

SAUVIGNON BLANC

for Spring Veggies

IF YOU LIKE

Armida Winery 2018 Redwood Road Estate Russian River Valley Sauvignon Blanc (\$28)

Brandon Lapidès makes two Sauvignon Blanc-centric wines and this one, from estate grapes grown in the relatively warm northern Russian River Valley, is a complex mélange of tropical fruit, green apple, citrus, and peach. Gently herbaceous, it has a slightly creamy mid-palate, bracketed by a bracing start and finish.

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

Rodney Strong Vineyards Charlotte's Home Sonoma County Sauvignon Blanc (\$17)

Smartly priced and widely available, this lively wine is varietally true, yet less herbaceous than some. It brims with straightforward green melon, lemon-lime, and white peach flavors and finishes with a mineral edge.



CABERNET SAUVIGNON

for St. Patrick's Day

IF YOU LIKE

Francis Ford Coppola Winery 2017 Francis Coppola Reserve Stuhlmuller Vineyards Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (\$62)

The dapper gent on the label is the artwork of Dean Tavoularis, filmmaker Francis Coppola's longtime production designer. Behind the label is an intense Cabernet with the sturdy tannins and crisp acidity that cut through the fat of rich meats, and a generosity of vibrant blackberry and dark cherry fruit that make it a delicious drink on its own. The finish is long and spicy.

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

Olema Wines 2017 Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon (\$25)

This is a great-value brand, as evidenced by this medium-full-bodied Cab that includes small amounts of Malbec, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Petit Verdot, and Petite Sirah. Blending of grapes from multiple sites created a supple, juicy, yet structured wine with blackberry, black cherry, cedar, chocolate, vanilla, and anise.

CHARDONNAY

for Easter Brunch/
Dinner

IF YOU LIKE

Tongue Dancer Wines 2017 Pratt Vineyard Irwin Lane Russian River Valley Chardonnay (\$39)

Tongue Dancer is the work of James MacPhail, who sold his eponymous brand to Hess Collection in 2011. This Chardonnay is classic cool-climate Sonoma, with lemon curd, white peach, and pear aromas and flavors, plus hints of caramel and toast. Its firm, mouthwatering acid backbone makes it extraordinarily refreshing and food-friendly. Think shellfish, ham, eggs, chicken, and pork.

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

Sonoma-Cutrer Vineyards 2017 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay (\$23)

Six estate vineyards and others contributed to this scintillating wine, which is fermented in a mix of French oak barrels and stainless steel. Aging in oak gives the wine baking spice and toasted nut notes, which enhance the vibrant stone fruit, green apple, and citrus fruit flavors. It's a no-brainer for the array of dishes offered at brunch.

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Bracing mornings and sunny afternoons signal spring in Sonoma, with gardens bursting with greens of all kinds. The hearty red wines of winter still have their place, yet it's an ideal time to pull the corks on refreshing whites for spring produce. Easter – April 12 this year – is a day for Chardonnay. Corned beef and savory lamb and beef pies for St. Patrick's Day call for sturdy Cabernet Sauvignon. When in doubt, go with Pinot Noir, as versatile as a wine gets. **LINDA MURPHY** recommends these bottles for Sonoma's awakening from winter.



PINOT NOIR

for Any Occasion

IF YOU LIKE

Three Sticks Wines 2017 Durell Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir (\$70)

Winery proprietor Bill Price also owns Durell Vineyard, and adjustments in the vineyard in recent years are evident in this polished, elegant wine – the finest Durell Pinot yet. The vineyard is located in southwest Sonoma County – the wine could also be labeled as Carneros and Sonoma Valley – and it produced a Pinot with lovely balance, vivid floral aromas, and a palate of juicy red and dark cherry fruit, with spicy oak and forest floor notes in the background.

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

Schug Carneros Estate Winery 2017 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir (\$30)

California Pinot Noir pioneer Walter Schug died in 2015, at age 70, yet his family's winery continues to produce the balanced Pinots with finesse and charm that Walter advocated. This blend of grapes from vineyards including Ricci, Stage Gulch, and the Schug estate in Carneros, is fragrant in its violet and rose petal aromas, which lead to a palate of bright, juicy red and dark cherry fruit, hints of toast, truffle, and fresh herbs.