

Wines Coming in July!

2017 "R" Petite Sirah, Clarksburg

2018 "R" Grenache, Silvaspoons Vineyard

2017 "R" Zinfandel, Estate

2016 "R" Cabernet Sauvignon, Rancho Sarco

Ingredients:

2 3/4 pounds trimmed boneless beef shank, cut into 2-inch pieces
One 750-milliliter bottle dry red wine
15 mint sprigs, stems reserved
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
One 35-ounce can peeled Italian tomatoes, crushed
1 pound fresh pappardelle
4 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced
Freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, for serving



Beef Brasato with Pappardelle and Mint

Directions:

In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the beef with the wine, mint stems and a generous pinch of salt and pepper. Seal the bag and refrigerate overnight.

Preheat the oven to 325°. Drain the beef, reserving the marinade; discard the mint stems. Pat the beef dry. In a large enameled cast-iron casserole, heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Add half of the meat to the casserole and cook over moderately high heat, turning occasionally, until well browned all over, about 12 minutes. Transfer the meat to a plate. Brown the remaining meat over moderate heat.

Return all the meat to the casserole. Add the marinade and bring to a boil. Add the tomatoes, season with salt and pepper and bring to a boil. Cover and braise in the oven for about 2 hours and 15 minutes, until the meat is very tender.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer the meat to a plate and shred with 2 forks. Boil the braising liquid until reduced to 2 1/2 cups, about 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large pot of salted boiling water, cook the pappardelle until al dente. Drain and return the pasta to the pot. Add the meat and the reduced braising liquid and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until the pasta is well coated with the brasato, about 2 minutes.

In a small skillet, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil until simmering. Add the garlic and cook until lightly golden, about 1 minute. Add the mint leaves and cook for 10 seconds. Pour the garlic-mint oil over the pasta and toss.

Serve in shallow bowls, passing the cheese alongside.

Recipe courtesy of CHRIS COSENTINO

Enjoy with a glass of "R" Syrah



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2017 "R" Petit Verdot, Stanislaus County

Petit Verdot along with Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Malbec is one of the five major red grape varieties grown in Bordeaux. Although Petit Verdot is highly valued for its color, structure, and lovely violet scent the French don't grow very much of it. The 'Right Bank' of appellations of Pomerol and St. Emilion grow virtually no Petit Verdot. Chateau Margaux and Chateau Angelus are among the leaders in Petit Verdot cultivation and neither has more than ten percent of its vineyards planted to this variety.

Given this, one might think there must be some disqualifying characteristic to Petit Verdot. There is. At least in Bordeaux there is. Petit Verdot is the last of the Bordeaux varieties to ripen, so even though French winemakers wax poetic about the qualities of this grape the climate in Bordeaux isn't warm enough for Petit Verdot to thrive. There just isn't enough sunshine to ripen this variety. In the post war years, Petit Verdot fully ripened in only one out of five vintages. In the 1980s, with improved growing techniques, every third year Petit Verdot would ripen. Perhaps with climate change Bordeaux might raise its batting average on this variety to .500. Either way Petit Verdot is just not that popular.

In California getting Petit Verdot to ripen is not an issue, especially not at the Damir Ranch in Stanislaus County; the source of the grapes we use to produce this wine. Petit Verdot thrives in the California sunshine where it produces deeply pigmented grapes and wines with mature, integrated tannins along with aromas of cassis and blackberry. Historically used as blending variety, we have decided to showcase Petit Verdot as a single varietal.

The 2017 Petit Verdot has a deep dark purple/black color with carmine/magenta hues. Pomegranate, cassis, and blackberry along with notes of violets and a sweet floral perfume jump from the glass. Careful management of the barrels used to age this wine has contributed a bouquet that delivers a scent of buttered toast and caramel. On the palate, succulent savory flavors of blackberry, plum and black currant are delivered by a smooth elegant wine with a creamy silky texture. The tannins are mature and well integrated providing viscosity and body without drying astringency. The finish is long and the flavors of toasted oak linger well after the wine is gone.

Varietal Composition: 100% Petit Verdot 13.8% Alc. 0.65 g/100ml TA 3.67 pH
 Oak Regime: 49% French Oak 37% American Oak 14% Neutral Oak Released: May 1, 2019 1,123 Cases Produced
Suggested Retail Price: \$26.00/ Club Price \$ 22.10/ SME2 Price \$20.80

2017 "R" Syrah, Paso Robles

Syrah is a variety I helped introduce into the portfolio of offerings at the J. Lohr Winery in the early 1990s. At the time, we were unfamiliar with Syrah, and so we spent quite some time exploring the various styles and flavors this grape produced. We tasted hundreds of wines from all over the world including the Rhone Valley of France, Australia, South Africa, Chile, Washington State and California. What we discovered was a distinct difference between 'Old World' and 'New World' Syrah. For the most part, the 'New World' wines had a defined fruit component while the 'Old World' wines featured a terroir driven character with plenty of earthy, flinty, and dusty aromas and flavors. The wines I found most appealing were the densely colored and deeply flavored old vine Syrahs from the McClaren Vale and Barrosa Valley of Australia, and it is the dense rich flavors so common to wines from these appellations we have attempted to emulate with our Syrah.

Almost all of our wines carry a vineyard designation. However, the 2017 Syrah is a wine produced from the fruit of two different vineyards; Silver Owl Vineyard in Ranchita Canyon which contributes a fruit driven foundation and the Three Way Vineyard at 1600' in elevation on the 'Westside' of Paso Robles that delivers depth and structure. Since the wine is a blend created from two different sources of grapes the label does not include a specific vineyard designation or growers name.

The 2017 vintage has a deep ruby purple color with hues that are bright and youthful. One whiff and it is obvious this is a 'New World' Syrah; bursting at the seams with plenty of ripe blackberry and boysenberry aromas. The bouquet features a spicy oak component with clove, cinnamon and allspice along with the sweet rich scents of caramel, chocolate and mocha. There is also a unique smoky nuance that comes from barrels toasted over not an oak but a hickory generated flame. What little terroir there is to this wine's scent is overwhelmed by the bright succulent dark red and black fruits. On the palate, savory mouth-filling flavors of dark currants, marionberry and plum are balanced with those of hazelnut and toasty oak. The texture of the 2017 vintage is luscious and round; the grape tannins are mature and combined with the tannins extracted from the barrels add a richness to the wine. There is a silky creaminess to the finish that lingers well and provides just a bit of mineral and dust to remind us that this wine was indeed made from Syrah grapes.

Varietal Composition: 100% Syrah 14.5% Alc. 0.74 g/100ml TA 3.44 pH
 Oak Regime: 68% American Oak 19% French Oak 13% Neutral Oak Released: May 1, 2019 624 Cases Produced
Suggested Retail Price: \$27.00/ Club Price \$22.95 / SME2 Price \$21.60