



Bordeaux Tid-bit #2 - White Bordeaux, An Understatement Worth Redefining. Part 2

by Collin Williams



Last week, we began the discussion on the White wines for Bordeaux and how wonderful and approachable they can be despite their unfortunate lack of attention.

This week we pick up where we left

off with a further investigation into the individual regions that produced some lovely whites.

Pessac Leognan and The Graves

These two regions lie south of Bordeaux City and on the left bank of the river Garonne. While generally higher in elevation than their northern neighbors in the Medoc, vineyards here experience more of a continental climate with warmer temperatures. Here, you will also see Gravelly soils (like that of the northern villages) but highlighting more of the mixture of limestone, sand, and clay as you progress further south. In fact, it is because of the gravelly soils that Graves received its name. How clever!

These factors, amongst others, help to mitigate the growth of the grapes into a more stable production year after year. Red grapes like Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Merlot can be seen coming from this region, but over one quarter of the production coming from The Graves and Pessac Leognan is white wine! Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon are once again the highlights for white grape varieties with Muscadelle seen sparingly.

Entre Deux Mers

"Between the Two Seas" is the translation of Entre Deux Mers and that is exactly where this region is located. Sitting in between the Garonne and Dordogne rivers, Entre Deux Mers will contradict the common notion of the "historic vineyards of Bordeaux". The idea of just a few acres of vines planted here and there with people working meticulously by hand is not this region's MO. It is here where the region of Bordeaux can produce tons and tons of cheap (yet good) wine for the masses.

Some refer to these plantings in Entre Deux Mers as a "vineyard prairie" with seemingly endless grape vines set on rolling hills. Soils here are rich loam which contribute a very fertile atmosphere for grapes to grow. And, just like any other fruit crop, grapes (if left unattended) can produce massive amounts of fruit if planted in fertile soil. However, the Bordelaise have elected to use the "less is more" strategy by planting vines farther apart with less vines per acre and training them on wire trellis systems. Mechanization in Bordeaux?? You bet.

Why tell you all of this boring information? Understanding the flavors within a wine has a lot to do with two factors: geography and geology! For instance, when you taste a wine that has a great mineral quality balanced by generous acidity odds are it was the environment that played a part.

Chateau Trocard Le Blanc 2009

\$9.49 cash

80% Sauvignon Blanc, 20% Semillon. This white wine is Bordeaux Classic Blend of Sauvignon Blanc with no oak aging. The perfume is very delicate with flowers, blackberry buds, and grapefruit. The mouth is very fresh with good acidity which makes it very refreshing in the summer and perfect with shellfish, salads, and grilled fish.

Pair this wine with:

Grilled Seafood Salad

Ingredients

- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh Italian parsley leaves
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh marjoram leaves
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme leaves
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 12 ounces sea scallops
- 12 ounces squid, bodies only
- 3 ounces arugula leaves (about 6 cups)
- 2 carrots, peeled, cut into thin strips
- ½ yellow bell pepper, cut into thin strips
- 1 (15-ounce) can white beans (cannellini), drained, rinsed
- 1 large head radicchio, leaves separated



Directions

Heat the oil in a heavy medium skillet over medium-low heat. Add the garlic, let it cook for 1 to 2 minutes and then add the herbs and saute until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Cool to room temperature. Whisk in the lemon juice. Season the dressing with salt and pepper, to taste.

Prepare the barbecue (medium-high heat). Pat the scallops and squid dry with paper towels and thread them onto skewers. Brush them with 2 tablespoons of the dressing. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill the scallops and squid until just cooked through, turning once, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Cool completely. Cut the squid crosswise into ¼-inch-wide rings.

Combine the arugula, carrots, bell peppers, and cannellini beans in a large bowl. Toss with 1/2 cup of the dressing to coat.

Place 1 large or 2 medium radicchio leaves on each of 4 plates. Spoon the bean salad into the radicchio cups. Top with the scallops and squid. Drizzle the remaining dressing over the seafood and serve. 🍴



Please email me at collinwilliams@specsonline.com with feedback.