

A fluffy, light-colored dog is sitting upright on a light-colored sofa. The room is dimly lit with warm, golden light from a lamp on the left. In the background, a window shows a view of a sunset or sunrise over a body of water, with a palm tree visible on the right. The overall mood is cozy and relaxed.

thebacklabel®

A MONTHLY WINE JOURNEY CURATED FOR ADVENTUROUS SOULS

# BIG NIGHT IN



Technics

thebacklabel®

EDITOR **LOGAN LEE**

ART DIRECTOR **ANDREW PARRIS**

WINE EDITOR **LOGAN LEE**

PHOTOGRAPHER **DALE SLEAR**

COPY EDITOR **PAIGE VILLIARD**

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## CONTENTS

### FEATURES

2 BIG NIGHT IN

4 ART OF THE BIG NIGHT IN

32 THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO CIDER

### EATS

18 VINEGAR-BRAISED CHICKEN WITH FARRO AND WATERCRESS

19 BAKED PASTA WITH ARTICHOKE, GREENS, AND TOO MUCH CHEESE

20 SOUR CREAM FLATBREAD

21 CARAMELIZED WINTER SQUASH WITH TOASTED COCONUT GREMOLATA

### RED WINES

6 2014 NASHWAWK CABERNET SAUVIGNON

8 2018 GIUNTA MALBEC NOUVEAU

10 2017 REALCE TEMPRANILLO

12 2013 STONEHORSE GSM BLEND

14 2017 UNSORTED PINOT NOIR

16 2015 BARBANERA "SER PASSO" TOSCANA ROSSO

### WHITE WINES

22 2017 KAT WALKER SAUVIGNON BLANC

24 2018 REALCE SAUVIGNON BLANC-MACABEO

26 2019 LEKKER, ROSÉ

28 2016 CAPE DREAMS CHENIN BLANC

30 2015 ALTES SCHLÖSSCHEN RIESLING



# BIG NIGHT IN

By **LOGAN LEE**

**LIVING IN NYC** can be a bit of a double edged sword. Yes, there is an infinite amount of cool things to check out i.e. plays, concerts, and some awesome restaurants that seem to open ad infinitum. I also may suffer from the common social disease we call FOMO, which definitely causes me to go out too much, spend too much money, and probably miss too much sleep.

We're challenging ourselves and you guys to fight for your right to stay in. We've put together this edition of *thebacklabel* to empower all of us to stay in, save some bucks, but without sacrificing any fun! But don't waste your Big Night In by plopping onto the lazy boy and surfing channels aimlessly... we gotta use this time to do things we've put off for too long or to catch up with the fraaands we never have time to hang out with. Work stuff is going to the back burner.

Awesome food is called for on a big night in. For culinary tips, we hit up our long time collaborator, Alison Roman. She basically broke instagram with a cookie recipe, she writes all about food and recipes for the New York Times, and her inaugural cookbook, *Dining In*, is you guessed it... all about making eating in truly awesome. Her new cookbook, *Nothing Fancy* hits bookstores this month! Get ya some.

We've got enough of our favorite tv shows and movies that one couldn't possible binge watch in a month, and some activities that we hope inspire you and your crew to simply enjoy hanging out together, or inspires you to finally start on that list of must-read books.

Oh yeah, plus we've amped up the wine

selections this month. You'll notice 11 wines in this monthly mag, which is all about us raising our game to find more and more vino from around the world that we can get to your doorstep.

We've got big and jammy reds from Australia, a super cool, lighter body Malbec from New Zealand, a couple organic wines from Spain, some tasty juice from Tuscany in Italy, a white and rosé from South Africa, a fruity riesling with a touch of sweetness from Germany, and to wrap things up, we end with a delectable Pinot Noir from the Golden State. I think we've put together an awesome selection that combined with some dope recipes and fun is sure to equal an excellent night staying in.

Together we ride, but not to a big night out on the town... let's toast to the ultimate big night in.

LL

# ART OF THE BIG NIGHT IN

**THE ART OF THE BIG NIGHT IN IS** all about taking just one night, maybe every other week, to do the shit we've always wanted to do but never seem to get around to do. We've got four Top 10 lists coming at ya all about movies, music, TV, and books!

Here's a list of classic movies that we've always wanted to do... so we did it!

1. ALL THE GODFATHER MOVIES
2. SPIKE LEE'S DO THE RIGHT THING (1989)
3. CITIZEN KANE (1941)
4. RICHARD LINKLATER'S EPIC TRILOGY... BEFORE SUNRISE, BEFORE SUNSET, AND BEFORE MIDNIGHT
5. 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968)
6. ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S PSYCHO (1960)
7. THE SHINING (1980)
8. ONE OF MARILYN MONROE'S FIRST MOVIES... SOME LIKE IT HOT (1959)
9. BLAZING SADDLES (1974)
10. WE BEGIN AND END WITH FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA... APOCALYPSE NOW (1979)

Music is awesome. Checking out some of the best music on vinyl is even more awesome. Set up a turntable and start collecting records... Here's ten classic records that can kick off your new collection.

1. AMY WINEHOUSE — BACK TO BLACK (2006)

2. THE CLASH — LONDON CALLING (1979)
3. LCD SOUNDSYSTEM — LCD SOUNDSYSTEM (2005)
4. KRAFTWERK — THE MAN-MACHINE (1978)
5. STEVIE WONDER — SONGS IN THE KEY OF LIFE (1976)
6. DAFT PUNK — RANDOM ACCESS MEMORIES (2013)
7. PINK FLOYD — WISH YOU WERE HERE (1975)
8. A TRIBE CALLED QUEST — MIDNIGHT MARAUDERS (1993)
9. THE BEATLES — ABBEY ROAD (1969)
- BILLIE HOLIDAY — LADY IN SATIN (1958)

Binge watching TV has never been easier! Don't settle for just the new stuff, but take advantage of the ole Internet and check out some all time great television!

1. THE SOPRANOS
2. THE WIRE
3. MAD MEN
4. BREAKING BAD
5. THE WEST WING

6. DALLAS
7. BEVERLY HILLS, 90210
8. SEINFELD
9. DRAGNET
10. GREEN ACRES

Reading is cool! But we're always too tired to get around to it. So on your big nights in, read a chapter or two of that book you've always wanted to dive into! This list is a good place to start.

1. TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD BY HARPER LEE
2. THE GREAT GATSBY BY F. SCOTT FITZGERALD
3. IN COLD BLOOD BY TRUMAN CAPOTE
4. BRAVE NEW WORLD BY ALDOUS HUXLEY
5. TO THE LIGHTHOUSE BY VIRGINIA WOOLF
6. BELOVED BY TONI MORRISON
7. THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN BY MARK TWAIN
8. CRIME AND PUNISHMENT BY FYODOR DOSTOYEVSKY
9. THE CALL OF THE WILD BY JACK LONDON
10. PERSUASION BY JANE AUSTEN



## 2014 NASHWAUK CABERNET SAUVIGNON

MCLAREN VALE, AUSTRALIA

100% Cabernet Sauvignon

**NOSE:** A forbidden love affair between mint and ripe dark berries

**PALATE:** Elegant tannins and full bodied, with casual berries that give way to sophisticated notes of violet and tobacco

**MOOD:** Forget the boujee night out. Heat up some leftovers on a fancy plate, dim the lights, and spin your most sultry vinyl on the record player.



Nashwauk vineyard overlooks the coast of the Fleurieu Peninsula & the township of McLaren Vale aka the McLaren Valley. The vineyard takes its name from a ship, the Nashwauk, which was wrecked off the nearby coast on May 13th, 1855. But this vino is no shipwreck unless it was a shipwreck on to a beautiful tropical island flowing with deliciousness.

The close proximity of the Nashwauk vineyard to the Gulf of St Vincent and the resultant cooling afternoon sea breezes means these grapes enjoy relatively even ripening conditions, and that means off the charts color, flavor, and tannin.

Nashwauk is everything we love about wine — a picturesque vineyard pumping out genuinely delicious juice that's bold and jammy just like some of our favorite loud and cray Aussie pals.



This Cab Sauv is big and bold enough to handle anything your local butcher has to offer. Get a rich beef stew going in the crockpot while you enjoy the day outdoors with your crew.



## 2018 GIUNTA MALBEC NOUVEAU

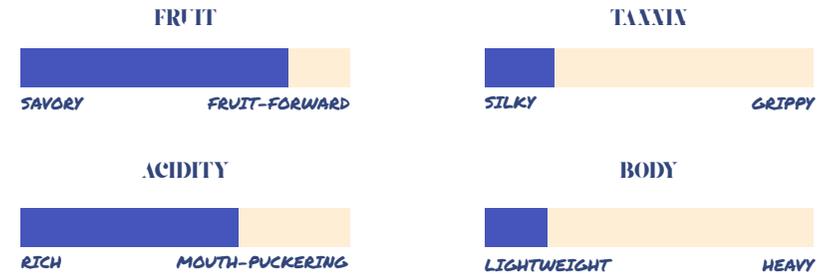
HAWKE'S BAY, NEW ZEALAND

100% Malbec

**NOSE:** Smoky and fruity have a rendezvous with savory black olive

**PALATE:** Like delicate blackberries and plums giving your mouth a crisp high five

**MOOD:** Getting your besties together for the last beach bonfire of the season. Hit play on some groovy surf rock and swap stories from the night before.



First off, Malbec isn't only from Argentina. And, originally, the delectable grape hails from France. Malbec has now made its way around the world and the crew behind Decibel Wines in New Zealand are doing some epic stuff with this variety. Decibel is dedicated to creating juice using classic techniques with minimal intervention. Located in Hawke's Bay, New Zealand, Decibel takes a community approach to making wine, teaming up with other local growers in the area to ensure the final product is the best possible quality.

This Malbec is lighter in style, making it even more gulpable... we didn't think that was possible. The juice is a royal, dark purple. The nose is wild and savory black olives picked off your fave pizza pie with sultry flavors of brambly fruit and wafts of smokiness. The palate is soft and plush with rich blackberries, plum, and spice. The finish is long and clean, making you clamor for the next sip!



Break out the barbecue and find a nice fatty brisket to load with your secret blend of salty seasonings. This Malbec provides enough fruitiness to counter a savory piece of meat, and the perfect hint of smokiness to seal the deal.



## 2017 REALCE TEMPRANILLO

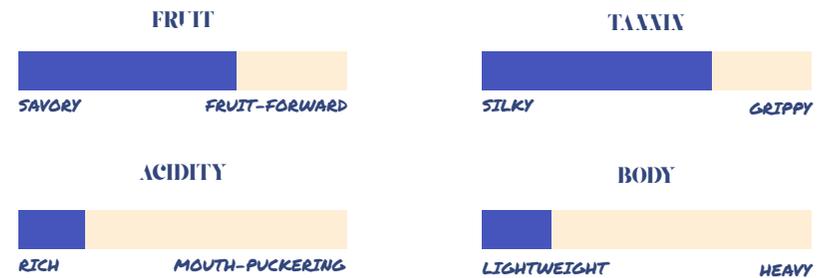
VINO DE LA TIERRA DE CASTILLA, SPAIN

100% Tempranillo

**NOSE:** bursting with vibrant, rich, and dark fruit like black currants, blackberries, pomegranates, and prunes

**PALATE:** dried plums smashed with an old cigar that's been buried in the back pocket of a farmer's Levi's

**MOOD:** You're making your shopping list and creating a Rolling Stones-inspired playlist for the perfect tailgate, meanwhile screaming at Alexa for the weather forecast.



Vino de la Tierra de Castilla is an emerging Spanish wine region and is cranking out some super solid juice! About 50 miles southeast of Madrid, younger winemakers are creating a home base here for many reasons, and one big one is that the rules are a lot less stringent than most of the legacy Spanish regions. This means winemakers have much more freedom for innovation. This bottle is an awesome example of these new wave Spanish winemakers innovating with some classic grapes.

Tempranillo is an iconic Spanish varietal, but the winemaker behind Realce is working with 100% certified organic grapes. The grapes are all hand harvested, the juice is vinified aka turned into wine in steel tanks, and, finally, it is aged in concrete barrels. Yeah, concrete like cement. This style of winemaking means you get uber ripe flavors bursting from each glass.



When you pull out this wine, you can impress your friends with the fun fact that this juice is aged in concrete tanks and not traditional oak barrels. Btw, it pairs well with nearly everything that comes off the grill!



## 2013 STONEHORSE GSM BLEND

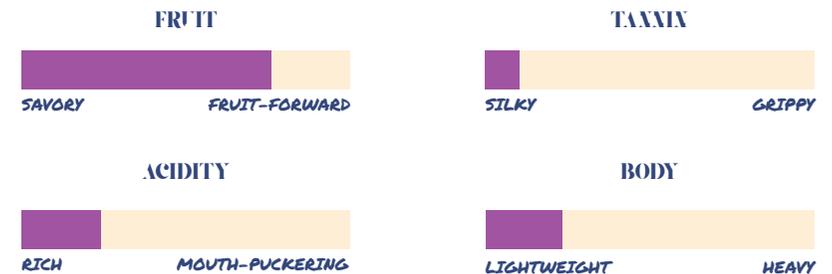
BAROSSA VALLEY, AUSTRALIA

Grenache, Shiraz, Mourvèdre

**NOSE:** Like going for a swim in a pool of blue and black berries

**PALATE:** Rhubarb, spice, and everything nice

**MOOD:** Inviting your friends over for an Aussie-themed dinner party. The attire is your best Crocodile Dundee impression, with a collection of down under accents to match.



Most bottles that you pick up online or at your local wine shop are meant to be consumed right away. It's a bit of a misnomer that the older the wine the better because most wines just turn to vinegar. But the 2013 Stonehorse GSM Blend is awesome right now, and the bottle is gonna be magnificent for at least 10 years. Meaning the 2013 vintage is just getting into its prime time!

The fruit is all estate-grown aka the winery and vineyard are all on the same property. The Grenache contributes vibrant fruit and softness, while the Shiraz provides palate depth and aromatic spice. Making these two varietals one helluva tag team. The nose is an elegant combo of blueberries and black currants, and the palate is lip smackin' savory with a touch of white pepper and fresh rhubarb.



Take a fresh angle on dinner and put together a hearty steak salad. This blend is savory and works perfectly with red meat, while still light and fruity enough to complement fresh veggies with a berry garnish.



## 2017 UNSORTED PINOT NOIR

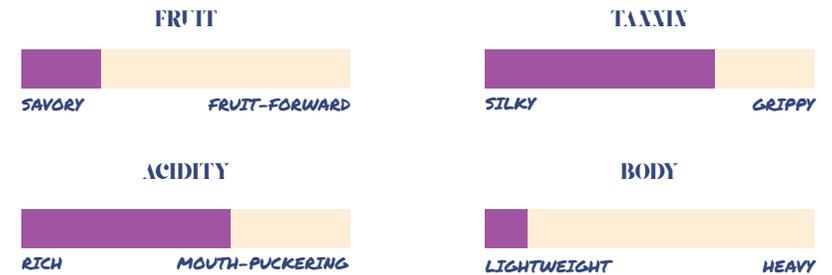
CALIFORNIA

100% Pinot Noir

**NOSE:** Eucalyptus and mint like a spa day in a glass

**PALATE:** Like a fairytale for your taste buds, fresh picked berries mingle with spicy white pepper and coriander

**MOOD:** A boozy nature walk after a long day in the office. Pop in your earbuds and realign your chakras while enjoying some well-deserved me time.



Finding stellar Pinot Noir from California at a price that is meant for everyday drinking is becoming more and more impossible. But the crew behind Unsorted Pinot Noir is doing the near impossible. It's crazy to think that just 30 to 40 years ago the rest of the world mocked Cali vino, but today the Golden State is primed with excellent juice.

This bottle begins with an intriguing incense of mint, eucalyptus, and alluring woodland aromatics. Smooth and lush splashes coat the palate with impressions of early-picked raspberry and blueberry, lending to a mid-palate acidity that yields to spicy hints of coriander and white pepper. This expressive elixir remains vibrant, yet flawlessly integrated to the end.



This aromatic red is begging for lots of herbs and zesty spices. Grab your favorite cut of red meat and get fancy with flavorful roasted potatoes, hot and crispy from the oven.



## 2015 BARBANERA "SER PASSO" TOSCANA ROSSO

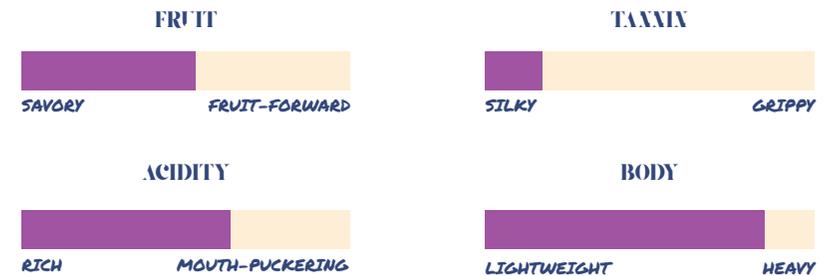
TUSCANY, ITALY

100% Sangiovese

**NOSE:** Like black cherries

**PALATE:** Silky and luscious, this Sangiovese is a smooth criminal with a fruity finish

**MOOD:** A cozy night in with your best recipe in the oven and Netflix queued up on the TV. It's your time to shine as you pop open this red that will have your significant other falling in love all over again.



Tuscany is one of the world capitals of wine and the region's signature grape has to be Sangiovese. It's definitely gotta be one of our all-time favorite varieties! First off, it's old school Italian, it's typically super easy drinking with ripe notes of black cherry, and finally, it makes nearly any pasta dish featuring a tomato-based sauce even better. What could be better on a big night in than some packed ziti with killer red?

The juice is deliciously captivating with vivacious notes of ripe red fruit. The wine literally flows like the finest silk over the palate and with a predominant fruit character of black cherries that's kept fresh by Sangiovese's natural acidity aka tart-ness. Tuscany strikes again with the perfect go-to bottle for your next spaghetti night or when you're too lazy to cook and your neighborhood Italian takeout spot does the trick.



Find some spicy, flavorful Italian sausage and put your own spin on a delicious baked pasta dish. This silky red is perfect for something cheesy and indulgent.

# EATS



## VINEGAR-BRAISED CHICKEN WITH FARRO AND WATERCRESS

### SERVES 4

**1 {3 1/2- to 4-pound} chicken, cut up into pieces, or 2 bone-in breasts and 2 bone-in legs**

**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

**1 tablespoon canola oil**

**1 head of garlic, halved crosswise**

**1 cup farro or spelt**

**1/2 cup white distilled vinegar or white wine vinegar**

**1 tablespoon yuzu kosho (optional)**

**4 cups watercress, thick stems removed**

NOTE: Please do not sell this chicken on the street unless you have a permit to do so.

DO AHEAD: Chicken can be cooked 2 days ahead and refrigerated. Rewarm over low heat with the lid on, adding a bit of water to the pot to prevent the chicken from drying out.

1. Season the chicken with salt and pepper. Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Sear the chicken (working in batches, if needed), skin-side down, until golden brown on both sides, 10 to 12 minutes per side. Transfer the chicken to a plate or cutting board.

2. Add the garlic and farro to the pot, stirring to coat them in the rendered chicken fat. Season with salt and pepper and cook until the garlic and farro begin to smell toasty, 5 to 8 minutes. Add the vinegar, yuzu kosho (if using), and 4 cups water, scraping up any bits on the bottom of the pan, and bring to a simmer.

3. Return the chicken to the pot, skin-side up, and cover. Reduce the heat to medium-low and gently simmer until the chicken is practically falling off the bone and the farro is totally cooked through—it should be tender but not mushy—about 90 minutes.

4. Stir in the watercress before serving.

## BAKED PASTA WITH ARTICHOKES, GREENS, AND TOO MUCH CHEESE

### SERVES 6 TO 8

**12 sheets lasagna noodles, fresh or dried, or 12 ounces pasta**

**Kosher salt**

**4 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling**

**1 large yellow onion, thinly sliced**  
**Freshly ground black pepper**

**1 bunch spinach (about 1 ounces), stems removed, leaves chopped (about 3 cups)**

**1 bunch kale (about 8 ounces), stems removed, leaves chopped (about 4 cups)**

**6 garlic cloves, finely chopped**

**1 (14-ounce) jar marinated artichoke hearts, drained and chopped**

**2 cups fresh full-fat ricotta cheese**  
**1 1/2 cups heavy cream**

**2 cups finely grated Parmesan or pecorino cheese (about 4 ounces), plus more as needed**

**8 ounces good mozzarella cheese, shredded**

DO AHEAD: The pasta can be assembled and baked 1 day ahead, then refrigerated. Cover with foil and reheat in a 350°F oven until warmed through, 30 to 40 minutes.

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.

2. Working in batches, cook the sheets of pasta in a large pot of salted boiling water (if you crowd the pot, they will most definitely stick together), just to al dente, 5 to 8 minutes, depending on the brand and type of pasta; if you're using fresh pasta, it'll be more like 30 to 60 seconds, just enough to soften.

3. Once it's ready, transfer each sheet, one by one, to a paper-towel-lined baking sheet. Don't let the pasta sheets touch or they'll stick together and your blood pressure will rise trying to get them apart (a truly impossible task). Drizzle a small amount of olive oil onto each sheet of pasta before separating each layer with paper towels. Set aside while you prepare the filling.

4. Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is totally softened and deeply caramelized, 15 to 20 minutes.

5. Working in batches, add handfuls of greens to the skillet, seasoning with salt and pepper and letting them wilt down before adding the next handful (when the skillet becomes too crowded even after wilting, transfer cooked greens to a bowl and continue wilting raw greens in the skillet). Once your last batch of greens has finished cooking, add the garlic and any cooked greens you set aside and toss to coat. Add the artichoke hearts and mix well; set aside.

6. Mix the ricotta, cream and parmesan together in a medium bowl; season with salt and pepper.

7. Drizzle olive oil into the bottom of a 23cm x 13cm x 6cm baking dish. Place a layer of cooked pasta on the bottom and top with one-third ricotta mixture. Top with one-third of the greens and artichokes, and top that with one-third of the mozzarella. Repeat until you have a layer of pasta on the top. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle more parmesan over the top.

8. Cover with foil and bake until everything is warmed through and the cheese has started to melt, 15-20 minutes. Remove the foil and raise the oven temperature to 250°C. Bake until the top is browned and the filling is bubbling along the edges, 8-10 minutes longer. Let cool slightly before slicing and eating.



## SOUR CREAM FLATBREAD

### MAKES 4 TO 6 FLATBREADS

**2 1/4 teaspoons active dry yeast**  
(from one 1/4-ounce envelope)

**Pinch of sugar**

**4 cups all-purpose flour, plus more**

**for rolling**

**1/2 cup sour cream**

**2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) unsalted**  
**butter, melted**

**1 tablespoon kosher salt**

**Olive or vegetable oil, for cooking,**  
**grilling, or baking**

NOTE: For those of you who are inclined to breeze past this recipe because you "don't bake," let me say that this recipe is for you. Yes, you! If we are being honest, I'm not even sure this totally qualifies as baking. I developed this dough mostly a dump and stir type of thing to be forgiving, foolproof, and versatile, so you can make it for any situation (grilling party, pizza party, regular ol' dinner party) in nearly any place there is high, direct heat (grill, oven, or skillet).

1. In a large bowl, dissolve the yeast in 1 1/2 cups warm (warm-not hot!) water with the sugar. Using a wooden spoon, stir in the flour until no large dry spots remain. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let it sit about 10 minutes. It won't look much different here, you're just letting the flour hydrate.

2. Add the sour cream, butter, and salt to the dough, and mix until all the sour cream is well blended—use your hands if you have to. You're not kneading but just making sure everything is well mixed.

3. Cover the bowl again with plastic wrap and let it sit for 2 hours; this will relax the gluten and further hydrate the flour, making the dough easier to work with. Punch down the dough and cover. Let it rise another 2 hours in a warm, draft-free place (alternatively, instead of letting it rise at room temperature, you can refrigerate it and let it rise very slowly over 24 hours).

4. When it comes time to roll the dough, place it on a lightly floured work surface and divide it into 4 to 6 equal-size pieces, depending on how large you want your flatbreads. If it's been refrigerated, proceed as usual; the only difference is that it'll be a bit stiffer, which actually makes it easier to work with. Oh, and when I say "lightly floured," I mean it! You just want to prevent sticking, not add more flour to the dough, which can dry it out.

5. Working with one piece at a time, roll out the dough. Using your hands, pick up the dough and lightly stretch it over the backs of your hands, like in the movies where people spin pizza. JK — you don't have to do that, but you do want to make sure that this dough is as thin as possible, without creating too many holes, and actually picking up the dough and stretching it is the best way to do that.

### COOK ON THE STOVETOP

1. Cooking the dough in a cast-iron skillet will give you a soft, fluffy naan texture without the extreme puffiness of pita. Once the dough hits the hot oil, it immediately starts to bubble, getting those blackened, Dalmatian-y spots. Be sure to monitor the heat levels and adjust accordingly. The more flatbreads you cook, the hotter the skillet will be, so you might need to turn down the heat as you go.

2. Heat a large preferably cast-iron, skillet over medium-high heat. Drizzle a bit of oil (olive or vegetable) into the skillet and lay a piece of dough flat into it. Let it cook until it starts to puff and bubble up in spots. Check periodically to see that it's browning and lightly charring on the underside like it's supposed to, 3 to 4 minutes; if not, turn the heat up slightly. After a few minutes, flip the dough and let it cook on the other side (no need to add more oil) until baked through, another 2 to 3 minutes.

3. Repeat with remaining dough, adding oil as needed.



## CARAMELIZED WINTER SQUASH WITH TOASTED COCONUT GREMOLATA

### SERVES 4

### SQUASH

**2 medium winter squash, such as**  
**delicata or acorn (1 1/2 to 2 pounds)**  
**3 tablespoons coconut oil, melted,**  
**or olive oil**

**1 tablespoon honey**

**Kosher salt and freshly ground**  
**black pepper**

**TOASTED COCONUT**  
**GREMOLATA**

**3/4 cup unsweetened coconut chips**

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

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

**1 tablespoon finely grated lemon**  
**zest 2 teaspoons Aleppo pepper or**

**1 teaspoon crushed red pepper**  
**flakes Kosher salt**

DO AHEAD: Everything but the coconut can be made 1 day ahead; when ready to serve, toast the coconut and add it to the chive mixture (toasted coconut will start to soften once mixed with the herbs and refrigerated).

1. ROAST THE SQUASH: Preheat the oven to 425°F.

2. Leaving the skin on, slice the squash into 1/2-inch-thick rings. (I roast my squash with the seeds still inside, because they get all crispy and I love the texture they bring to the table, but you can remove them if you like. Best way to do that is cut the squash in half crosswise and scoop out the seeds with a spoon, then slice into rings.)

3. Toss the squash with the coconut oil and honey on a rimmed baking sheet and season with salt and pepper. Roast, flipping the squash once, until it is completely tender, browned, and caramelized, 25 to 30 minutes.

4. MAKE THE GREMOLATA: While the squash is roasting, heat a small skillet over medium heat and add the coconut. Shake the skillet occasionally until the coconut is starting to brown at the edges and smells all toasty and amazing, 3 to 4 minutes. Place it in a medium bowl to cool completely.

5. Once the coconut has cooled, add the chives, cilantro, lemon zest, and Aleppo pepper, and season with salt. Using your fingers, mix this together until the oils in the lemon zest have released and everything is evenly distributed (especially the lemon zest, which can stubbornly clump up).

6. Sprinkle the coconut gremolata over the roasted squash and serve.





## 2017 KAT WALKER SAUVIGNON BLANC

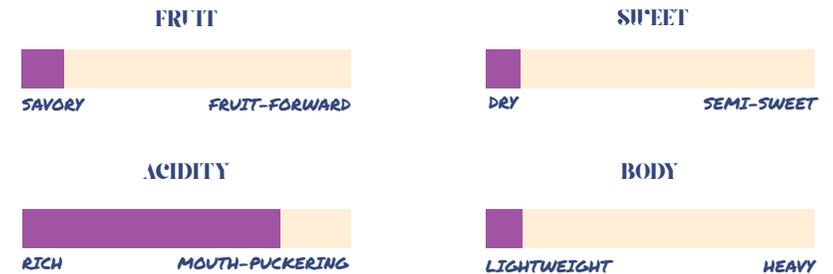
MARLBOROUGH, NEW ZEALAND

100% Sauvignon Blanc

**NOSE:** Like the ripest, freshest citrus in the whole orchard

**PALATE:** Sprite's more sophisticated older sibling, with a clean minerality and grippy citrus and stone fruit

**MOOD:** Catching some rays by the pool on a hot and sunny afternoon. Your friends are bumping laid-back jams while you enjoy the occasional splash from a well-executed cannonball.



If you didn't know... a blend of grapes hailing from 3 valleys is better than one, and now ya know! The Kat Walker Sauv Blanc comes to us via the Ant More Estate in Marlborough, New Zealand with vineyards planted across the Awatere, Waihopai, and Wairau valleys, which all have their own personalities making this Sauvignon Blanc loaded up with the richness of each spot.

Sauv Blanc from Marlborough has become such a jam because the warm clear days with loads of sunshine provide great conditions for ripening the fruit. This bottle is the "house style" of the winery meaning they make this vino for how they want to drink it and let's just say they know what they're doing. Flavors of lemon, lime, and peaches leap on to the taste buds, while the finish is steely smooth with lush layers of citrus piling on top of each other.



A refreshing white like this Sauv Blanc loves to hangout with lemony grilled chicken and fresh veggies. Going simple and healthy will bring out all the best qualities in this juice.



## 2018 REALCE SAUVIGNON BLANC-MACABEO

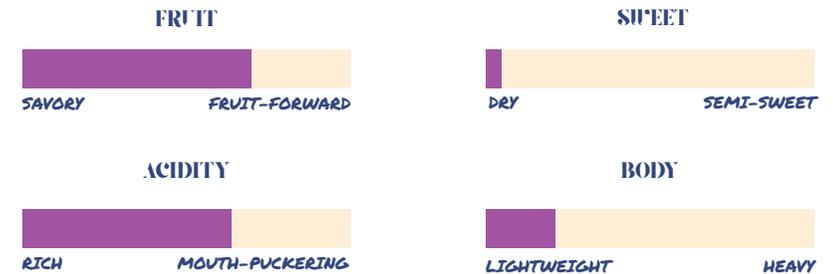
CASTILLA-LA MANCHA, SPAIN

60% Sauvignon Blanc, 40% Macabeo

**NOSE:** Lemon and citrus perform a DJ set for your taste buds

**PALATE:** A creamy roundness and minerality that stage a flavor soirée between your cheeks and tongue

**MOOD:** Doing a shimmy and shake across the living room to your favorite Robyn dance tune as you prepare for a Saturday night booty shaking contest in your apartment.



This Spanish vino is certified organic and is a delectable blend of Sauvignon Blanc and the indigenous aka local grape, Macabeo. Spaniards often only work with indigenous grapes, but the one exception is Sauvignon Blanc. For this bottle, the wine shows off all the classic notes of a gulp-able SB, but the winemaker added some finesse and lush roundness by blending it with the Spanish grape.

The nose is like a party hosted by the duo of lemon and citrus, but the two deftly invited apple, pear, and wildflowers to the soirée. The palate is lush and round with tastes of green apple, melon, and honeysuckle with a refreshing, minerally finish. Best of luck not trying to drink on this bottle too quickly.



This vino is perfect with your favorite leafy salad. We're doing some steak stir fry over spinach with a teriyaki vinaigrette!



## 2019 LEKKER, ROSÉ

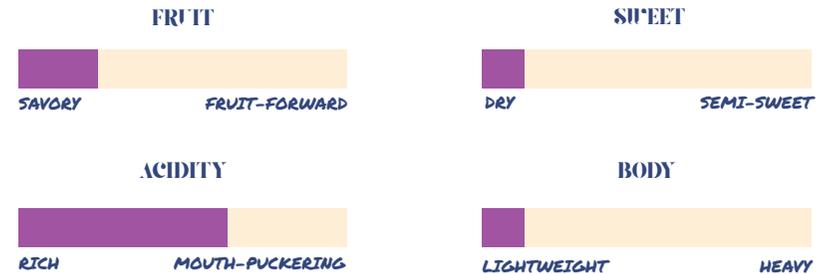
WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

52% Grenache, 48% Merlot

**NOSE:** Tangy guava and grilled hibiscus-coated watermelon. Stemmy, green, tart strawberries and cold steel.

**PALATE:** An acid that acts like a bee sting to the back of your tongue, causing your mouth to pucker.

**MOOD:** Jumping into the ocean for the first time.



Lekker Rosé was handcrafted by winemaker Nico Grobler, of Eikendal Vineyards & La Brune Wines, in collaboration with Wine Awesomeness - and we're super excited about it! It's the 2019 vintage, making it one of the freshest, most easy-drinking wines on the market.

This wine is pure energy, like shooting stars drenched in lemon juice. This is the kind of wine that stains your summer memories. The kind of wine you will cling to the memory of when you're trudging through the snow come winter. Once in your glass, you will find a nose of fresh Herbes de Provence, watermelon and orange zest. Electrified pink lemonade, red pepper flakes and grapefruit rinds.



Combat the tartness of the pickled beets and the tang and creaminess of the goat cheese with Lekker Rosé's bright acidity.



## 2016 CAPE DREAMS CHENIN BLANC

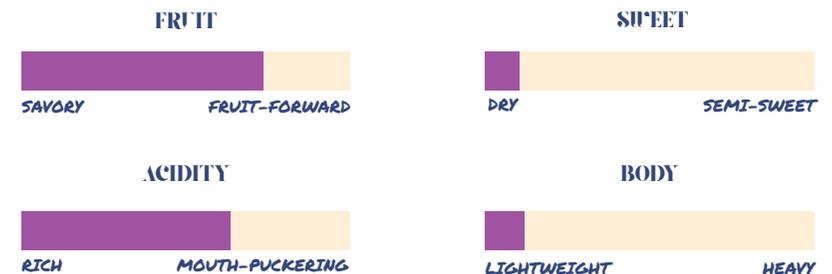
ROBERTSON, SOUTH AFRICA

100% Chenin Blanc

**NOSE:** Lost in the tropics with your pals pineapple and citrus

**PALATE:** Fruit forward with a hint of dry apple, fresh and zesty yet well balanced, like how you want to feel walkin' into the club

**MOOD:** Looking chic and feeling fancy on your friend's well-kept roof deck. You're rocking your favorite pair of shades and you can't be bothered with drama while you bob your head to the song you selected as unofficial DJ.



Chenin Blanc's relationship to Sauvignon Blanc is kinda like being Beyonce's little sister. You might not know Solange Knowles, but she's one badass and talented lady. She might not scream pop music, but she sure is a cool and stylish one. We heart Sauvignon Blanc, but we can't forget how good it's grape sibling, Chenin Blanc is for sipping on the reg.

This version comes from South Africa, one of the more underrated wine regions in the world and a hotbed for finding wines that outperform their price point. This juice brings the value to the schoolyard if you know what we mean. The nose immediately transports you to the tropics with whiffs of pineapple, guava, and lime. The palate adds a slight sophistication to this tropical soiree with a hint of dried apple and a lemon zesty, balanced finish.



Fresh seafood and Chenin Blanc are a match made in pairing heaven. Visit your local grocery store or fish monger and get a beautiful piece of tuna to sear in a cast iron skillet. A delicate salad on the side ties everything together.



## 2015 ALTES SCHLÖSSCHEN RIESLING

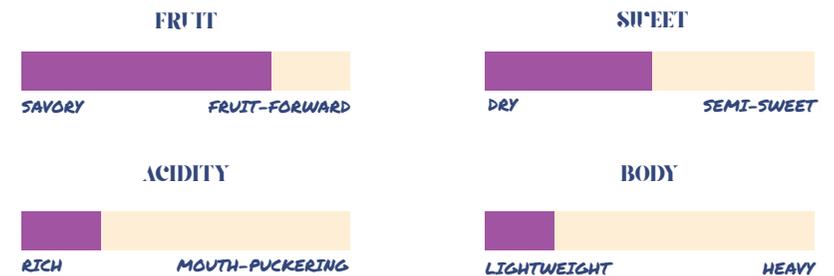
PFALZ, GERMANY

100% Riesling

**NOSE:** White peaches, apricots, and green apple having a dance battle

**PALATE:** A well-balanced, medium body delivers crisp taste and citrus with just a touch of sweet fruitiness to balance the scales

**MOOD:** Setting up a smorgasbord of tasty appetizers on the back porch on a Saturday evening with your pals. There's charcuterie with salty meats and pickled vegetables, everyone brought over their favorite bottle of vino, and a competitive game of tipsy Scattergories is right around the corner.



**R**iesling is a bit of a controversial grape! Apparently back in the 70s and 80s, the Blue Nun Riesling brand invaded the states and everyone and their brother's grandma purchased the overly sweet and syrupy version of Riesling. The WA Crew is here though to show off what the grape can really do. Technically, this Riesling is off-dry meaning there is some sugar present, but it's balanced with the acidity aka the tartness. The Altes Schlösschen is that perfect balance and it's easy to tell that this winery has been in the family for 4 generations.

The balanced touch of sweetness makes this vino a great pair with spicy dishes. Think Thai takeout, hot wangs, curries, etc. etc. The nose is all about stone fruit like ripe peaches and apricots. The palate is crisp, balanced with delicate flavors of citrus, white peaches, and green apples that finishes with a touch of fruity sweetness.



This Riesling is a perfect opportunity to whip up some seriously impressive homemade Thai food. Combine a light, flavorful yellow curry sauce with rice, chicken, and your favorite veggies.



**AH, FALL, THE TIME OF YEAR WHEN** “rosé aficionados” are concerned with the fading of summer water from the shelves of their local watering hole. But have no fear, I have a festive alternative for you that will turn any fall party into an autumn bash.

Cider, no I’m not talking about the golden sparkling juice you cheered over at 10:05 pm (at the kid’s table) on December 31st. I am also not talking about the canned elixir that high schoolers and college freshmen alike drink as an alternative to PBR or Natty Light.

The process of making cider is similar to wine (but simpler). The apples used are not the apples you buy at the grocery store or eat every day. Instead, cider apples are used. These apples are small, extremely sour, and tart and are perfect for fermenting. Cider makers take the sharp and tangy juice from the cider apples – and any juice from other fruits they want to include for some pizzazz – then fermentation happens.

I am talking about a sophisticated, class and sass in a wine glass (or a pint) kind of cider. Despite whatever predetermined notion you have of cider, I am here to clear a few things up. The kind of wine drinker you are will greatly affect the kind of cider you enjoy. From funky to traditional, there are many, many options. Cider is the new kid on the block this autumn and everyone wants a taste.

## **FUNKY CIDER**

DRINK THESE IF YOU LOVE WEIRD SUPER NATURAL, BIODYNAMIC PÉT-NAT TYPE OF WINES.

If you like to take long walks on the wild side and look ridiculousness in the face, then I have the drink for you! This type originates in the Basque region at the tippy top of Spain. The area is known for its high acid beauty Txakolina, and also for the high pour that some do with those wines. Although some use this technique as a party trick, there actually is a reason why it is done. The high pour is used to break down the small carbon bubbles that are inside the bottle. This type of cider is usually very inexpensive, ranging from 8-12 bucks and in many ways can be viewed as similar to beer. Try Isastegi Sagardo Basque Cider to transport you on a Spanish vacation in just one sip.

## **THE CLASSY CIDER**

DRINK THIS IF YOU LIKE CHARDONNAY OR CLASSIC CALIFORNIA CABS.

It is elegant, preppy and can at times be expensive. These sparklers usually come from Normandy, France, but also can come from Switzerland – though these may be harder to find. Delicate and low alcohol, they would be great for brunch. These bottles are clad with refined soft bubbles that will make your mouth feel like it is full of fluffy clouds. Try a Poiré, Cidrerie du Vulcain, J. Perritaz (2014) to have a posh cider experience.

## **RUSTIC CIDER**

DRINK THESE IF YOU LIKE TO EXPLORE OLD-SCHOOL GEORGIAN ORANGE WINES.

These ciders are unfiltered and naturally oh so beautiful. They are produced in a way similar to what our founding fathers drank (or maybe rapped about... I’m looking at you, Hamilton). These can be a little different

and out there but are worth the try. They are authentic and extremely ‘back to your roots.’ A good bottle to try is the Millstone Cellars ‘Hopvine.’

## **THE FESTIVE CIDER**

DRINK THESE IF YOU’RE INTO THE CHANGING OF THE SEASONS.

These ciders only come out in the fall and are perfect for people who love to celebrate the changing of the seasons. Pumpkin apple cider is similar to pumpkin ale. It is bone dry, yeasty but with the zip of acid that cider apples give. There are also ginger ciders as well as cinnamon apple pie ciders. A perfect fall cider to try is Left Foot Charley, Cinnamon Girl Cider.

As you can see, cider is an awesome way to keep your festivities going while also getting your drink on. Whether you like super weird stuff or are into the classics, there is a cider for you. SO, pull out your skeleton lights and get ready to carve some pumpkins because the festivities are only just beginning.

# 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.



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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!



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WINE AWESOMENESS