upcoming Live Virtual Wine Classes...

### May Classes

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](#)

## June Classes

Thursday, June 4 at 7pm EST:  
*Experience Chile & Argentina's  
New Identity*

[More information](#)

[Register now](#)

Thursday, June 11 at 7pm EST:  
*Jewels of the Mediterranean: Sicily  
and Greece*

[More information](#)

[Register now](#)

Thursday, June 18 at 7pm EST:  
*Super, Summer Wines that Will  
Surprise!*

[More information](#)

[Register now](#)

Thursday, June 25 at 7pm EST:  
*Winemaker Masterclass:  
SAMsARA Winery in Santa  
Barbara with Winemakers Matt  
Brady & Lily Hays*

[More information](#)

[Register now](#)



**Register Now**



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