

# WINE News

*You worry about the turkey; we've got the wine (and booze) covered!*



## NOVEMBER 15, 2021 FEATURES

- |                |                     |                  |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 2 Sonoma Coast | 5 Rioja y Mas       | 8 Autumnal Hues  |
| 3 Super Mâcon  | 6 Kiwi Pairings     | 9 Sideboard Sips |
| 4 Champagne    | 7 The Italian Table | 10 Fast Friends  |

## Come Home, and Explore a World of Wine

By Ryan Woodhouse

I love Thanksgiving for many reasons, but mostly because it's a holiday focused almost entirely on eating—and drinking! It's the perfect excuse to set aside a ridiculous amount of time to obsess over how to brine, stuff, spatchcock, deep-fry, roast, or smoke a turkey. Then there are the sides: the traditional ones; the family specials (and not-so specials); and the unusual ones you never saw coming, but couldn't leave alone. As far as wine pairings go, the smorgasbord of dishes that typically congregate on the dinner table offer up many opportunities for that magical synthesis of food and wine, yet often the winner is a versatile wine that is equally comfortable with bacon-wrapped Brussels sprouts, turkey galore, and

pumpkin pie! So read on through these pages as our team brings you their personal favorites. Highlights include: the power and grace of Champagne Pierre Paillard; a dazzling aromatic white from Massican; a spectacular Gran Reserva Rioja from Bodegas Muga; a triple 95-point Pinot Noir from New Zealand that is sure to turn heads; the incredible wines of Hirsch Vineyards; mouthwatering Chenin Blanc from the Loire (not to mention some epic recipe ideas from Keith); some ever-tempting Burgundy for every budget; and dram of 25-year-old, single sherry butt, cask-strength Scotch to round out the night without costing you a mortgage payment. Gobble gobble!

### 2018 Arterberry Maresh "Old Vines" Dundee Hills Pinot Noir (\$39.95)

Here's a perennial top pick for Turkey Day. The 50-year-old vines of the Maresh and Webber vineyards in Oregon's Dundee Hills produce Pinot Noir of uncommon elegance and complexity. Layered, powerful, pure, and refined, this shows vivid floral notes, wild berries, forest floor, earthy tones, and mulling spices—\$39.95 doesn't buy better Pinot than this, anywhere. **94+ RP, 93 WS**



### 2017 Skylark "Rodgers Creek Vineyard" Sonoma Coast Syrah (\$29.95)

This staff favorite is sourced from the famed Rodgers Creek vineyard, located in the fairly new Petaluma Gap appellation, adjacent to Carneros. It offers up spiced blueberries and blackberries on the nose along with that distinct aromatic of peppered bacon. It's a brilliant match for fall cuisine. Best of all, we're offering it at a market-low price! **93 JD**



### 2018 Greystone "Nor'Wester" Pinot Noir North Canterbury (\$19.99)

Named for the grey limestone soils that blanket the region's vineyards, Greystone is a top producer in North Canterbury, New Zealand. Brimming with dark, concentrated black fruits accented by herbal undertones and racy acidity, this tremendous value is one of the best Pinot Noirs you can find anywhere at its price. **93 SK, 91 JS**



Cover: You can almost smell the pumpkin pie cooking, somewhere off camera, in this scene of Oregon's Dundee Hills in autumn. (Photo: Shutterstock)



Indeed, in the Sonoma Coast, the wines are often as gorgeous as the views. (Photo: Hirsch Vineyards)

## For the Roast from the Sonoma Coast

By Ryan Woodhouse

### Producer Spotlight: Hirsch Vineyards

A few weeks back I was nosing around in the cellar and found a bottle of 2010 Hirsch West Ridge Pinot Noir. My wife and I drank the bottle that night, and it was simply stunning. However, I couldn't help but think, "Darn, I should have saved that for Thanksgiving, it would have been so perfect."

So, when it came time to write up some wines for this annual Thanksgiving newsletter, Hirsch was front of mind. This iconic estate was founded by Sonoma Coast pioneer, David Hirsch, in 1980. After buying a ridge-top parcel, at a 1,500-foot elevation just a few miles from the Pacific Ocean, David went to work getting cuttings from many of the most revered plantings of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay in the state. Piece by piece, he created the intricate collage of some 60-plus distinct blocks that make up the estate today. These heritage selections of Pinot Noir include Swan, Calera, Mount Eden, and Pommard. The Chardonnay is a 1994 massal selection from Rochioli. The soils of the property are about as diverse as you'll find anywhere. The San Andreas Fault, which runs just a few hundred yards from the vineyard itself, has twisted and ground up the underlying geology into a hodgepodge of variegated marine sediment, sandstone, and clay soils. The property also features several separate ridges, just about every aspect on the compass, and slopes up to a precipitous 40%. Since 2011 the estate has been farmed using organic and biodynamic practices. Jasmine Hirsch, David's daughter, returned home from Europe in 2008 to live on the estate. In 2015 she took over as general manager, and in 2019 became the winemaker, building on the great work done by predecessors Anthony Filiberti and Ross Cobb. This unique piece of land and the passion of the folks that farm the vines means that the wines produced here are some of the most magical in all of California. I can't recommend them more highly for your holiday table!



### 2019 Hirsch "Bohan-Dillon" Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir (\$39.95)

This gorgeous little wine is a blend of Hirsch estate fruit plus some parcels from neighboring, and also highly regarded, Hellenthal. In 2019 the estate fruit makes up 97%. Quite translucent in the glass; bright, fresh, red-fruited; baking spice and dried herbs. **95 WE**

### 2018 Hirsch "San Andreas Fault" Sonoma Coast

**Pinot Noir (\$54.95)** Hirsch's flagship cuvée, combining 45 individual blocks into one wine, is the choral voice of the estate. The vines are between 20 and 40 years of age, of numerous selections and clones, with many soil types and rootstocks. Exotic forest berry fruits, Morello cherry, black raspberry, Christmas cake spice, rose water, alpine herbs, woody spices. Stunning Pinot Noir by any measure. **95 JD**

### 2018 Hirsch "Reserve" Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir (\$84.95)

The crème de la crème of blocks and barrels from Hirsch selected for its ultimate expression of the site, predominantly from the 40-year-old blocks. Powerful, brooding, darker-edged than the two prior wines, but with similar earthy spices and aromatic lift. **96 W&S**

**2019 Hirsch Sonoma Coast Chardonnay (\$59.99)** If you prefer a white wine option for Thanksgiving dinner, Hirsch has you covered there also! The Chardonnay from the estate is a tiny production but just as transcendent as the Pinot Noir. From a radically steep slope planted in 1994, with less than four acres of Chardonnay, this is focused; profoundly mineral; crystallized cool sunlight; an ocean breeze wafting through an orchard.



## More Thanksgiving Favorites for Your Consideration

### 2020 Evening Land “Seven Springs de Mures” Eola-Amity Hills

**Pinot Noir (\$19.95)** A very intriguing wine from the talented crew at Evening Land. Sitting somewhere between rosé and a light red, this is basically vinous cranberry sauce. A very short maceration before pressing gives a juicy, tart, mouthwatering wine meant to be drunk with a slight chill. Estate-grown organic and biodynamic fruit from an historic vineyard; native fermentation and neutral oak aging.



### 2018 Thomas Fogarty Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir (\$29.95)

One of my favorite local Santa Cruz Mountains wines, this has the perfect flavor profile for Thanksgiving. Floral, lifted aromas of spiced red fruits, coastal redwood grove, baking spice, and bramble. Vibrant acidity and a refined texture on the palate. Great turkey wine. **95 WE**

### 2017 Byron “Rita’s Crown” Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir (\$34.95)

An exceptional deal on one of the most highly sought-after vineyards in the Sta. Rita Hills, a jewel of the region that sits high on exposed windy slopes with very lean diatomaceous earth soils. The resulting wine is explosively aromatic with Asian spices, ripe, dark berry fruits, clove, and wisps of toasty barrel spice. Very suave Pinot Noir. **95 VN**

### 2019 Sam Louis Smith “Carmelita Pelio Vineyard” Monterey Pinot Noir (\$44.95)

A tiny, 50-case production from the super-talented Sam Smith. Carmelita is a best-barrel selection from the Pelio

vineyard, which sits atop the mountain range dividing the Santa Lucia Highlands from Carmel Valley. Very floral, with precise notes of black raspberry and mulling spices like nutmeg, dried orange peel, and clove. One sip of this captivating wine will have you coming back for more. **95 WE**

### 2018 A Tribute to Grace “Vie Caprice Vineyard”

**Santa Ynez Valley Grenache (\$44.95)** If, like many, you prefer a wine that is a little fuller-bodied than your typical Pinot Noir, Grenache should be at the top of your list. Few winemakers are as talented with this under-appreciated grape as Angela Osborne at Tribute to Grace. Truly, this wine is a perfect example of what it can offer in the right hands. Dark cherry fruit, macerated raspberry, sappy, ample fruit on the palate, with sweet spice and leather. This is perfectly poised and complete. **95 VN**



### 2019 Ridge Vineyards “East Bench” Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel (\$29.95)

A home-grown grape for an American holiday. I love Zin for Thanksgiving, especially an elegant, balanced one like this from Ridge Vineyards. The East Bench bottling is stunning this year; I think perhaps the best of all the 2019 Zin-based releases. It has an almost Pinot Noir-like weight, but with much fruit intensity and that classic Zinfandel saturation on the palate. Fresh, pure, brambly fruit, toasted spices, subtle oak. It’s a beautiful Zin that’s easy to love. **95 JD**



## A Mâcon Superstar Returns for the Holidays

By Alex Pross

As we continue to battle through supply chain issues and Covid, there is some good news thankfully on the horizon: we just got in our shipment of **Domaine Renaud** wines! Thanks to the removal of all tariffs and a lower euro rate, these wines are priced pretty much the same as they were three or more years ago. Domaine Renaud is run by husband-and-wife team Pascal and Mireille Renaud, who farm 25 acres across the villages of Pouilly-Fuissé, Solutré, and Davayé. With an aim for brightness and fresh fruit, they work primarily with stainless steel and large oak foudres.

Domaine Renaud has a stunning trio of 2020 vintage wines priced at \$16.99, each offering a great interpretation of their terroir. First, the **2020 Domaine Renaud Mâcon-Villages (\$16.99)** is a bright and zesty wine with hints of orchard fruits and citrus. This lively white is a great everyday sipper, and makes a wonderful holiday party wine as well. The **2020 Domaine Renaud Mâcon-Solutré (\$16.99)** is impressively balanced, with an elegant feel and pure, fresh orchard fruits that seamlessly lead to a long, flowing finish. Next up, the **2020 Domaine Renaud Mâcon-Charnay (\$16.99)** is the most full-bodied of this amazing trio. Flush with orchard fruits, mainly focused on pear and apple flavors, this wine has a tad more spice and power on the palate, and a long, supple finish.

A small step up in price from these three entry-level offerings, the **2020 Domaine Renaud Saint Veran (\$19.99)** is a richly textured wine with plenty of white flower aromas as well as star fruit, peach, and yellow plum flavors. On the palate there’s incredible richness, impressive depth, and concentration, with fruit, spice, and brightness that make this an amazing value.

With their holdings in Pouilly-Fuissé, Domaine Renaud has fashioned some impressive wines. The **2018 Domaine Renaud Pouilly-Fuissé Vieilles Vignes (\$29.99)** is a great example of the heights this property can attain in this great region. A wealth of aromas abound from the glass, including peach and yellow plum, as well as hints of brioche. On the palate there’s beautiful orchard fruit notes, spice, and a rich, buttery note thanks to a hint of oak. The wine unfolds slowly on the palate to reveal depth and structure worthy of a fine white Burgundy.



(Continued on page 7)

## The Elegance of Champagne for the Thanksgiving Table

By Gary Westby

**Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday of the whole year.** The sentiment of bringing friends and family to the table to give thanks touches me, and I have to say that I love the food as well! I am happy to say that we have many options for toasting and the table, in a wide range of prices and styles.

Every year, we get one drop of the tiny-production **Thierry Thibault Brut Champagne (\$29.99)**, and our in-the-know Champagne-loving customers descend upon it. Thierry is Champagne royalty, as the son of Daniel Thibault, former *chef de cave* of Charles Heidsieck and one of the most respected winemakers in the history of Champagne. The family vines that Thierry tends in the Marne Valley village of Verneuil are perfectly situated, and used to be sold to Charles Heidsieck. But Thierry has decided to keep the fruit and make his own wine. Because we buy direct from the man whose name is on the label, the price is very low, given the quality. The Brut is composed of one-third each of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Meunier, and has *pain au levain* toast on the nose, a creamy, nougat-like mid-palate from three years on the lees, and a dry, fresh finish thanks to the cool 2017 vintage it is based on. This is a perfect Champagne for all the Thanksgiving appetizers. Buy extra of this one — we won't get more until next year!



Just arrived, also direct from the producer, are the Champagnes of Pierre Paillard. They are all estate-grown from the Grand Cru of Bouzy, and entirely made from old massal selections rather than cloned vines. The **Pierre Paillard “Les Parcelles” Grand Cru Extra Brut Bouzy Champagne (375ml \$22.99; 750ml \$39.99; 1.5L \$99.99)** is not only great for toasting and appetizers, but also will pair well with turkey and the fixings. It is composed of 70% Pinot Noir and 30% Chardonnay, almost entirely vinified in stainless steel. The fresh personality of this Champagne makes it very easy to drink, but the depth and power are there to pair with a big bite of gravy-covered turkey leg. The Champagne has great warm pie crust aromas and Braeburn apple fruit, but the best part is the finish—the pure chalky class of the Grand Cru Bouzy comes through on the lifted, long finale.



The **Pierre Paillard “Les Terres Roses” Grand Cru Extra Brut Rosé (\$57.99)** is one of our Thanksgiving favorites at home. It's composed of two-thirds Chardonnay and one-third Pinot Noir, with just 5% Bouzy rouge giving it the color and flavor of rosé. The combination of chalky virility from the Chardonnay and dark cherry fruit from the top-class Pinot are stunning, and we were



*“We cooked an extra Thanksgiving meal early, just to test this pairing,” explains Gary Westby.*

amazed last year how the wine went with everything from oysters to sausage stuffing! If you like a rosé with plenty of flavor, but that is still completely dry, this one is for you!

We also received a small amount of the monumental **2008 Pierre Paillard “La Grand Récolte” Grand Cru Extra Brut (\$79.99)** which comes from the two oldest plots on the property, the 45% of Chardonnay planted in 1961 and the 55% of Pinot Noir in 1970. If you want to treat your guests to a show stopping combination of power and grace you need look no further.

If you are seeking a truly fabulous treat, I can not recommend the **2007 Billecart-Salmon “Cuvée Louis” Brut Blanc de Blancs (\$129.99)** more strongly. This wine was a worth it when we sold it at \$170, but a special deal with Mathieu Roland-Billecart has allowed us to shave off \$40. This creamy, elegant Champagne has the kind of tiny-bead bubbles that take years to develop and a balance between high-class citric zing and silky brioche that must be tasted to be believed! A toast to you!



# Rioja and More for the Very Best Runner-Up Holiday

By Kirk Walker



**Thanksgiving is... one of my favorite holidays.** Christmas is the best, but there is a lot happening that day. Thanksgiving starts by waking up too early and then running, or just waiting in the cold while others run, but after that I slowly lay siege to the kitchen, preparing all of the goodies that will be consumed over the next several hours. The smells, the tastes, and the pace — it's a chance to sit or stand around and indulge with loved ones and friends. In anticipation for our upcoming time in the kitchen, here are some inspirational bottles.

**2020 Soalheiro Alvarinho Monção e Melgaço Vinho Verde Portugal (\$24.99)** This is always one of the best Alvarinho (or Albariño) wines on the Iberian peninsula. Grown in the northernmost sub-region of Vinho Verde, just across the Minho river from Spain, in granitic soils and farmed organically, this wine shines. Expressive is the first word that comes to mind: the fruit flirts with exotic, while maintaining its cool, mineral focus. It has a round mid-palate

and a long, mouthwatering finish. While not a classic pairing for turkey, this is amazing, with its savory, sweet fruit combinations. It's perfect as an aperitif, or, with a lot of luck, for Dungeness crab! **92 W&S**

**2020 Bodega Chacra "Sin Azufre" Pinot Noir Rio Negro Patagonia (\$37.99)** It is predictable to suggest Pinot Noir for Thanksgiving, I know, but a classic is a classic, and I can mix it up with where it comes from: Patagonia, for instance. Bodega Chacra makes some of the best, if not the best, Pinot Noir from the South American continent. Sourced from 60-year-old vines that are organically and biodynamically grown in pebbly soils, this wine has that perfect balance of ripe fruit, spice, and savory earthy tones. The



balance is fruit-heavy with dark cherries, dark berries, and red berries, but underneath that are the earthy, mushroomy savory notes. This wine is subtle, deep; complex, but exuberant. A wonderful foil to all the classic sides on the Thanksgiving table. **95 JS**

**2015 Miguel Merino Reserva Rioja (\$34.99)**

The Miguel Merino wines are traditional, with a sensibility that is modern, or as Miguel himself says, "updated classic." The fruit is sourced from hillside vineyards around the village of Briones. This is one of the great Rioja Alta sites, just south of the Ebro river. The fruit is grown organically in limestone-rich soils. The wines are aged in barrels with American oak staves and French oak heads. What stands out with these wines is the fruit. It jumps out, and there is so much energy here. The fruit is a mix of dark and red berries, and the oak is spicy and restrained (that updated Rioja thing). It pops on the palate with dark fruits, savory and sweet spices, and leather. Clean, balanced, and long. I want this with my mom's potato and Italian sausage stuffing!



**2014 Bodegas Muga "Prado Enea" Gran Reserva Rioja (\$79.99)**

Gran Reserva wines are special occasion wines, and the Prado Enea is one of the most special of Gran Reservas. Prado Enea for me is holiday wine. There is just something about the mixture of the very best French and American oak, with the depth and breadth of spice, that evokes the holiday kitchen to me. It is heady with spice and savory notes. There is a sweetness to the fruit baked with a tangy focus. And then the texture: polished, elegant, and long; substantial without being heavy. This wine will pair with the most traditional fare to the most exotic. A perfect choice for everyone at a table, this wine delivers that special holiday experience. **97 JS**



After harvest, the gnarled old vines of Rioja have just enough energy to put on a colorful show. (Photo: Shutterstock)



*In Marlborough, all that's gold is not Sauvignon Blanc — the Pinot Noir there is outstanding, as well. (Photo: New Zealand Winegrowers Inc.)*

## Not *that* Bird — New Zealand Pinot Noir

By Thomas Smith

**When it comes to Thanksgiving and wine it's all about Pinot Noir.** There is no style of wine that pairs better with everything from turkey to cranberry sauce. And this Thanksgiving, we'll be pouring New Zealand Pinot Noir at our family's holiday table. Over the past several years, New Zealand's Pinot Noir has begun winning acclaim on a global scale for its phenomenal craftsmanship and exceptional value. There's something for everybody in New Zealand Pinot Noir, and this year I've selected a few of my favorite wines that I'm thrilled to recommend for your Thanksgiving.

North Canterbury might not be New Zealand's most recognizable names in wine, but this small region about an hour north of Christchurch is packed with dozens of small, boutique producers focused on crafting Pinot Noir with an eye toward the wines of Burgundy. This is the only region in New Zealand where Pinot is planted on limestone soils, one of the key factors in the wines of the Côte d'Or.

Greystone is one of North Canterbury's top producers, named for the grey limestone soils that blanket the region's vineyards. Also featured on page 1 of this newsletter, their **2018 Greystone "Nor'Wester" Pinot Noir North Canterbury (\$19.99)** is brimming with black fruits and is one of the best Pinot Noirs you can find anywhere at its price.

Another exceptional region for Pinot Noir is found in the tiny hamlet of Martinborough, located at the southern end of New Zealand's northern island. Originally planted in the early 1970s, Martinborough has built a reputation over the past few decades as one of New Zealand's premier sites for top-tier Pinot Noir. Ata Rangi was one of the three original pioneers of the region, and continues to win accolades year after year for their stunning Pinot Noir. One of only two wineries granted Grand Cru status in New Zealand, the **2018 Ata Rangi "Crimson" Pinot Noir Martinborough (\$24.99)** is made from younger estate vines and is showing beautifully, with sweet red cherry, pomegranate, and rose petal. And at under \$25, it's no wonder James Suckling recently declared Ata Rangi's Crimson, "One of the best value wines on the planet, hands down!" **94 SK**

Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc may be a global phenomenon, but a handful of small sites in the Southern Valleys region have shown an underestimated potential for sensational Pinot Noir.



K&L's favorite producer in Marlborough is Te Whare Ra, led by husband-and-wife team Jason and Anna Flowerday. Their **2017 TWR (Te Whare Ra) Pinot Noir Marlborough (\$29.99)** is an absolute dark horse. In 2017, they ultimately composed their Pinot Noir from both their estate vineyard and Clayvin vineyard, the most acclaimed vineyard in the region. With a style that leans toward Burgundy's Côte de Beaune, this is crackling with spicy red fruits and crunchy tannin. In my book, this is the best TWR Marlborough Pinot Noir ever produced. **94 JS**



A short drive from Te Whare Ra is one of my other all-time favorite New Zealand producers, Fromm. Fromm is widely known across New Zealand as Marlborough's finest producer of Pinot Noir, focusing on crafting vineyard-specific wines from a handful of the best sites in Marlborough's Southern Valleys. The **2018 Fromm "Cuvée H" Pinot Noir Marlborough (\$34.99)** is their premier reserve Pinot Noir. Named for founding winemaker Hans Kalberer, this is a blend of the absolute best barrels from these vineyards each year. A gorgeous profile of exquisitely executed French oak perfectly complements the generous fruit on this wine, resulting in a classy and refined glass that is sure to impress. **95 JS**



Finally, we'll return to Martinborough to highlight one of the most exciting New Zealand wines being produced today. Dry River was one of the other pioneering producers of the region, but unlike Ata Rangi or Martinborough Vineyards, Dry River has remained tiny by comparison. Helmed by the incredible Wilco Lam, Dry River is all organic, all dry-farmed, with an obsessive eye to quality in the vineyard and in the cellar.



The **2018 Dry River Pinot Noir Martinborough (\$89.99)** is easily one of the best wines made in New Zealand today. Showing dark, supple fruits above earthy notes of forest floor, this has a level of power and distinctiveness found nowhere else. Another example of New Zealand's foray onto the world stage of Pinot Noir. **97 VN**

# Food, Wine? Go Italian.

By Greg St. Clair

**The holidays are always a time for celebrating with food and wine, and there's no better wine to pair with food than Italian!**

The Italians joke that you can't taste a wine properly unless you have a fork in your other hand. Maybe that's a bit of bravado, but the combination of Italian wine's acidity and the rich meals of the holiday makes this come through! So, in that vein, we'll suggest some Italian wines!

One of my favorite wines right now, the **2019 Cantina Terlaner "Terlaner Cuvée" Alto Adige (\$24.99)** is an extraordinary blend of 60% Pinot Bianco, 30% Chardonnay, and 10% Sauvignon Blanc. The Pinot Bianco is the backbone of this wine, giving it real character, while the Chardonnay adds a little mid-palate weight from a small portion that is aged in barrel, and the Sauvignon Blanc lends a little personality and flair. This is a white wine that's ideal for pairing with your Thanksgiving turkey and all of the trimmings! **93 JS**

The **2017 Tolaini "Al Passo" Toscana (\$19.99)** is a bargain, and is something that you can give to those die-hard California wine fans who have to have a bit of the Bordeaux varieties in everything they drink! **94 JS**

And to double down on those Bordeaux blends, the **2016 Collazzi Toscana Rosso (\$29.99)** is one of the best in its category that I have had! Sangiovese 34%, Merlot 33%, Cabernet Sauvignon 33%. **95 JS**

Yet, I digress. Back to some of Italy's more unique whites leads us to a Tuscan favorite—Michelangelo's favorite, as well. The **2019 Montenedoli "Tradizionale" Vernaccia di San Gimignano (\$17.99)** has a brief fermentation on the skins, so for your "orange wine" family or friends, this has a tinge of color that actually makes it well-suited for turkey and the fixings. I love this wine, the extra texture and weight giving it more depth. An ideal holiday wine. **97 DC**



Looking for something bigger that you can sit around drinking all by itself after dinner? Well, look no further: the **2016 Ciacci Piccolomini d'Aragona Brunello di Montalcino (\$59.99)** is fabulous. It comes from the south slope of Montalcino where the iron-rich *terra rossa* soils give the wine abundant plummy fruit character. This soil produces a salted plum, and umami flavor that is amplified in the wine's supple richness. The 2016 vintage is sensational; its focus and linear nature adding length and superb balance to this wine. It's one of my favorite wines of the vintage—it's awesome! **97 WE, 95 RP**



*You run outta turkey? Italy's got you covered, amico. Have a mortadella.*

more subtle, umami-layered richness seems to be the overriding character. The finish shows this is a wine that will age very well, but the supple, smooth texture will allow you to drink this one now! **97 JS, 96 WE**

To have at the end of your meal, or truthfully, just any time during the holidays, give yourself a treat and try a bottle of the **2020 Saracco Moscato d'Asti (\$14.99)**. Low-alcohol pure fun that comes across light, crisp, and clean.

Happy Thanksgiving, everyone!

If you're looking for just a little more muscle, then the **2015 Castelgiocondo Brunello di Montalcino (\$54.99)** is the wine for you. The nose is deep, full-throated, with dark fruit, cassis, ripe plums, and hints of Tuscan brush in the background. On the palate, the wine is full-bodied, structured, and has super-fine, sweet tannins. The plum and cassis flavors are still there, but a



## **Mâcon Superstar** (Continued from page 3)

As winemakers in Pouilly-Fuissé slowly start to incorporate Premier Cru vineyard status to all their eligible wines, the next two offerings from Domaine Renaud will receive this elevated status in 2020. The **2019 Domaine Renaud Pouilly-Fuissé "Aux Bouthiers" (\$29.99)** displays fabulous depth and precision, with gorgeous orchard fruit notes and candied ginger. Smooth and sleek, this beautiful wine has excellent complexity and a wonderful finish.

Lastly, the **2018 Domaine Renaud Pouilly-Fuissé "Aux Chailloux" (\$32.99)** shows the most complexity of all the selections in this offering, slowly unwinding to display beautiful citrus and orchard aromas, as well as hints of fig and kiwi, wrapped up in spice and subtle oak notes. A fabulous wine that speaks to the wonderful terroirs in Pouilly-Fuissé, and a great example of why many vineyards there will get elevated to Premier Cru status for the 2020 vintage. We are happy to have one of our favorite Burgundian and Mâconnais producers back in stock!

## Domestic Whites with Autumnal Hues

By Kaj Stromer

**In my opinion, white wines are supremely built to pair with food.** Their lively acidity keeps your palate fresh between bites. Varietal wines like Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Pinot Gris, and Riesling are as well-structured, complex, and as rewarding as any red wine, as their inherent fruit notes, highlighted by a touch of spice, make them the perfect foil for roast chicken, pork tenderloin, salmon, and even the annual turkey. So, for my fellow lovers of white wine, here's a selection that's well-suited to your autumnal table.

When it comes to ageability and complexity, Riesling simply can't be beat. In the realm of dry, Austrian-styled Riesling, few "get it" the way Mike Callahan at Maidenstoen does. His **2019 Maidenstoen "Wirz Vineyard" Cienega Valley Riesling (\$19.99)** is sourced from one of California's most historic vineyards. The old-vine Wirz vineyard was planted in the 1960s in the Cienega Valley AVA. Now, these old, gnarled vines ripen late and yield a mere one ton per acre. The result is a Riesling good enough to make an Austrian blush — a German, too. This is a dry-style Riesling. It offers up a whiff of passion fruit followed by zesty citrus, dried apple, and honeysuckle. This is a super wine at this price point. **94 WE**

Dan Petroski has been turning heads with his all-white lineup at Massican. His drop-dead gorgeous **2020 Massican "Annia" Napa Valley White Blend (\$29.95)** is a stunning and compelling white wine blend of Tocai Friulano, Ribolla Gialla, and Chardonnay. There's a panoply of pear, apple, tropical fruit, white flowers, and talc on the nose. On the palate the intensity of the wine grows while you swirl, revealing copious amounts of fruit resting beneath a nervy tension. The level of intensity is matched only by its palate-coating texture. It possesses bracing acidity, the likes of which make your mouth water in anticipation of the next sip. This level of quality for under \$30 is simply amazing. **96 WE**

Named *Wine Enthusiast* Winemaker of the Year 2020, Greg Brewer keeps turning out world-class single-vineyard Chardonnay from the Sta. Rita Hills. His **2016 Diatom (Brewer-Clifton) "Hilliard Bruce" Sta. Rita Hills Chardonnay (\$34.99)** is traditionally only available through the winery, but Greg did bless us with a handful of cases. The Hilliard Bruce vineyard is strategically situated on a knoll overlooking the Sta. Rita Hills. The result is a wine of great complexity and

enchanting aromatics. Chardonnay is definitely the fall white for my tastes. All that fresh apple and pear fruit with just a touch of wood spice. **94 JD**

Oregon put a stake in the ground years ago that Pinot Gris would be their hallmark white. Our friends at Alexana have hit it out of the park with their **2018 Alexana "Terroir Series" Willamette Valley Pinot Gris (\$24.95)**. This top-rated wine offers the taster a mouthful of flavor and complexity. Bring on the fall menu of roast bird and root vegetables and you'll find a food-and-wine match made in heaven. True Pinot Gris tends to be a touch lighter in weight than Chardonnay, so it's easy to keep sipping on this one. **95 DC**

Nowadays, no discussion of white wine is complete without the mention of orange wine. Simply put, orange wine is a white wine that has been fermented on its skins. The result is wine with greater texture and an orange hue. One of our best sellers in the category, the **2020 Field Recordings "Domo Arigato Mr. Ramato" Central Coast Pinot Gris (\$19.99)** is inspired by the Italian winemaking method (ramato) of letting Pinot Grigio juice ferment on its skins. The wine is nearly rosé in color and offers a wild panoply of flavors including hallmark spiciness. It's a white wine that drinks more like a red.

Though they are relative newcomers to the California wine scene, the Haarmeyers seem like they've been at it for much longer. Their Chenin Blancs, sourced from organically farmed vineyards around the Sacramento area, have caught the attention of wine critics and customers alike. Chenin, the legend of the Loire, is deftly translated here as they capture the peach and spice flavors that typify the wine. I love the intensity, length and persistence of their **2020 Haarmeyer "St. Rey SRV" Clarksburg Chenin Blanc (\$16.99)**. This is certainly a winery to watch and to further explore their many other fascinating wines.





# Thanks on the Rocks: Turkey Party Tipples

By Andrew Whiteley and David Othenin-Girard

## Momento: A Mezcal Cocktail for the Cook

**Verde Momento Mezcal (\$29.99)** One of the best values for cocktail mezcals, the Verde Momento brand was developed by the same team that makes the well-regarded Amarás organic mezcals. Distilled by Dorotea Garcia in Tlacolula, with the same commitment to sustainable and organic production given to the Verde brand, this uses Espadin, for which 10 plants are sowed for every one harvested. The plants are roasted over ocote, encino, and pirul wood. Naturally fermented for up to a month, depending on the outside temps, before slow double distillation on copper pot stills, the resulting mezcal is perfectly smoky and designed to work in cocktails. Ten percent of profits are sent back to the communities where the mezcal is made and designated to preserve the flora and fauna of Oaxaca. Finally, it's bottled each year with a new set of unique artwork on the label, so each bottle is different. This supports up-and-coming Mexican artists.



## Single Malt Single Barrels from Signatory

The incredible Signatory single barrels have been difficult to come by over the last couple of years, mainly thanks to price increases due to tariffs. Now the tariffs are gone, and their awesome barrel program is back in action. We've got an incredible selection of different styles, each more exciting than the next. It starts with a heavily peated Bunnahabhain aged in recharred barrels—savory, sweet, salty, and certain to sell out quickly. There's an out-of-this-world Linkwood aged in a charred red wine cask, filled with red fruit and roasted vanilla bean. And finally, a super fruity and fresh Glen Elgin, one of Speyside's most underrated distillers.

**2014 Bunnahabhain Staoisha Heavily Peated 6 Year Old "Signatory K&L Exclusive" Dechar-Rechar Cask Strength Islay Single Malt Scotch Whisky (\$79.99)**

**2010 Linkwood 11 Year Old "Signatory K&L Exclusive" Charred Wine Hogshead Single Malt Scotch Whisky (\$89.99)**

**2007 Glen Elgin 14 Year Old "Signatory K&L Exclusive" Hogshead Cask Strength Collection Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky (\$89.99)**



## Build Your Sideboard Stash

**Aviation American Gin (\$23.99)** Previously \$27. This highly rated gin became famous thanks to the help of a certain celebrity investor, but it's still made at the wonderful House Spirits Distillery in Portland, Oregon. This wild juniper-driven gin is *bone-dry* and ready to fly! Expect the balanced blend of botanicals originally crafted by mixologist Ryan Magarian and distillers Lee Medoff and Christian Krogstad many years ago, to enhance any classic gin cocktail. They use juniper, cardamom, coriander, lavender, anise seed, sarsaparilla, and dried orange peel for a bright, balanced style that doesn't forget it's gin. We've got an extremely sharp price on this now-famous gin, so you can get on this flight right here at K&L.



**1994 Tomatin 25 Year Old "Hunter Laing Old & Rare" Single Sherry Butt Cask Strength Single Malt Scotch Whisky (700ml \$249.99)**

In today's Scotch market, 25-year-old single malt from a great producer in a robust sherry cask can be prohibitively expensive. Not so with the beautiful Tomatin from Hunter Laing. This exceptional cask provides all the rich, unctuous sherry profile you could want without covering up its hefty malt profile. Add a stunning lacquered wood box to boot, and you've got one of the best deals available for the Scotch lover on your gift-giving list.



**1994 New Yarmouth 26 Year Old "Golden Devil" Single Barrel Jamaican Rum (\$249.99)**

Perhaps the rarest rum we've ever sold. New Yarmouth is rarely seen as a single cask, but most Jamaican rum drinkers would be familiar with J. Wray & Nephew. What we have here is essentially 26-year-old J.W&N with all of the complexity you'd expect from that richly flavored rum after more than 2.5 decades in barrel. Combine that with a 66.3% ABV and you've got a powerful concoction that will satisfy even the most jaded rum head.



**Shirataki Shuzo Jozen Mizuno Gotoshi Junmai Ginjo "Hiyaoroshi" Sake (720ml \$37.99)**

If you're looking for something a little different this holiday season, try this Hiyaoroshi sake from Shirataki Shuzo Jozen, served cold. This special release celebrates the fall season and is packed with flavors that perfectly complement a traditional American Thanksgiving meal. With a fresh fruity aroma and a palate that sings with pumpkin pie spice, roasted nuts, and spiced plums, this sake is a lovely conversation piece to mix up your holiday drinking.



Big wedges of cheese and fresh loaves of rustic bread make fast friends with savory Bandol wine. (Photo: Domaine de la Bégude)

## A French Regional “Friendsgiving”

By Keith Mabry

I make no secret that Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays.

I love the food and the wine, and the near-infinite combinations you can make matching the two all on one table. It’s also usually the day I don’t have to cook. I show up with a bunch of bottles of wine, and my family feeds me. But, I also love a *Friendsgiving*. It’s less formal (and, for many, less dramatic) and I can let my creative cooking flag fly. I have a bunch of friends over and make half a dozen dishes, all with varied parts of the turkey. I firmly believe that a turkey shows its best when you cook each part individually to bring out those disparate parts’ true natures. I’ve done thigh-meat Bolognese, I’ve made turkey leg tamales, I’ve confited the neck and wings and made turkey rilette. One of my all-time favorites was a turkey tonkotsu-style ramen, spiked with yuzu, then topped with chashu-marinated breast meat. And I can get much more creative with the wine pairings.

This year I’m making a tom yung soup with some turkey stock, makrut lime leaf, lemongrass, mushroom, chili paste, lime juice, and braised leg meat. Its sweet and sour flavor is a great palate-opener, and I’m serving it with a Muscadet. We have the **2020 Bedouet “Clos des Grands Primos” Muscadet Sèvre et Maine Sur Lie (\$12.99)** newly arrived and ready to please with its creamy body and balanced acidity. Muscadet makes for a great aperitif on any table, and its clean, precise flavors of brined apples, nectarine, and wet stones cleanse the palate and complement most starter dishes. Just don’t make your soup too spicy!

Chenin Blanc is the oft-overlooked alternative to Riesling (a Thanksgiving staple). Varying from dry to sweet, it has a lot of flexibility for food pairing. Its apple and pear notes scream fall flavors, so I think these are necessary wines for the season.



I’m going to salt-brine a turkey breast and then *sous vide* it, and make a cider-spiked gravy to go along with it. I’ll serve it with some Brussels sprouts with oven-crisped turkey skin (instead of bacon). I’ll pair it with one of my favorite Chenins, the **2019 Le Rocher des Violettes “Touche-Mitaine” Montlouis-sur-Loire (\$22.99)**. A dry style from the region on the opposite bank of Vouvray along the Loire River, Montlouis is just getting its due. Winemaker Xavier Weisskopf farms organically and works with a restrained hand in the cellar. Flavors of apple, quince, and chalky minerality will make for a great complement to my bird variation. **92+ JG**



As mentioned above, I make a Bolognese from thigh meat. I do this just for me, as it is one of my favorite dishes and I freeze a bunch to eat throughout the season. I usually grind my own thighs along with any giblets, mainly the heart and liver, and some high-quality pancetta. Along with a mirepoix, I sauté everything, then add tomato paste, stock, and a little milk with a sachet of rosemary and sage. I slowly cook it in the oven for a couple of hours, and then finish with Parmesan and a little heavy cream to emulsify everything.

This savory dish serves me well throughout the season. And to pair with it, my favorite savory red on our shelves right now is the **2017 Domaine de la Bégude Bandol Rouge (\$34.99)**. Mostly Mourvèdre, this wine has a true sense of place. Its pure Mediterranean profile delivers notes of blackberry, crushed herbs, lavender, and spices. Some tannic structure blends well with a sauce like this, and this Bandol’s flavors accentuate the subtle herbs steeped in the sauce. It’s a guaranteed winner! **97 DC**

And then there’s “leftovers-giving,” but we’ll save that for another time. Happy Friendsgiving!

### K&L REDWOOD CITY

3005 El Camino Real, Redwood City, CA 94061

**P** (650) 364-8544 **F** (650) 364-4687

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