

WINEAWESOMENESS.COM

thebacklabel®

COME ON OVER!

A MONTHLY WINE JOURNEY CURATED FOR ADVENTUROUS SOULS.



thebacklabel®

*EDITOR* LOGAN LEE

*ART DIRECTOR* ANDREW PARRIS

*WINE EDITOR* LOGAN LEE

*PHOTOGRAPHER* DALE SLEAR

*COPY EDITOR* PAIGE VILLIARD

*COPYWRITER* CARSON RITCH

## CONTENTS

### FEATURES

2 COME ON OVER!

4 ART OF THE SPRITZ

32 PANTRY ESSENTIALS

### EATS

16 GARLICKY BEET DIP WITH WALNUTS

17 ROASTED RADISHES WITH GREEN GODDESS BUTTER

15 A BETTER GARLIC BREAD

19 MUSTARDY GREEN BEANS WITH ANCHOVYED WALNUTS

20 STICKY CHILI CHICKEN WITH HOT-AND-SOUR PINEAPPLE

### RED WINES

6 2016 ESTAMPA GRAN RESERVA CABERNET SAUVIGNON

8 2017 BE BIKE TEMPRANILLO

10 2018 PETIRROJO D.O. VALENCIA

12 VINACCIO ROSSO, NV

14 2018 LUBANZI RED BLEND

### WHITE WINES

22 2015 ZOTOVICH SR/246 CHARDONNAY

24 CASTELLO DI RONCADE PROSECCO BRUT

26 2016 ANT MOORE ESTATE PINOT GRIS

28 2018 GEORGIE ORBACH CHARDONNAY

30 2018 ESTAMPA GRAN RESERVA SAUVIGNON BLANC

By LOGAN LEE

# COME ON OVER!



You'll probably never find a crew that loves discovering a new restaurant or wine bar more than the Wine Awesomeness crew. I'm lucky enough to live in NYC, and as they say, it takes 10 years to become a New Yorker, but it also takes a decade just to explore all the restaurants in your own neighborhood (not to mention the borough or the entire city). The options are endless, but that's what friends are for! New York apartments aren't exactly made for having people over, but we resolve to have more people over in 2020. In fact, it may be more en vogue than ever before to have your crew over to your place for good eats and adult beverages AKA wine!

As Alison Roman proclaims, "roasting a chicken for people is such a good way to say, 'I love you.'" This is why she was the first person we reached out to when we made the commitment to have more people over in 2020, which is also perfect timing because Alison just released her new cookbook, *Nothing Fancy*. *Nothing Fancy* is basically a treatise on making awesome eats without pretending to be some pompous kitchen tyrant. She lent us a few of her recipes from the new book as well as some tricks and tips that will surely elevate your culinary skillzz. Alison is making awesome meals more attainable, which is exactly our mission when it comes to vino.

As for this month's vino... the juice is quite global. We've got some bubbles from an Italian castle that dates back to Roman times. We've got red wines from Chile, Spain, Italy, and a special bottle from South Africa that creates a difference in the lives of the laborers who live and work on the Rainbow Nation's wine farms. We've got white wine from California, New Zealand, Australia, Chile, and Italy.

We've also connected with a cocktail mastermind to learn about aperitifs and, of course, if you're having people over you gotta end with some sweets. We think this issue of thebacklabel is an awesome way to kick off a new year and we hope it helps just a bit for you and your crew to enjoy hanging out together.

Cheers!  
LL

By WA TEAM  
Photo LIZZIE MUNRO

# ART OF THE SPRITZ



We sat down with one of our favorite NYC cocktail masterminds Naren Young, the co-owner and bar director of Dante, an all-day Italian café. We talked drinking Italian style, the beauty of aperitivo hour, and even managed to get our hands on some of Naren's ridiculously good Italian cocktail recipes. We're pumped to share his Spritz with you.

A Spritz basically serves two purposes. First, when you have people over and you serve a round of these effervescent adult beverages, you look like you kinda know what you're doing. Second, a Spritz is an aperitif AKA an alcoholic beverage that prepares the tummy for some yummy food and cleanses the palate in anticipation of deliciousness. Two Italian liqueurs are some of the most common base ingredients for this bubbly cocktail.

**CAMPARI** is an alcoholic liqueur, considered an apéritif, obtained from the infusion of herbs and fruit in alcohol and water. It is bitter, characterized by its dark red color.

**APEROL** is a classic Italian bitter apéritif (alcoholic, but less than Campari) made of gentian, rhubarb, and cinchona, among other ingredients. It has a vibrant orange hue, which is why it is often popular during the summer.

## **NAREN YOUNG'S SPRITZ**

Start with 2 oz. of Aperol

Pour into a large wine glass over ice

Add 3 oz. Perrier

Add 2 oz. Prosecco (we've curated one of our favorite Proseccos in this month's box)

Stir and garnish with an orange or grapefruit wedge and a green olive



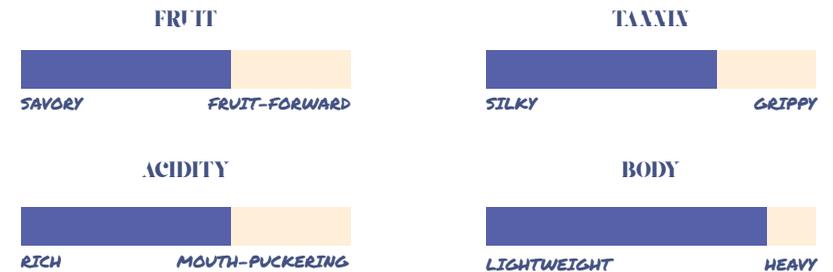
## 2016 ESTAMPA GRAN RESERVA CABERNET SAUVIGNON

85% CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 13% SYRAH, 2% MALBEC  
COLCHAGUA VALLEY, CHILE

**NOSE:** Juicy plum, red berries and spice, like a boozy fruitcake

**PALATE:** Prodding tannins inspire you to cuddle up on a comfy sofa with bold flavors of ripe currant that fade into subtle but lush dark chocolate and black pepper.

**MOOD:** You've finally honed in on a solid New Year's resolution but it can definitely wait until Monday. A sodium fueled takeout buffet is a crucial component of leaving the old you behind and stepping into the new decade with a bang.



Under the guidance of Head Winemaker, Johana Pereira, the Estampa Winery is producing some of the most deluxe, every day drinking vino in Chile right now. The winery makes all the classic South American grapes like Cab Sauv, Malbec, and Carmenere! However, the Estampa team built a rep on their ability to make delectable blends AKA a technique that consists of carefully combining two or more grape types to create wines with tremendous balance and unique personality.

This juice definitely has some personality and it's big, jammy, and like a warm flannel blanket that you can wrap yourself up in all winter long. The nose is all about juicy plum and fresh red berries with a touch of spice and herbs. The palate is prodding tannins pushing you to sink in an uber comfy sofa with bold flavors of ripe currants that fade into subtle but lush dark chocolate and black pepper.



This bold and juicy red blend can handle something rich and indulgent. Beef Stroganoff is a perfect combination of red meat and heavy, creamy pasta that will warm your whole body even on the coldest winter night.



## 2017 BE BIKE TEMPRANILLO

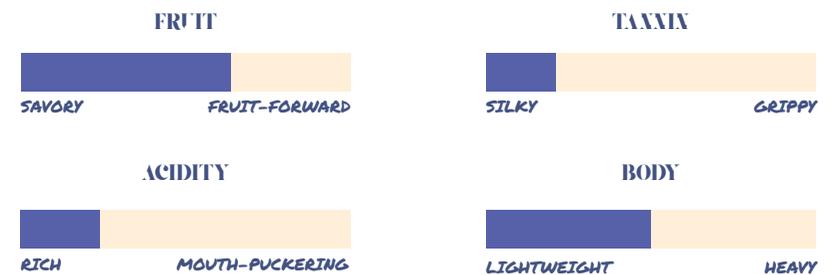
100% TEMPRANILLO

NAVARRA, SPAIN

**NOSE:** Like tearing open a fresh pack of Twizzlers at the movie theater

**PALATE:** Juicy and fruity, with tastes of rhubarb and red raspberry that finish with a sophisticated hint of fine leather from your local tannery.

**MOOD:** A lazy Sunday is your opportunity for some much needed me time. After lounging around all afternoon you make yourself a well-deserved dinner as a reward for making it through the weekend.



Over the last few years buzz words like 'organic' and 'sustainable' have become very popular in the wine industry. This juice hails from Navarra, a famous region located in northern Spain at the foot of the Pyrenees Mountains, where the word organic isn't a buzz word. The region has a long tradition in organic agriculture, and is a fertile region to grow grapes and produce exceptional vino.

This luscious and organic Tempranillo is medium bodied making it a super cozy wine but also quite quaffable. The nose is like the first smell that hits your face when you open a pack of red licorice in a dark movie theater. The palate is juicy and fruity with tastes of rhubarb and red raspberry that lead to a fancy leather-y apex of flavor. It's the perfect easy drinking winter warmer upper.



There's no need to eat out for a great cheeseburger when you have a great Spanish red like this Tempranillo at home. Get some quality ground beef and your favorite toppings for an elevated casual meal.



## 2018 PETIRROJO D.O. VALENCIA

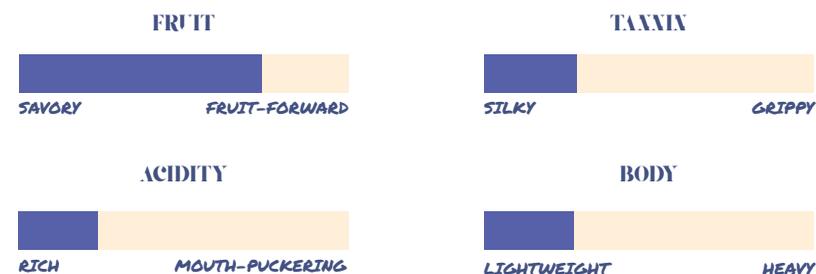
60% TEMPRANILLO, 40% MERLOT

VALENCIA, SPAIN

**NOSE:** Like a farmer's market loaded with fresh strawberries and blueberries

**PALATE:** Black cherry and juicy, ripe red currants make for a smooth and easy sipping glass that you won't want to put down.

**MOOD:** It's always the right time for a brisk wine walk in your local park. You call your squad and take a stroll while swapping stories about the holiday festivities.



The town and the region of Valencia are often overlooked by tourists, but it's a spot to find really incredible juice. Valencia is also the birthplace of one of Spain's most popular dishes: paella. We think we'd visit solely for the paella and the wine. Nothing else is needed, but the quaint town is loaded with awesome architecture and history, plus the Valencia motto is "the land of flowers, sunlight, and colors."

One of those colors should be ruby red wine red! We've found a Tempranillo and Merlot blend that is exactly what you'd find in downtown Valencia eateries paired with delish paella. The nose is like the farmer's market's fresh strawberries and blueberries. The sippin' is easy as a Sunday morning with endless notes of black Cherry and juicy, ripe red currants that you'll never want to finish.



Seafood and red wine might not be your first thought when pairing for a meal but this bright red blend from Valencia wonderfully complements the bold flavors of a traditional paella. Find a recipe that looks good and treat your friends to this perfect family style dish.



## VINACCIO ROSSO, NV

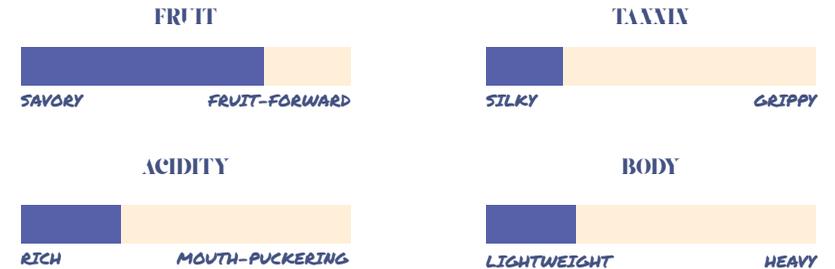
100% NERELLO MASCALESE

SICILY, ITALY

**NOSE:** Fresh cherries jello wrestle with clove and bay leaves

**PALATE:** A medium to light body makes way for easy drinking like picking fresh red fruit straight from the earth

**MOOD:** This is a wine that makes you feel like the life of the party! You think the time is right for a dance party with friends, but you're feeling so cool you decide to just dance on your own... Robyn style.



Nerello Mascalese is the Pinot Noir of Sicily. Over the years, WA has found some of our faves on this big island at the very end of Italy, but this wine and story might be the coolest yet! Meet the winemaker of Vinaccio, Tim Manning, who left the UK in 1998 to chase a dream of becoming a winemaker in Italy. Manning, inspired by all the allure and tradition of Italy, quickly found his way into an assistant winemaker role in Tuscany, but with a fierce, independent spirit to experiment and shake things up. He has built a reputation by combining innovative techniques on old varietals with natural winemaking.

Vinaccio Rosso is vintage Manning. The juice is like sipping an adult version of the most amazing cherries you've ever found at a hipster farmer's market. By hipster farmer's market, we mean the kid selling these cherries is wearing way too tight of jeans and smoking a clove cigarette that somehow enhances the cherry flavors of the vino.



Show off your wine knowledge and tell your friends that Nerello Mascalese is the Pinot Noir of Sicily, then pair with some bold Indian takeout to up the wow factor.



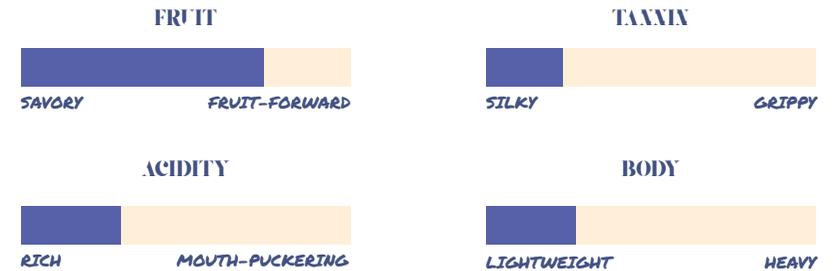
## 2018 LUBANZI RED BLEND

39% SHIRAZ, 34% GRENACHE, 15% MOURVEDRE, 9% CINSULT, 3% CARIGNAN  
WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

**NOSE:** Uber dark chocolate melted on top of a strawberry Fruit Roll-Up

**PALATE:** Incredibly fresh and vibrant bunch of strawberries and raspberries that are getting a little oozy in the summer sun

**MOOD:** Holding down the fort during the polar vortex, and dreaming of a lush green lawn, the perfect picnic, and the delightfully warm summer sun.



The Western Cape of South Africa is basically where the mountains meet the ocean. And by mountains, we mean jagged rock that literally seems thrust straight out of the land sort of in a beauty competition with the sea as they stare at each other. It's safe to say, the Rainbow Nation is one of our all-time favorite wine regions and we've been obsessed with its vino for a long time.

Meet our new South African wine crush, Lubanzi, a socially Conscious Wine Co., crafting fairly produced wine that punches far above its weight and creates a difference in the lives of the laborers who live & work on South Africa's wine farms. The nose will bring you back to lazy childhood afternoons snacking on fresh Fruit Roll-Ups and Hershey's dark chocolate candy bars. The palate is lush, vibrant, fruity, and quite too easy to gulp.



This red blend is perfect on its own, or paired with movie night, but we're pairing it up with 5 different types of pork salami.



## GARLICKY BEET DIP WITH WALNUTS

### MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS

**1 pound beets or carrots, tops removed and scrubbed, or sweet potatoes**

**1/3 cup olive oil, plus more for drizzling**

**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

**1 garlic clove, finely grated**

**1/3 cup walnuts, hazelnuts, or almonds, toasted**

**2 tablespoons red wine vinegar or white wine vinegar, plus more as needed**

**1/2 cup sour cream or full-fat Greek yogurt (optional)**

**1/4 cup fresh dill, coarsely chopped**

1 Preheat the oven to 425°F.

2 Place the beets in a large baking dish. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast until totally and completely fork-tender, 60 to 70 minutes, depending on size. (If you're doing this with sweet potatoes, they'll take about the same amount of time; carrots will take less time—40 to 45 minutes.) 3

3 Remove from the oven and let cool enough so that you can peel them, then cut into smaller chunks.

4 Place the beets, garlic, nuts, olive oil, and the vinegar in the bowl of a food processor. Pulse until you've got the texture of your dreams, which is different for all of us. For me, it's not perfectly smooth but processed enough to spread. If you like chunkier or smoother, then go for it.

5 Once your desired texture is reached, fold in the sour cream, if using. Season with salt, pepper, and more vinegar. Transfer to your cutest bowl, drizzle with more olive oil, and top with dill.

DO AHEAD Dip can be made up to 1 week ahead, wrapped tightly, and refrigerated.



## ROASTED RADISHES WITH GREEN GODDESS BUTTER

### SERVES 4 TO 6

#### **FOR THE GREEN GODDESS BUTTER**

**1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature**

**1/2 cup fresh parsley, tender leaves and stems, very finely chopped**

**1/4 cup fresh tarragon leaves, very finely chopped**

**1/4 cup very finely chopped fresh chives**

**4 anchovy fillets, very finely chopped**

**1 garlic clove, finely grated**

**2 tablespoons white wine vinegar**

**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

#### **FOR THE VEGETABLES**

**2 bunches radishes or baby turnips with tops on, scrubbed well and halved lengthwise**

**3 tablespoons olive oil**

**1 lemon, halved**

**Flaky sea salt**

**Freshly ground black pepper**

1 Make the Green Goddess Butter. Combine the butter, parsley, tarragon, chives, anchovies, garlic, and vinegar in a medium bowl. Smash with a fork until well blended (alternatively, place all ingredients in a food processor and blend until well combined). Season with salt and pepper.

2 Preheat the oven to 425°F.

3 Prepare the vegetables. Toss the radishes and olive oil together on a rimmed baking sheet, making sure to get olive oil on the leaves as well. Roast until the radishes are tender and the tops are browned and crispy, 12 to 15 minutes.

4 Spread the Green Goddess Butter on a serving plate or in a shallow bowl. Top with the radishes and squeeze lemon juice over everything. Sprinkle with flaky salt and pepper and serve.

DO AHEAD Green Goddess Butter can be made up to 2 weeks ahead, covered tightly, and refrigerated. Bring the butter to room temperature before serving.

## A BETTER GARLIC BREAD / CARAMELIZED GARLIC ON TOAST WITH ANCHOVIES

### SERVES 4 TO 6

1 head of garlic, cloves separated, peeled, and smashed with the back of a knife

½ cup olive oil

1 (2-ounce) tin anchovies (or half of a 4-ounce jar), drained

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened

Pinch of crushed red pepper flakes (optional)

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 or 2 baguettes, halved lengthwise

Flaky sea salt

Finely chopped fresh parsley (optional)

**NOTE** This butter mixture makes enough for 1 or 2 baguettes, depending on the baguette, but start with one and either way you'll have some le-over-because to run out of garlic butter would be a true crime.

1 Preheat the oven to 425°F.

2 Heat the garlic and oil in a small pot over medium heat. Cook until the garlic has started to audibly sizzle, about 3 minutes. Reduce the heat to the lowest possible setting and continue to cook until the garlic is totally tender and golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes. Add the anchovies and remove from heat.

3 Transfer the oil mixture to a medium bowl along with the butter and red pepper flakes. Using a fork, smash everything together so that the garlic cloves break down and everything turns into a delicious, creamy paste. Season with salt and pepper. Using a spoon, evenly distribute this deliciousness onto each half of the bread, letting it really soak in there.

4 Place the bread on a rimmed baking sheet and bake until the edges are golden brown, with soft and supple centers (the only time I'll use the word supple), 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with flaky salt and parsley, if using.

**DO AHEAD** Garlic butter can be made 1 week ahead, wrapped tightly, and stored in the refrigerator. Bring to room temperature before smearing onto the bread.



## MUSTARDY GREEN BEANS WITH ANCHOVY WALNUTS

### SERVES 4 TO 6

1 cup raw walnuts, coarsely chopped

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided, plus more for drizzling

4 anchovy fillets

1 garlic clove, finely grated

1½ pounds fresh green beans, trimmed

1 lemon, thinly sliced, seeds removed

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons whole-grain mustard

1 tablespoon distilled white vinegar or white wine vinegar

¼ cup fresh dill, finely chopped

1 Preheat the oven to 450°F (or heat a grill to medium-high).

2 Heat the walnuts and ¼ cup oil in a medium pot over medium heat. Cook, swirling occasionally, until the walnuts are toasted, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and add the anchovies and garlic, swirling to dissolve the anchovies; set aside.

3 Place the green beans and lemon on a rimmed baking sheet and drizzle with enough olive oil to lightly coat and season with salt and pepper. Roast (or grill), tossing green beans and lemon once or twice, until they've started to char and brown in spots, 12 to 15 minutes (closer to 8 to 10 if grilling).

4 Combine the mustard, vinegar, and the remaining ¼ cup olive oil in a large bowl and season with salt and pepper. Add the green beans and toss to coat. Transfer to a serving platter and top with the reserved walnuts and the dill.

**DO AHEAD** Green beans can be cooked and dressed a few hours ahead, stored loosely covered at room temperature (this is an excellent room-temperature dish).

## STICKY CHILI CHICKEN WITH HOT-AND-SOUR PINEAPPLE

### SERVES 6 TO 8

4 pounds bone-in, skin-on chicken (legs, thighs, breasts, and/or wings all work)

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

½ cup light brown sugar

½ cup unseasoned rice wine vinegar

½ cup sambal or other chili paste

¼ cup fish sauce

¼ cup fresh lime juice

2 teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes

2 garlic cloves, finely grated

½ pineapple, peeled and cored, cut into 1½-inch spears or wedges

½ shallot or 4 scallions, thinly sliced

1 cup fresh cilantro, tender leaves and stems, coarsely chopped

2 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds

1 Season the chicken with salt and pepper and place in a large resealable plastic bag or large baking dish.

2 Combine the brown sugar, vinegar, sambal, fish sauce, lime juice, crushed red pepper flakes, and garlic in a medium bowl, whisking to dissolve the sugar. Pour over the chicken, massaging to make sure everything gets equal love. Seal the plastic bag or wrap the baking dish and let sit at least 30 minutes, refrigerated.

3 Preheat the oven to 425°F. Place the chicken and pineapple on a rimmed baking sheet (for easier clean-up, line with foil or parchment). Drizzle the remaining marinade over everything and place in oven.

4 Roast until the chicken is deeply browned, caramelized, and cooked through (if you have a pastry or BBQ brush, feel free to baste the chicken and pineapple periodically with the rendered chicken fat juices), 50 to 60 minutes. By this time, the pineapple will also be impossibly golden and juicy, giving up all the goods, which makes for a delicious, sticky sauce.

5 Remove from the oven and transfer to a serving platter, carving up the chicken and slicing the pineapple for easier serving, if you like. Scatter with the shallot, cilantro, and sesame before serving.

DO AHEAD Chicken can be marinated 24 hours in advance.





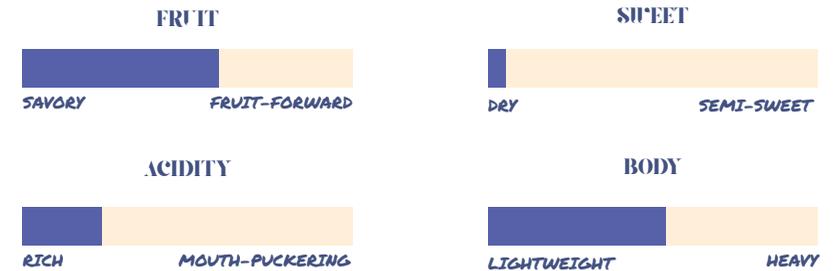
## 2015 ZOTOVICH SR/246 CHARDONNAY

100% CHARDONNAY  
SANTA RITA HILLS, CALIFORNIA

**NOSE:** Lemon, lime, and salty ocean mist, like a Sprite factory on the open seas

**PALATE:** A combination of lemon curd and ginger snap complement the salty and fruity duo of melon wrapped with prosciutto, finishing with a riverstone-like minerality that makes for serious refreshment.

**MOOD:** Your recent trip to the tropics has had a lasting effect and you aren't ready to accept the cold weather yet. You pop on some island tunes, crank the heat, and sport your bathing suit on the couch.



Zotovich Vineyards & Winery is a small, family-owned operation located in the Santa Rita Hills of California. And we're lucky to get our hands on their new brand of vino that's meant for sippin' on the daily. Only 300 cases were produced of this quintessentially California Chardonnay.

The Zotovich fam believes that grape vines form a partnership with the earth and that premium wine cannot be made without exceptional grapes. The goal is to extract much of what the earth so freely offers by being good stewards of the grapes, as well as the land. The two are very symbiotic. The nose is an initial blast of lemon and lime combined with a salty ocean sea-breeze. The palate holds a combination of lemon curd and ginger snap complemented by the salty and fruity duo of melon wrapped with prosciutto. This medium-bodied Chardonnay finishes with a riverstone-like minerality that is delicate and refreshing.



This bright California Chard is going to marry perfectly with a flavorful seafood dish. Do a spicy Indian take on shellfish with a curried mussel pot. Lemon, butter, and savory Indian spices will make this a one-pot wonder.



## CASTELLO DI RONCADE PROSECCO BRUT

100% GLERA

TREVISO, ITALY

**NOSE:** Flowery and exotic, like an Instagram-worthy botanical garden

**PALATE:** Not overly sweet but instead fresh, balanced, and lively with delicate bubbles gently dancing with every sip.

**MOOD:** A long-awaited promotion at work is an obvious call for celebration as you break open the bubbles and toast to being not quite as broke as you were before

### FRUIT



### SWEET



### ACIDITY



### BODY



If you were a baron... what would you do?!?! We'd purchase a dope castle in the wine region that made Prosecco famous, eat a ton of Italian meats and cheeses, and consume ungodly amounts of wine. That's kinda exactly what Baron Tito Ciani Bassetti did when he chose to buy Castello di Roncade and make it his family residence and the place where he could follow one of his dreams: winemaking. The castle is surrounded by vineyards that have been producing killer juice since the Romans. It's good to be a Baron!

This Prosecco ain't no overly sweet or cheap juice used only to make bottomless mimosas at brunch. It does make a damn good mimosa, but this juice is dry, frothy, and gives off day dreams of being a Baron yourself. The nose is elegant with notes of white flowers and tropical fruits. The palate is fresh, balanced, and lively with those little bubbles playfully all splish splash-y on the inside your cheeks.



This Prosecco stands well on its own as a pre-dinner aperitif. Break out your fanciest glassware and cleanse your palate before a delicious meal.

○○ SALT-N-PEPA - PUSH IT



## 2016 ANT MOORE ESTATE PINOT GRIS

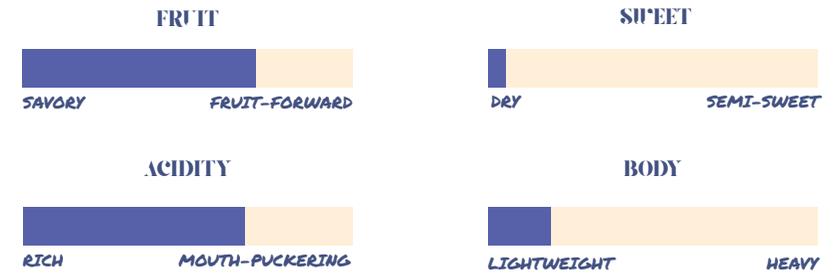
100% PINOT GRIS

MARLBOROUGH, NEW ZEALAND

**NOSE:** Like a juicy, close-up bite of a ripe spring peach in an expensive commercial

**PALATE:** The sippin' is soft, clean, and crispy with flavors of apricot, peach, pear, finishing with subtle citrus and mineral notes.

**MOOD:** Your bestie was out of town for your official friendiversary, but their flight back just landed and you already have the scene set for a debauchorous celebration of your time together.



Ant Moore is an Aussie transplant who settled in Marlborough, New Zealand. After a lot of hustle and hard work, Moore purchased some dilapidated vineyards and winery and built it into an excellent wine business bearing his name with the belief that New Zealand can produce extremely high quality wine that is just as good if not better than the other major wine regions of the world.

This Pinot Gris is the bottle you need to pop open when old man winter has nearly cracked your mental capacity to deal with the cold. The juice will remind you that spring is eternal, and despite feeling forever away, warmer weather will arrive. The nose will take you to the first bite of a ripe, spring peach or fresh pear. The sippin' is soft, clean, and crispy with flavors of apricot, peach, pear, and finishes with subtle citrus and mineral notes.



Pad Thai is a really flavorful dish you can make at home that has a restaurant quality feel. It also leaves plenty of room for customization to create the perfect pairing for this refreshing Pinot Gris.



## 2018 GEORGIE ORBACH CHARDONNAY

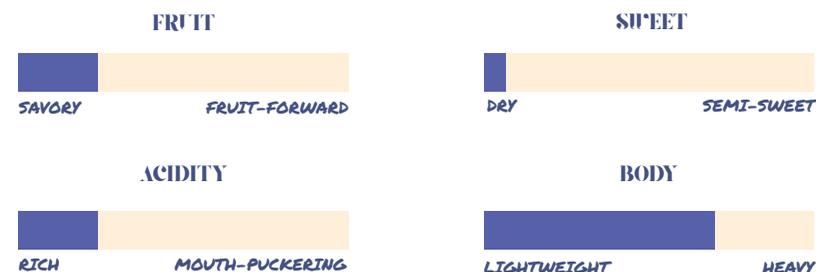
100% CHARDONNAY

RIVERINA, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

**NOSE:** Fragrant pear and Granny Smith apple like a fever dream in the produce section

**PALATE:** Crisp and vibrant with an elegant richness and a slight pep of buttery oak.

**MOOD:** It's boozy movie night but you're giving it a sophisticated spin by pressing play on that documentary all of your adult friends have been raving about. You lose the contacts and throw on your glasses for that scholarly look.



Calling all the '80s cool kids to the vineyard!!! Winemaker Georgie Orbach is basically a walking billboard for the 1980s. We imagine her being a teen with a transparent landline phone in her bedroom staying up way too late chatting with her BFFs. She might not have known it then, but neon colors and slap bracelets would end up inspiring her very own brands of excellent Aussie vino.

Now meet Georgie's lush Chardonnay. The nose is fragrant with fresh pear and ripe Granny Smith apples. The juice is vibrant and peppy with just the slightest touch of elegant richness. The style is called modern contemporary winemaking... Basically it's a trendy cool kid that isn't afraid to make a nod to the classics. Leg warmers, teased hair, or acid wash denim jeans are not necessary to enjoy this wine, but they wouldn't hurt either!



Get a good sear on some thick-cut pork chops in a cast-iron skillet and finish them off in a closed grill for that added layer of smokiness. Bright, citrusy herbs help tie the whole meal together.



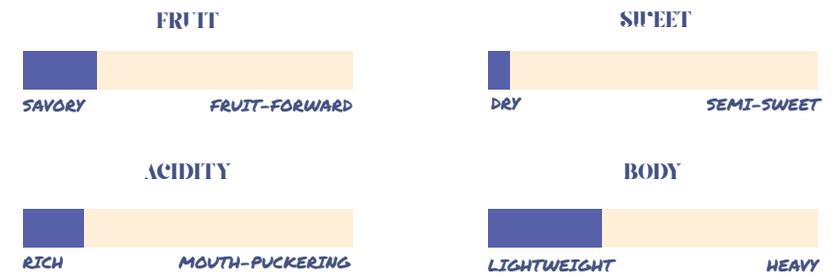
## 2018 ESTAMPA GRAN RESERVA SAUVIGNON BLANC

95% SAUVIGNON BLANC, 3% CHARDONNAY, 2% VIOGNIER  
COLCHAGUA VALLEY, CHILE

**NOSE:** Like walking down a path of river stones with whiffs of citrus-y goodness

**PALATE:** A clean stoniness and minerality, with hints of orange and green herbs that finish with a whisper of crisp bell pepper.

**MOOD:** The crisp, cool weather has you in the mood to reconnect with nature. You and a few members of the crew rent an RV and engage in a little bit of lavishly "rugged" camping.



Planting his figurative roots in 2001, Miguel González-Ortiz founded the Estampa Winery in the Colchagua Valley of Chile. This valley is one of the world's most beautiful places and makes for an excellent setting to produce world class wines. The combo of climate, soil, and its proximity to the Pacific Ocean make this place magical to grow those delicious wine berries. We tip our caps to Miguel for helping put Chilean wines on the map.

Estampa has built quite the rep for blended wines. The splash of Chardonnay and Viognier really accentuate the 95% of the blend that is Sauvignon Blanc. The nose is like walking down a path of river stones with whiffs of citrus-y goodness and crisp herbaceous aromas. A racy and lean palate with wet stones fades into a delightful bell pepper finish.



This white blend is crisp and fresh, so put together a healthy quinoa salad with tons of veggies, herbs, and citrusy spices.

# PANTRY ESSENTIALS

**A well-stocked pantry (and refrigerator) will save your life. Once you've got things like olive oil, salt, and pepper, there are other big-ticket items that are great for keeping around the house. They will always prove helpful when having people over. Here is a non exhaustive list of some of the things I keep on hand.**

## **CHEESE!**

Hard, aged cheeses like Parmesan and Pecorino. Not only are they good for your own personal hunger emergencies, but they are also great because they last forever. Seriously, I probably have some aged parmesan from two years ago in my fridge right now. And guess what? I am absolutely going to serve it to you.

Aside from casual snacking and impromptu cheese plates, a grating of Parm or Pecorino atop a bowl of grains, pasta, roasted vegetables, or salad is always welcome. I like to serve a hunk of it on a plate with a microplane, peeler, or other grating tool so people can DIT (Do It Themselves).

## **TINNED FISH.**

In many parts of the world, tinned fish is a common and expected snack, but here in the United States of I Don't Like Tinned Fish, it can be a harder sell. Nevertheless, I have been known to open a can and set it out for snack time, or include it alongside other things like crushed potato salad or seafood pasta where those fishies are good in, on, and with.

## **TANGY, BRINY THINGS.**

Pickles, olives, capers, caper berries, pearl onions, and the like have their own shelf in my refrigerator. Of course, I use them to cook with and to set out at dinnertime as part of a spread, but more often than not, I'm using them to feature prominently in any and all of my snacking scenarios. Even if you have "nothing"

in your fridge, when you set out a bowl of olives (better yet, Fancy Citrusy Olives, people will think you are an excellent, extremely put-together host.

## **CRACKERS.**

I was originally going to do a ranking of store-bought crackers, but then realized I enjoy being likable and do not want the majority of people reading this book to burn it when they discover I prefer Triscuits to Ritz. But whatever your cracker truth is, whether it's buttery or wheaty, studded with dried cranberries or topped with rosemary, live it large. In case you haven't heard, crackers are good with cheese, but also with tinned fish and every single dip in this world. They are good on their own out of the box in the middle of the night and they are good topped with sour cream and a spoonful of caviar at your next festive gathering. Crackers truly live that high/low life, and for that virtue alone, they have earned a permanent position in my pantry.

## **CITRUS.**

I haven't done the exact math, but I'd say 90 percent of the recipes in my book encourage or require the use of citrus. Maybe it's the peel for your DIT martini bar, or maybe I want you to chop up a whole lemon for a salad dressing, but whatever the case, lemons, limes, oranges, and grapefruits breathe life into nearly everything they touch. For the recipes alone they're all worth having on hand, but also know a bowl of tangerines make a very acceptable last-minute (and delightfully phoned-in) dessert.

## **SELTZER.**

Imagine how excited you get when you're at a restaurant that offers complimentary sparkling water? This is how your friends will feel when they know you've got an abundance of seltzer waiting for them. Maybe I've been in New York too long (seltzer capital

of the world, baby!), but I can't imagine not having it around. It's great for mixing a Spritz, for hydrating (right?), for sipping in between too much wine. Doesn't matter if it comes from a can, bottle, or a home machine, it's a nice touch. Bonus points if you give it a twist of citrus. So classy!

## **A LOAF OF BREAD.**

Whenever I buy fresh bread, I'll often freeze at least half of the loaf for later use. "Later use," in many cases turns out to be when people come over and I realize that I either forgot to buy bread or ran out of bread or panic that I didn't make enough food and three extra people showed up and you know what is good and filling? Bread. Not for nothing, it's also good for croutons and bread crumbs which hopefully you'll be making a lot of once you read this book.

To rejuvenate kind-of-stale or refrigerated bread: Preheat the oven to 450°F. Quickly run the whole loaf of bread under running water just to barely soak the crust. Place it directly on the wire rack in the oven and bake until the crust is once again toasty and crunchy and the inside is warmed and fluffy, 10 to 15 minutes. Serve whole, slice it, or tear it.

For frozen bread: Preheat the oven to 450°F. Wrap the bread in aluminum foil and bake 10 to 15 minutes, just to take the edge off. Remove the bread from the foil and follow the instructions above.

## **CHOCOLATE.**

Chocolate and I are not best friends, rather, we're acquaintances who share close mutual friends. Without fail, at least one person I invite over will

always ask if I have "a little something chocolatey," and who am I to deny them? So I keep small bars of high-quality chocolate or cookies like chocolate Pocky or wafers on hand to satisfy them.

## **VANILLA ICE CREAM.**

Not to sound vanilla, but vanilla ice cream is the best ice cream. It is the only flavor that goes with absolutely everything, and for that I value it above all others. I like to think of it as whipped cream but better and you didn't even have to do anything. Hibiscus-Roasted Peaches? Vanilla ice cream. Lemony Turmeric Tea Cake? Really great with vanilla ice cream. Crispy Chocolate Cake? YES, VANILLA ICE CREAM, PLEASE. If you're having people over, just buy some and you'll find a use for it, even if you weren't even planning on making dessert. You won't be sorry.



# Glossary

## **ACIDITY**

Gives wine a bright, crisp, tart taste and is essential in keeping a wine balanced — acidity balances out sweetness. You can gauge how acidic a wine is by taking note of how much you salivate after your first sip of wine. More saliva = more acid.

## **BODY**

Describes how heavy wine feels on the palate. When determining body, picture the difference between how skim milk feels in your mouth versus how heavy cream feels. If a wine feels like skim milk, it has a lighter body. If it feels more like heavy cream, it has a full body. Acidity, sweetness, tannin and alcohol all affect the body of a wine.

## **DRY**

A “dry wine” is one that does not have a sweet taste. However, even if a wine is technically dry, it can still have a considerable amount of residual sugar that’s concealed by a higher acidity. Example: unsweetened is technically “dry.”

## **FRUITY**

Commonly confused with sweetness (because we affiliate fruit with sweetness), “fruity” describes the presence of fruit flavors in wine. To better understand fruitiness in wine, imagine unsweetened iced tea with lemon squeezed in it. The tea has a fruitiness from the lemon but is still dry because it’s unsweetened.

## **SWEETNESS**

A wine’s sweetness is measured by the amount of naturally occurring sugar — Residual Sugar (RS) — that’s left in the wine at the end of the fermentation process. This sweetness is ranked from bone dry (Brut Nature) to very sweet (doux) and can usually be detected by a slight tingling sensation on the tip of the tongue.

## **TANNIN**

The astringent or “grippy,” almost drying, feeling a red wine leaves in your mouth. A wine’s tannin level is determined by how long the pressed juice sits with the grape seeds and stems, which is where tannins are naturally found. Example: think about how your mouth feels after drinking unsweetened black tea — also high in tannin.

# THANKS FOR BEING A MEMBER! DID YOU KNOW...

## **THE WINE**

We’re constantly tracking down, taste-testing and selecting authentic bottles from winemakers around the world — wines that are new to us and hopefully new to you, too. We curate authentic wines rather than bulk blending so that you can truly experience the diverse world of wine.



## **ADD YOUR FAVORITES**

Discovered something you love in your box? Browse our wine shop and stock up on your favorites. Members get exclusive discounts on the wine shop (up to 25% off!) AND free shipping (when you select “No-Rush” shipping at checkout). Hurry! They go fast.

## **MEMBERSHIP FLEXIBILITY**

More in the mood for only red (or white) wine this month? Switch the type of wine you want to receive. Swimming in wine right now and need a break? Log in to manage your membership to fit your wine needs. P.S. We’re now offering 6 packs of all white or all red!



## **PERKS PERKS PERKS. ALL ABOUT PERKS.**

Free shipping, exclusive member discounts on wine, the discovery experience... could there be more? Yes! Get excited and read on.

## **REFER FRIENDS FOR MORE WINE!**

Just share your referral code — which can be found on your account dashboard online — and when your friend signs up, you get \$25 in your account! It’s as simple as that.

## **KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR A NEW MEMBER PERK EACH MONTH!**

**DON'T FORGET TO CHECK US OUT ON SOCIAL AND SHARE YOUR MONTHLY WINE EXPERIENCE!**



*COPYRIGHT © 2019 WINE AWESOMENESS INC.*



WINE AWESOMENESS