

WINE News

Cool off in warm weather with these “summer sippers.”



JULY 20, 2020 FEATURES

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Sipping in the Summertime

By Trey Beffa

Strange times indeed. Who knows what 2020 will bring us next? Currently, our retail stores remain closed for walk-in business. Stay tuned for a possible date for reopening. Luckily, we are still open for business. Our website is always open, our phone lines are open, and our staff are ready to take your order during normal business hours.

Along with our local delivery and shipping options, we now have our curbside pickup service up and running. Detailed instructions on how to use the curbside service can be found here:

<https://www.klwines.com/Shipping/InStorePickup>

Summertime sippers can provide us all with a sense of normalcy during these strange times. What exactly is a “summer sipper”? My definition would be a wine that is refreshing, crisp, with a light to medium body, and is all-around ideal for warm weather enjoyment. For some, a summer sipper could be a nice bottle of Zinfandel or Syrah. If that is the case, then go with it. Wine is subjective, and everyone’s tastes are different. More traditional picks would be Riesling, Pinot Grigio, or Chardonnay. When I think of summertime sippers, the three categories that pop into my head are Sancerre, Chablis, and French rosé. Below, see my top picks from those regions. Enjoy — and stay safe this summer.

2019 Franck Millet Sancerre Blanc (\$18.99)

We have been out of this wine for months, but it’s back just in time for the summer! This just-released vintage shows the quality of the incoming 2019s. Grown on limestone-clay soils, it shows a wonderful balance and purity of fruit. Hints of lime and citrus linger on the long finish. This is a great choice to cool off on those warm summer nights.



2017 Domaine Vocoret Chablis (\$23.99)

One of our top super sipper Chardonnay picks this year comes from the Chablis region in France. The 2017 whites from this region show wonderful acidity and freshness. The Vocoret Chablis is a mineral-driven, crisp white with a mouthwatering finish. Hints of white flower, slate, and lime jump from the glass. This one is difficult to put down.



2019 Domaine la Chapelle Saint Victor Coteaux d’Aix en Provence Rosé (\$14.99)

One of our favorite rosés every year. The 2019 is a blend of 50% Grenache, 30% Cinsault, and 20% Syrah. A vibrant, slightly pink color, this wine shows hints of strawberry, lavender, and tons of ripe, spicy, fresh fruit. Light and refreshing, this wine glides across the palate and lingers on the finish. The *beau idéal* of a summertime sipper!





Summer in the vineyards of Bandol—somebody get those vines a drink! (Shutterstock)

Summer in French Regional: It's Not Just About Rosé...

By Keith Mabry

When thinking of summer wines, there are few better places to start than with rosé. But, if you were to explore my patio ice chest, you'd come across a few reds tucked in—or, on top of the ice—to help relieve some of the heat of the day. With a light chill, many reds offer a thrilling new way to appreciate these warmest of times. Though I find no shame in drinking hearty, bold reds, (Bandol is one of my favorite choices for burgers), I find that something a bit lighter on its feet works wonders with most of that outdoor food I'll be consuming.

A few years ago, I met winemaker Henri Le Roy through a mutual friend, and Le Roy in turn introduced me to the style of light reds. It was a Pinot Noir-Trousseau he produced that turned my head. Henri is a taciturn man, allowing his feelings to best be expressed through his wines. His winery, l'Aigle à Deux Têtes (the two-headed eagle), is based in Jura. The region is most famous for its oxidatively aged whites, but the secret really is the fabulous and intriguing reds. And those reds take a light chill so well!

Henri's **2019 L'Aigle à Deux Têtes Trousseau Côtes du Jura Rouge (\$24.99)** is a pale, almost translucent red with a coppery hue that evokes those pink wines from much further south. Trousseau is famous for its light color and rustic vibe, but this is definitely a red wine. In Henri's hands it takes on a vibrant and ebullient feel. Though it is light-bodied, it has a weight and texture that keeps it firmly in the *rouge* category. This Trousseau is perfumed and elegant, while still showing its savory and spicy side. Sink this bottle in the ice for 20 minutes and you'll find this summer red will cut through all the fat of a smoked brisket.

For something a little weightier, I like to put a few bottles of Loire Valley Cabernet Franc on top of the ice. These make a great alternative to heavier, warmer Cab Sauv's, while keeping me closer to that beloved profile. In addition, Loire Francs give you a lot of food flexibility. My favorite bottle is the **2018 Domaines les Pins "Les Rochettes" Bourgueil (750ml \$14.99; 1.5L \$29.99)** from a father-son team near the city of Tour. This emerging region offers



some of the best cost-to-quality red wine drinking in the Loire. I might crave the profile of a Cab Sauv, and this wine has those notes of currants, tobacco, and black cherries, but finishes with an aromatic hit of lavender and sage, making it pure Cab Franc. This is a summer glass of red that captures all that is fresh in this summer season of fruit and herbs. Given a light chill, this is perfect with rotisserie chicken, grilled pork, or my famous Santa Maria tri-tip. **91 WE**

...But, It's Also About Rosé!

How can you have summer sippers and not focus on some rosé? We have so many great new offerings that have landed, it's hard to figure out where to start. We have dozens of rosé wines from Corsica, Sancerre, Provence, and the Languedoc. And that's just France! But where to begin...

Let's start with the **2019 Château St-Jacques d'Albas "La Chapelle en Rose" Minervois Rosé (\$16.99)**, one of my favorites of the season. Minervois is in the Languedoc region, a tremendous growing area for Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvèdre. "La Chapelle" takes its name from the ancient chapel on the winery's property, which is a beautiful sight to behold. The wine captures that essence with its silky texture driven by strawberry, fresh cut melon, and a light salinity. A plate of charcuterie and cheese with a glass of this should help the day flow nicely.

Another favorite comes from the multi-generational winemaking family at Château de la Noblesse in Bandol. Agnes Cade makes the wines, while her father works in the vineyards, and her daughter runs the office. Agnes' **2019 Château de la Noblesse Bandol Rosé (\$24.99)** is light on its feet but still has the regional weight and power behind it. That's because it's based on mostly Mourvèdre, which makes the bold and rustic reds of the region. That reliance on Mourvèdre makes Bandol rosé so distinctive from its surrounding Provençal neighbors. This is great summer drinking, and like most Bandol rosés, it will evolve and improve over the next few months, if not a year or two. Pour a glass to go with some halibut and vegetables grilled over mesquite.



Gorgeous White Burgundies from Domaine Matrot

By Alex Pross

There are exciting things happening at Domaine Matrot! Thierry et Pascale Matrot have handed the running of the domaine, which has a history in Meursault that dates back to 1835, from Thierry (father) and Pascale (mother) to their two daughters, Adele and Elsa. The 2016 vintage was the first that the daughters controlled 100 percent, and the results are stunning.

The 2016 white Burgundies from Domaine Thierry et Pascale Matrot, sourced from their substantial holdings in Puligny-Montrachet and Meursault, are jaw-droppingly good. Loaded with fresh, pure fruit notes, bright minerality, and great structure, these wines are a synergy of purity and elegance, with a classical Burgundian feel. We have a great selection of these 2016 wines at unbeatable prices—easily 15–30% off all other retailers' prices.

Our first mind-blowing value, the **2016 Domaine Thierry et Pascale Matrot St-Romain (\$19.99)** easily blows away any Bourgogne blanc within \$5 to \$10 of its price range. This wine starts off with a beautiful nose of orchard fruits, sweet butter, and crushed seashells. The palate is full and rich, with orchard fruit flavors, and mineral notes run throughout this pretty wine. The wine finishes with a flurry of fruit and racy acidity, as it lingers on the tip of your tongue, making it impossible to resist another sip.

Next we have a dynamic duo of Puligny-Montrachets. The **2016 Domaine Thierry et Pascale Matrot Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru "Les Chalumeaux" (\$69.99)** comes from a vineyard located near Hameau de Blagny, on a hillside facing east that sits on very rocky, early limestone. There's simultaneously a richness and a strong sense of minerality in this wine. Purity and elegance are the hallmarks here, with wet stone, minerality, and hints of orchard fruit weaving their way through a complex, multi-layered palate. The finish has a touch of oak, and a subtle nuance of hazelnuts that gives the wine further complexity and weight. **92 RP, 92 WS, 91 BH, 91 VN**

At about \$80, **Domaine Thierry et Pascale Matrot Puligny-Montrachet 1er Cru "Combettes" (\$79.99)** is the priciest wine in this article, but also the best. It's quintessential Puligny-Montrachet—there's such purity and sleekness to this wine. The fruit unfurls to display peach and nectarine flavors, while the minerality shows itself as pristine mountain water flowing over smooth stones. With great acidity and flavors that echo throughout, this wine was the favorite at a recent dinner among family and friends. **92 BH, 90 VN**

It seems to me that Meursaults in recent years have gained a bit more weight, and I think this set of 2016 Matrot Meursaults exemplifies this trend. The **2016 Domaine Thierry et Pascale Matrot Meursault 1er Cru "Blagny" (\$59.99)** needs a little coaxing at first to really strut its stuff; then it comes on like gangbusters. Aromas of lemon zest, flint, roasted nuts, and white flowers all seamlessly flow to a palate that displays orange marmalade, white peach, and spice notes. Rich and full-bodied, this wine is a great foil for roast chicken. **93 WE, 90 RP**

The **2016 Domaine Thierry et Pascale Matrot Meursault 1er Cru "Charmes" (\$69.99)** hails from the largest Premier Cru vineyard in Meursault, Charmes—often referred to as the archetype of Meursault. The 2016 Matrot Charmes shows off a flinty, spicy nose that gives way to a palate of fresh lemons, peach, and nectarine flavors. The wine has a ton of stuffing, with layer after layer of complexity and a long, long finish. This is a Meursault that will not only regale the Burgundy enthusiast, but should also win over the California Chardonnay fan. **94 WS, 91 VN**



Warm Up the Grill with a Glass of Shiraz

By Thomas Smith

Australian Shiraz is my go-to barbecue wine.

Full-bodied, with layers of black fruit, smoke, and meat, it can stand up to and complement the big flavors of everything grilled, from burgers to brisket.

There are few bigger names in Barossa than Torbreck, but the **2018 Torbreck Woodcutter's Shiraz Barossa Valley (\$19.99)** is one of their best-kept secrets. At \$20, this Shiraz absolutely over-delivers. I love the depth of dark fruit on the palate, with bright acidity that cuts through the fat of barbecue, creating a perfect pairing. **94 JS, 91 RP**



A few hundred miles to the southwest of Barossa, cooled by onshore flow from Port Phillip Bay, is Grampians. The **2017 Mount Langi Ghiran "Cliff Edge" Shiraz (\$19.99)** is a classic expression of cool climate Shiraz. Black pepper, charcoal, and black fruit abound, plus crunchy tannin and lightning acidity. **96 JH**

The Glaetzer family has been rooted in Barossa since 1888, and today Ben Glaetzer is one of the most in-demand consulting winemakers in the region. The **2016 Glaetzer "Bishop" Shiraz Barossa Valley (\$34.99)** is a blend of 120-year-old vines and "younger" 35-year-old vines, combining freshness with structure and power. With notes of grilled meat, spice, and red-toned fruit, this is sure to impress at your next cookout. **95 JH, 92 RP**

Top Buyer Picks for Summer Sipping

Kirk Walker's Summertime Sips from Spain

2018 Adegas Valtea Albariño Rias Baixas (\$15.99)

Exotic, refreshing, and evocative, Albariño is one of the most transportative varietal wines in the world. This is “green” Spain—coastal, verdant, and vibrant. Valtea's vineyards are in Condado do Tea, more interior than the famous Salnes Valley. The wine is “mineral,” but more high mountain stream than salty coastal mineral. It's warmer and drier there, giving the wines more fruit and texture, but never at a loss for zippy acid. With nearly tropical, subtle floral tones, and a hint of something green, this transports me out of my house to this magical corner of Spain.



2019 Vinos del Viento Rosé Campo de Borja

(\$12.99) This rosé captures early summertime—when you can find the last of cherries, the best raspberries, and the first watermelons at the farmers market—in a glass. Medium-bodied, with all of those fun, summery flavors, this is crisp, but with a surprisingly long finish.



Keith Mabry Susses out the Sancerre

2016 Gitton Père & Fils “Les Fredins” Sancerre (\$24.99)

Persistent fruit meets evolution in this fine example from Sancerre. Instead of overt citrus and grass, this wine has mellowed into a harmonious assemblage of perfumed Meyer lemon, gooseberry, crushed rocks, and fresh thyme. Silex (flint) soils of the region provide this wine's resolute backbone and crackling minerality.



New Zealand Picks from Thomas Smith

Kumeu River is New Zealand's most celebrated Chardonnay producer, by far. But when their importer accidentally sent me a bottle of the **2018 Kumeu Village Pinot Noir (\$19.99)** I instantly fell head over heels for this wine. With just the barest hint of color, it could almost be mistaken for rosé. Elegant, delicate, and beautifully floral, along with hints of earth and tannin, this is incredibly distinctive and absolutely delicious. This will please any Burgundy lover. Serve with a slight chill along with grilled salmon on a summer evening.



Nautilus has quickly become noticed as a rising star in Marlborough, so the stage was set with the 2019 vintage, one of the best growing years Marlborough has seen in nearly a decade. The wines from this vintage are downright fantastic, and the **2019 Nautilus Sauvignon Blanc Marlborough (\$14.99)** is certainly the best rendition they've produced to date. Full of passionfruit and ripe pineapple notes, followed up with a mineral-driven backbone and a crisp, green snap, this is a spectacular wine that shows how truly great Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc can be. **95 BC, 93 JS, 91 WE**



Greg St. Clair's Hot Tips from Tuscany and Beyond

2016 Querciabella “Mongrana” Toscana (\$19.99) You're going to love this blend of 50% Sangiovese, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 25% Merlot from a biodynamic winery on the Tuscan coast. The nose of this wine is floral, aromatic, with an underlying *sauvage* layer. On the palate, it shows extraordinary balance and depth, at a price you just don't see for this quality. The flavors expand across your tongue, showing wild cherry, plum, and hints of cassis, accented with wild herbs and lilacs. Just superb—and vegan! **95 JS**



2017 Farnetella “Lucilla” Toscana Rosso (\$12.99)

From Felsina's other estate in Tuscany, this 93-point bargain Super Tuscan blend of Sangiovese, Cabernet, and Merlot tastes like it should be \$20-plus! I love the nose of this wine, full of rich fruit and mixed berries. But it's on the palate where it shines with power, depth, and complexity. I've found that this wine is almost always better on the second day, so if you're drinking now, I'd suggest to decant it a bit first! **93 JS, 90 VN**

2016 Tenuta Rovaglia “Vigne di Catullo” Lugana Riserva (\$18.99)

Some Italian white wine is thought of as thin and acidic, but this single vineyard Riserva has a California richness to it. The aromatics show stone fruit and lavender, but the wine fills the air around you not just with a floral component, but a heady, musky, almost humid richness. The full body gives a creaminess to the wine that is ultra-pleasing to the palate, yet perfectly balanced. The finish is long, and, in a word, irresistible. You should try some.

94 WE



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