

ORDINAIRE

Le Raisin a Plume Vas-Y

Jacques Fevrier has held various roles within the wine industry, transitioning from a sommelier in London to apprenticing with winemakers in Australia before eventually starting a project of his own. He and his wife bought a property in Oudon, a quaint village situated in Coteaux d'Ancenis in the far West of the Loire Valley, where the Loir river begins to spread out and fork into its broad estuary leading to the Atlantic. With its moist air and granitic soils, the region has more in common with Muscadet than with Anjou and Touraine. That relative obscurity meant that Jacques could afford to buy a decent chunk of land—and it also meant that there was a nice mix varieties growing on the property, rather than just a bunch of young vine Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot. He began converting 14 acres of land with 7 different varieties back to organic, from which he makes myriad cuvées, all without chemicals or filtration. "Vas-Y" is 100% gamay from their vineyard, and stylistically reminded us a lot of Anton Van Klopper from Lucy Margaux, who was one of Jacques' mentors in Australia: bright, stemmy and easy to drink. This is a springtime wine, something to bring to the beach when it gets sunny after a few days of rain. We think it drinks best chilled and pairs nicely with a picnic! - Michelle & Diana



La Rural Parellada

I have a bad habit of cooking paella whenever Catalunyan winemakers visit the shop. It would be one thing if I was good at it, but I really don't know what I'm doing. Inevitably, they gather around and start giving advice. There is something universal about the tense camaraderie that forms around food cooking over a fire. And even though I usually screw up the rice, the process is always worth it—I learn a few things, and they get to flex their paella-making *savoir-faire*. In March, Xavi Padró from LaRural visited the Bay to attend Brumaire. As we stood around the pan, we conversed in broken Castilian while sharing a bottle of his Parellada—clean, bright and salty—just the thing to nervously slurp down while I fretted over the *soccarat*. At one point, without explanation, Xavi just poured a whole glass into the rice. Ancestral wisdom I guess. Xavi and his brother Andreu started making wine in 2018 after catching the natural wine bug. Under the guidance of Oriol Artigas and Laureano Serres, they've been slowly honing their craft, producing wines that are easy to drink but also full of dense fruit and vegetal character. This is a platonic coastal white. So pair with anything from the coast. The white sea bass running off the coast of San Diego are delicious right now. On May Day, we wrapped a bunch of filets in fig leaves and grilled them over almond wood. Perfect pairing. - Bradford



EXTRAORDINAIRE

2021 La Grapperie Adnois

This is second time we've featured our beloved Loire Valley Pineau D'Aunis in the Extraordinaire club this calendar year. In 2004 Renaud Guettier acquired a half hectare of very old vines from his stepfather in the small village of Bueil-en-Touraine. Since then he's expanded to about 25 vineyards totaling roughly 6.5 hectares. He works primarily with Chenin Blanc, and I will say all of the most recent cuvées we've had at the shop are well worth going out of your way for if you're a fan of that grape. He makes just a couple red wines all from Pineau D'aunis and the Adonis is from the younger vines (4-50 years old). Compared to the Sucettes a L'aunis from a couple months ago, the Adonis is much deeper and darker. Inky and almost purple in the glass, rich dark berry fruit gives way to the expected peppercorn and finishes with a somewhat surprising (for this grape) yet balanced amount of sandy tannin. Definitely a wine for the table- I might suggest pairing with braised lamb shoulder, pita bread, multi-colored mezzes, and perhaps even a side of Egyptian style Molokhiya. That's what we did and it was delightful. - Daniel the Elder



Ça Boit Libre "Mon Blanc"

Ça Boit Libre had its first harvest in 2018. Damien Bastian previously worked for Dominique Lucas and Domaine Ganevat, which shaped his natural winemaking philosophies and approach. He currently farms Pinot Noir, Gamay, and Chasselas grapes planted in 1985 on glacial moraine soil in the Savoie region, just miles away from the shores of Lake Geneva. His vineyards benefit from the cool alpine influences of the nearby lake and mountains. Drinking his Mon Blanc is like stumbling upon a refreshing chasselas waterfall in the French Alps on a hot day and drinking straight from the cascade. The Chasselas grape has a debated history but is thought to have originated in the 16th century by the shores of Lake Geneva. It has had a somewhat poor reputation outside of Switzerland for being overcropped and producing bland wines, with much of the crop being used for table grapes. However, Damien is one of a few pioneering natural winemakers in France championing and giving the Chasselas grape a vibrant, distinctive new style and life. It shows its mountainous terroir very vividly in Damien's hands - balanced and refreshing, with ripe white fruit flavors, mineral aromatics and a light saline character. This crisp wine would pair beautifully with seared garlic prawns or can be enjoyed simply as an aperitif. As Damien's cheeky label stating "ça boit libre" ("drink freely") slyly suggests, and freedom for the Savoie region! - Michelle



ORDINAIRE WINE CLUB

May 2024

Here's Kevin carefully tending to some white sea bass wrapped in fig leaves. We served with a meyer lemon relish. Here's the recipe:

INGREDIENTS

- One side of white sea bass, about 2-3 lbs (available at Monterey Fish)
- 10 fresh fig leaves (not dried out!)
- 2 tender-fleshed meyer lemons from a neighbor
- Salt, pepper, shallot, olive oil, herbs (parsley, chervil, etc.)

DIRECTIONS

Make sure you start your fire long in advance so coals will be hot but not insanely hot. Cut the side of bass into 6-8 portions. Season with salt, pepper and olive oil and let sit at room temp for 30-45 mins. Then wrap each in a fig leaf. Make the lemon relish by finely dicing two lemons and putting all of it, except the seeds, into bowl, with salt, lemon juice, herbs, olive oil and diced shallot. Add some red chiles if you wish. Grill the fish until they are firm to touch (we think it's ok to err on side of medium-well rather than undercooked). Put all the beautiful, aromatic fish pockets on a platter with the relish on the side. Serve with some rice or flatbreads sprinkled with za'atar.