

Always Faithful: Celebration, Versatility, Utilitarian

Too much of anything is bad, but too much champagne is just right." F. Scott Fitzgerald

	100	NV	Graham Beck Rose	Sparkling	35	Robertson	Western Cape	South Africa
	105	2011	Mont Marcal <i>Rosado</i>	Cava	36	Penedes	Catalunya	Spain
	110	NV	Gruet <i>Extra Blanc de Noir</i>	Sparkling	38	Albuquerque	New Mexico	USA
	120	NV	Scarpetta <i>Timido Brut</i>	Spumante	40	Friuli Venezia-Giulia		Italy
WM	140	NV	Jo Landron <i>Atmospheres</i>	Sparkling	45	Muscadet	Loire	France
	145	NV	De La Motte Brut (.375)	Champagne	55	A le Mesnil Sur Oger	Champagne	France
	147	NV	Pierre Moncuit (.375)	Champagne	55	A le Mesnil Sur Oger	Champagne	France
	150	NV	Trouillard <i>Brut Extra Selection</i>	Champagne	75	Epernay	Champagne	France
	175	2011	Soter Vineyards <i>Mineral Springs</i>	Sparkling	100	Yamhill-Carlton	Oregon	USA
WM	176	NV	Robert Moncuit <i>Grand Cru</i>	Champagne	105	A le Mesnil Sur Oger	Champagne	France
	177	NV	Savart <i>L'Accomplie 1er Cru</i>	Champagne	125	Ecueil	Champagne	France
	179	2012	Sea Smoke <i>Sea Spray</i>	Sparkling	175	Santa Rita Hills	California	USA

First Courses: Light, Bright, Lean & Clean

Those wines that have grip and acid, that lend themselves as perfect dates for most seafood, but are equally impressive with their crispness allowing them to hold their own as a starter white. These selections are chosen specifically for their true representation of the variety and the terroir.

	208	2014	Scarpetta	Pinot Grigio	36	Friuli Venezia-Giulia	Friuli	Italy
	210	2016	Makara	Sauvignon Blanc	38		Marlborough	New Zealand
	212	2016	Martinsancho	Verdejo	40	Rueda	Castilla y Leon	Spain
	215	2016	Tyrrell's	Semillon	45		Hunter Valley	Australia
	217	2016	Dom. Gerard Fiou	Sauvignon Blanc	48	Sancerre	Loire	France
WM	220	2016	Weingut Jager <i>Ried Klaus</i>	Gruner Veltliner	50		Wachau	Austria
	222	2016	Bellus <i>Caldera</i>	Falanghina	50		Campania	Italy
	230	2016	Jolie-Laide <i>Rorick Heritage Vnyd</i>	Pinot Gris	58	Russian River	California	USA
	235	2016	Yetti & the Kokonut <i>B'rose</i>	Rose	60		Barossa Valley	Australia
	240	2017	Minimus <i>Powdery...</i>	Gruner Veltliner	60	Willamette	Oregon	USA
	245	2011	Scholium Project <i>Prince Caves</i>	Sauvignon Blanc	75	Sonoma	California	USA
WM	252	2015	Ronco Gnemiz	Sauvignon Blanc	80	Salice	Friuli	Italy

Steward's Disclaimer: Vintages are subject to change without notification from our suppliers. Even with bi-weekly inventory of 300+ bottles it is possible that I may make a mistake. Please accept my sincerest apologies for any human error.

steward's selection (@)

2/22/2019

The Queen & Her Court

The Diva. She knows what she wants and knows how to get it. Period.

WM	302	2017	Skylark Alondra	Chardonnay	40	Mendocino	California	USA
	320	2016	L'Ecole	Chardonnay	50	Columbia Valley	Washington	USA
	325	2017	Paul Hobbs' Crossbarn	Chardonnay	60	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	333	2015	Collovray Terrier Deux Roches	Chardonnay	72	Pouilly Fuisse	Burgundy	France
	335	2014	Byron Kosuge	Chardonnay	75	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	337	2015	Sandhi	Chardonnay	85	Santa Rita	California	USA
	338	2015	Peay Vineyards	Chardonnay	85	Sonoma County	California	USA
WM	340	2016	Evening Land	Chardonnay	90	Eola-Amity Hills	Oregon	USA
	342	2016	Lingua Franca Bunker Hill	Chardonnay	94	Willamette Valley	Oregon	USA
	345	2015	Lioco La Marisma Vineyards	Chardonnay	95	Santa Cruz Mtns	North Coast	USA
	347	2015	Jean Philippe Fichet	Chardonnay	100	Mersault	Burgundy	France
	348	2015	Dom Genot-Boulangier 1er Cru	Chardonnay	150	Chassagne-Montrachet	Burgundy	France

If there were ever a "food wine" specific white category this would be it. The ideal progression when moving into richer & fatter flavors on the menu that generally attract a safer selection. Interested in something new? Plenty here to chew on.

	370	2016	Morgadio	Albarino	42	Rias Baixas	Galicia	Spain
	372	2016	Empire State	Riesling	42	Finger Lakes	New York	USA
	374	2015	Rafael Palacios Louro	Godello	45	Valdeorras	Castilla y Leon	Spain
	377	2016	Dandelion Enchanted Garden	Riesling	48	Eden Valley	McLaren Vale	Australia
	380	2015	Lieu Dit	Chenin Blanc	50	Santa Ynez	California	USA
	381	2016	Terroir al Limit Historic	Gren Blanc/Macabeo	58		Priorat	Spain
WM	384	2015	Olivier Riviere Jequitiba	Viura/GrBl/Malvasia	60		Rioja	Spain
WM	386	2016	Massican Annia	Ribolla Gialla Blend	65	Napa	California	USA
	390	2016	Weingut Keller Limestone	Riesling	70		Rheinhessen	Germany
	391	2016	...Approach Relaxation Nichon	Semillon	82	S. Australia	Barossa	Australia
WM	392	2010	Scholium Project Midan	Funky White Blend	85		California	USA
	393	2015	Pierre Gaillard	Viognier	88	Condrieu	Rhone	France
WM	393	2013	Booker White	Roussanne/Viognier	90	Paso Robles	California	USA
	394	2016	Matthiasson	Ribolla Gialla		Oak Knoll	California	USA

Some information about some of the wines that may not be household names....yet.

Godello (also known in Portugal as Verdelho) is a chardonnay-like variety that hails from the northwest of Spain. It is suprisingly well structured, with balanced acidity and tends to pair better with a variety of fare than chardonnay.

Fiano is a thick-skinned variety that offers very small amounts of juice from the grape which caused vintners to plant better yielding varieties. This wine is typical of Sicily and Campania and must comprise 85% of the indigenous grape.

Tocai Friuliano, typical of the northeast region in Italy, is a "rounder" wine with great versatility. Recently, Hungary went to court to protect the name "tokaji"; now, many producers are simply calling it friuliano. Trousseau Gris is one of the new "nerd" wines in the Sommelier world. Also known as Grey Riesling, this light body, light acid white is an ideal starter wine. It is gaining notoriety all over the world which will certainly impact the number of producers to give it a shot.

Savagnin hails from the Jura region (in France)--another "nerd" wine that in some areas must age miminally for 6 years. This wine is sherry-like, with forward nuttiness and creaminess that is often mistaken with the wine being "off."

Greco is an Italian offering that originated in Greece; it can be rich and fruity and is a standard house wine in southwest Italy. Gruner Veltliner is Austria's most produced grape. It is crisp, light with pleasant spice. It is very fun to say.

Albarino (or Alvarinho in neighboring Portugal) is the queen of white wine in Galicia. Fruit forward, creamy and medium body are the prototypical characteristics. Jacquere is the Savoie's (France) primary commodity. They tend to be light, dry with good acid. Vermintino, in some circles is thought to be related to Malvasia. It flourishes in Sardinia and Corsica but also is keen on the western Italian regions. It is often blended, but when comprised entirely of the variety, it tends to be reminiscent of the coast: light, mild, good acid, salinity. Ideal for seafood courses. Verdejo originates in the Rueda (central Spain) but has found itself thriving in neighboring regions. Although it is fuller-bodied and rich it has a crispness and a creamy texture that in my opinion differentiates it from most any othe white variety.

The Diplomatic Varietal

Sugar & Spice & Everything Nice

Softer, riper and smoother. Elegance. Think dark, starry skies, wind blown porches and Sade.

	405	2016	Pali Wine Co. <i>Bluffs</i>	Pinot Noir	50	Russian River	California	USA
	406	2015	Dom. S. Magnien	Pinot Noir	50	Cotes de Beaune	Burgundy	France
WM	415	2014	Carr	Pinot Noir	68	Santa Barbara	California	USA
	422	2014	Byron Kosuge <i>The Shop</i>	Pinot Noir	70	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	425	2015	Ant Hill Farms	Pinot Noir	75	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
WM	427	2015	Whetstone <i>Jon Boat</i>	Pinot Noir	80	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	428	2014	Evening Land <i>Seven Springs</i>	Pinot Noir	90	Eola-Amity Hills	Oregon	USA
	430	2013	Black Kite <i>Soberanes</i>	Pinot Noir	99	Santa Lucia Highlands	California	USA
	445	2015	Joseph Voillot <i>Volnay VV</i>	Pinot Noir	105	Cotes de Beaune	Burgundy	France
	446	2014	Radio Coteau <i>La Neblina</i>	Pinot Noir	120	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	448	2013	Big Table Farms <i>Catrall Bros.</i>	Pinot Noir	120	Eola-Amity Hills	Oregon	USA
	450	2016	Rivers Marie Summa <i>Old Vines</i>	Pinot Noir	125	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	451	2016	Hirsch <i>East Ridge *</i>	Pinot Noir	140	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	455	2013	Sea Smoke Cellars <i>Southing</i>	Pinot Noir	150	Santa Rita Hills	California	USA

Snakes & Snails & Puppy Dog Tails

Dirt, bramble, minerals & darker fruits that aren't interested in making the first move. It's a guy thing.

	500	2015	Thierry et Pascale Matrot	Pinot Noir	45	Cote-D'Or	Burgundy	France
WM	504	2016	Salem Wine Co.	Pinot Noir	60	Eola-Amity Hills	Oregon	USA
WM	510	2016	Lingua Franca <i>Avni</i>	Pinot Noir	75	Willamette Valley	Oregon	USA
WM	512	2016	Peay Vineyards	Pinot Noir	82	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	540	2015	Ant Hill Farms <i>Peters Vnyd</i>	Pinot Noir	100	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	541	2014	Big Table Farms	Pinot Noir	120	Yamhill	Oregon	USA
	542	2014	Big Table Farms <i>Sunnyside</i>	Pinot Noir	120	Willamette Valley	Oregon	USA
	545	2014	Hirsch <i>San Andreas Fault</i>	Pinot Noir	120	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	548	2009	D'Alphonso Badge <i>Double Barrel</i>	Pinot Noir	125	Santa Rita Hills	California	USA
	550	2013	Ochota Barrels <i>Forest</i>	Pinot Noir	125	Adelaide Hills	South Australia	Australia
	555	2013	Rivers Marie <i>Occidental Ridge</i>	Pinot Noir	125	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	560	2013	Rivers Marie <i>Silver Eagle</i>	Pinot Noir	125	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	564	2015	Ceritas <i>Elliott Vineyard</i>	Pinot Noir	150	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	565	2013	Sea Smoke Cellars <i>Ten</i>	Pinot Noir	200	Santa Rita Hills	California	USA
	570	2013	Cirq <i>Bootlegger Hill</i>	Pinot Noir	275	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	580	2014	Cirq <i>Bootlegger Hill</i>	Pinot Noir	275	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	585	2014	Boar's View	Pinot Noir	400	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	590	2012	Peter Michael <i>Ma Danseuse</i>	Pinot Noir	500	Sonoma Coast	California	USA

The Nobles: The Greatest Grapes

Those varieties that are arguably the MOST important to the growth of the wine industry as a whole. It is in this category where many of the wineries who have made their way "in" the industry cut their teeth. For many of them, they made a noteworthy wine and maintained their focus on the continued excellence of the wine instead of branching out into unknown spaces and losing the intensity that put them "at the table" in the first place. Getting back to the basics but nothing "basic" in their quality.

	600	2013	Frescobaldi Nipozzano	Sangiovese	52	Chianti	Tuscany	Italy
	608	2016	Sleight of Hand <i>Spellbinder</i>	Cab/Merl/Cab Fr	54	Columbia Valley	Washington	USA
WM	610	2015	Dom. Petit Lyzieres	Cabernet Franc	56	Saumur	Loire	France
	614	2016	Maal Wines <i>biolento</i>	Malbec	58		Mendoza	Argentina
	616	2016	Round Pond <i>Estate</i>	Cabernet Sauvignon	60	Rutherford	Napa	USA
	617	2014	Pesquera	Tempranillo	65	Ribera del Duero	Castillo y Leon	Spain
	618	2015	Carr Vineyards	Cabernet Franc	70	Santa Ynez Valley	California	USA
WM	619	2014	Powers <i>Sheridan Vineyard</i>	Cabernet Sauvignon	70	Yakima Valley	Washington	USA
	620	2016	Ch. Laplagnotte Gr.Cru	Merlot Blend	72	St. Emilion	Bordeaux	France
	628	2016	Alpha Omega <i>II</i>	Bordeaux Blend	75	Rutherford	Napa	USA
	634	2015	Tamber Bey <i>Rabicano</i>	Bordeaux Blend	80	Yountville	Napa	USA
	640	2016	Priest Ranch <i>Somerston Vyd</i>	Cabernet Sauvignon	85	St Helena	Napa	USA
	642	2015	Aalto	Tempranillo	88	Ribera del Duero	Castillo y Leon	Spain
	644	2014	Grammercy Cellars	Cabernet Sauvignon	95	Columbia Valley	Washington	USA
	646	2012	Fratelli Alessandria <i>Gramolere</i>	Nebbiolo	100	Barolo	Piemonte	Italy
	648	2012	Chateau Segla	Cab/Merlot/Pet Ver	100	Margaux	Bordeaux	France
WM	650	2012	Convexity	Cabernet Sauvignon	100	Napa	California	USA
	652	2013	Keever <i>Inspirado</i>	Cab/Malbec/Merlot	105	Napa	California	USA
	655	2009	La Rioja Alta Gran Reserva	Tempranillo	110	Rioja	La Rioja	Spain
	660	2013	Blackbird <i>Arise</i>	Bordeaux Blend	115	Oakville	Napa	USA
	662	2013	Larkin	Cabernet Franc	120	Napa	California	USA
	665	2013	Hidden Ridge 55% Slope	Cabernet Sauvignon	120	Sonoma County	California	USA
	669	2013	Fossacolle Brunello di Montalcino	Sangiovese	125		Tuscany	Italy
WM	670	2016	Lieu Dit (1.5 liter)	Cabernet Franc	130	Santa Ynez Valley	California	USA
	672	2015	Enfield	Cabernet Sauvignon	130	Napa	California	USA
WM	676	2014	G.D. Vajra <i>Bricco delle Viole</i>	Nebbiolo	150	Barolo	Piemonte	Italy
	677	2011	Bodegas Roda I <i>Riserva</i>	Tempranillo	155		Rioja	Spain
	678	2015	Paul Hobbs	Cabernet Sauvignon	160	Napa	California	USA
	680	2012	Keever Vineyards	Cabernet Sauvignon	175	Yountville	California	USA
	681	2014	Matthiasson Vineyards	Bordeaux Blend	180	Napa	California	USA
	683	2015	Dunn	Cabernet Sauvignon	200	Napa	California	USA
	685	2013	Rivers Marie Corona	Cabernet Sauvignon	210	Oakville	Napa	USA
	686	2013	Phillipe Melka <i>Metisse</i>	Cabernet Sauvignon	225	St Helena	Napa	USA
	687	2013	Rivers Marie <i>Panek Vineyard</i>	Cabernet Sauvignon	250	St Helena	Napa	USA
	688	2014	Rivers Marie Calistoga	Cabernet Sauvignon	250	Calistoga	Napa	USA
	689	2015	Antinori Tignanello	Super Tuscan	250		Tuscany	Italy
	690	2012	Pulido Walker <i>Melanson Vnyd</i>	Cabernet Sauvignon	275	St Helena	California	USA
	691	2012	Pulido Walker <i>Panek Vnyd</i>	Cabernet Sauvignon	275	St Helena	California	USA
	693	2014	Rivers Marie <i>Lore Vineyard</i>	Cabernet Sauvignon	300	Oakville	Napa	USA
	694	2013	Ovid Vineyards	Bordeaux Blend	400	Pritchard Hill	Napa	USA
	695	2012	Ovid Vineyards	Bordeaux Blend	450	Pritchard Hill	Napa	USA
	696	2013	Ovid Vineyards <i>R83</i>	Bordeaux Blend	450	Pritchard Hill	Napa	USA
	697	2013	Ovid Vineyards <i>Hexameter</i>	Bordeaux Blend	450	Pritchard Hill	Napa	USA
	698	2013	Corra	Cabernet Sauvignon	450	Napa	California	USA
	699	2013	Scarecrow	Cabernet Sauvignon	1000	Napa	California	USA

When in Rhone (aka Que Syrah, Syrah): Knowing When You've Crossed the Line

Northern Lights

Leave it to the French to draw lines. It took me an eternity to understand the difference between the division of the Rhone Valley: that is, was it Montelimar? But it is much more like a war was fought and the spoils were split: North-you get the Syrah; South-you get the Grenache (but you can use Syrah, too. Sounds like a fair trade to me. What follows are my favorite varieties of both.

	720	2014	3 Rings	Shiraz	45		Barossa Valley	Australia
	724	2011	Xabregas Mount Barker	Shiraz	48	Great Southern	W. Australia	Australia
	726	2013	Jamsheed Illaj	Syrah	58	Beechworth	Victoria	Australia
WM	728	2016	BK Wines Nouveau	Syrah	60	Lobethal	Adelaide	Australia
	730	2015	Saint Cosme	Syrah	99	Cote Rotie	Rhone	France
	732	2013	Arnot Roberts Clary Ranch	Syrah	100	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
	734	2015	Benevolent Neglect	Syrah	105	Sonoma County	California	USA
	736	2014	Two Hands Bella's Garden	Shiraz	110		Barossa Valley	Australia
	737	2014	Ochota Barrels Shellac Vnyd	Syrah	125	Marananga District	Barossa Valley	Australia
	739	2013	Tor "Rock" Homage Allan	Syrah	125		California	USA
	740	2013	Arnot Roberts Que Syrah	Syrah	140	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
WM	744	NV	Sami-Odi Little Wine #4	Syrah	150		Barossa Valley	Australia
	750	2012	Cayuse Cailloux Vineyard	Syrah	175	Walla Walla	Washington	USA
	752	2012	Cayuse En Chamberlin Vnyd	Syrah	175	Walla Walla	Washington	USA
	754	2011	Cayuse En Chamberlin Vnyd	Syrah	195	Walla Walla	Washington	USA
	756	2014	Cayuse Armada Vineyard	Syrah	275	Walla Walla	Washington	USA
	758	2014	Cayuse Bionic Frog	Syrah	300	Walla Walla	Washington	USA
	759	2003	Cayuse En Chamberlin Vnyd	Syrah	350	Walla Walla	Washington	USA
	760	2004	Cayuse En Chamberlin Vnyd	Syrah	350	Walla Walla	Washington	USA

Southern Hospitality

Grenache is the most widely planted varietal on earth. Such a rugged little bugger, the vines can adapt to almost any climate. This section can provide a unique flavor profile--many remind me of Thanksgiving: smoky, meaty with clove & cinnamon spices--that tends to attract a litany of cuisines. Fancy blending grapes hold their own in this section and while difficult to pronounce they are very easy to enjoy. Co-stars of this section are Syrah & Mourvedre (& their aliases)

	770	2014	Can Blau	Mazuelo/Garn/Syrah	36	Montsant	Cataluna	Spain
WM	772	2014	Dm. Galevan Paroles de Femme	Rhone Blend	40	Cotes du Rhone	Rhone	France
	774	2015	Pesquie Terrasses	Grenache/Syrah	45	Cotes du Ventoux	Rhone	France
	776	2013	Domaine Galevan	Rhone Blend	70	Ch. Neuf du Pape	Rhone	France
	777	2016	Minimus Soloro Vineyard	Grenache	75	Applegate Valley	Oregon	USA
	778	2015	Benevolent Neglect	Grenache	80	Mendocino	California	USA
	780	2016	Geyer Wild Bunch	Gren/Syr/Mour	80		Barossa	Australia
	782	2015	Domaine Paul Autard	Rhone Blend	86	Ch. Neuf du Pape	Rhone	France
	784	2013	Jolie-Laide Rossi Ranch	Rhone Blend	88	Sonoma Co.	California	USA
WM	786	2014	Commando G Rozas 1er Cru	Grenache	90		DO Madrid	Spain
	788	2014	Jolie Laide Song of the Sunset	Gren/Syr/Vio/Musc	94	Sonoma Coast	California	USA
WM	780	2015	Sucette	Grenache	99		Barossa Valley	Australia
	782	2013	Tor "Rock" Cuvee Cooper	Grenache/Syrah	100		California	USA
	784	2013	Ochota Barrels The Fugazi	Grenache	100	Blewitt Springs District	McLaren Vale	Australia
	786	2013	Ochota Barrels Green Room (1.5L)	Grenache/Syrah	125	Onka Blewitt District	McLaren Vale	Australia

Esoteric & Indigenous: Lost in Translation

This area is reserved for those grapes that truly know their roots. Wine has long since been a hot commodity that conquering generals stole among other things; replanted in their local vineyards and often renamed. You'll also find some fun combinations of varieties in here. My father used to put all of the leftovers into one pot and cook them--he called it "supper." This is like that but only better. Maybe look at it this way: close your eyes and imagine the experience from the vines perspective...you won't need a passport for this journey either.

	800	2017	G.D. Vajra	Dolcetto	48		Piemonte	Italy
	814	2014	Santa Ema <i>Amplus One</i>	Carmenere/Syrah	48	Peumo	CH	Chile
WM	816	2016	Benevolent Neglect	Counoise	54			USA
WM	828	2016	Benje Tinto <i>Envinata</i>	Listan Negro	60	Tenerife	Canary Islands	Spain
	830	2015	Evening Land	Gamay	62	Sierra Foothills	California	USA
	832	2015	Cruse Wine <i>Monkey Jacket</i>	Valdigue/Tannat/Syrah	65	North Coast	California	USA
	834	2014	Tofanelli	Charbono	66	Calistoga	California	USA
	840	2011	Elyse <i>Black Sears</i>	Zinfandel	68	Howell Mountain	California	USA
	846	2015	Fedellos do Cuoto <i>Cortezada</i>	Mencia	70	Ribeira Sacra	Galicia	Spain
	850	2015	Day	Zinfandel	70	Sonoma County	California	USA
	852	2016	Geyer <i>The Big Easy</i>	PetV/Malb/Mont/Shir	75	S. Australia	Barossa Valley	Australia
	854	2012	Tofanelli	Zinfandel	75	Calistoga	California	USA
WM	856	2012	Vigna Traverso	Schioppettino	75	Prepotto	Friuli-Venzia Giulia	Italy
	860	2016	Arnot Roberts	Trousseau	80	North Coast	California	USA
	864	2012	Veronica Ortega <i>ROC</i>	Mencia	90	Valtuille	Bierzo	Spain
	866	2013	El Nido <i>Clio</i>	Monastrel	90	Jumilla	Murcia	Spain
	868	2014	Outpost	Zinfandel	90	Howell Mountain	California	USA
	870	2015	Gaja Ca'Marcanda <i>Promis</i>	Merlot/Syrah/Sangio	110		Tuscany	Italy
	872	2009	DiBruno <i>Stolpman Vineyard</i>	Sangiovese	120	Santa Ynez County	California	USA
	875	2013	El Nido <i>El Nido</i>	Cabernet/Monastrel	200	Jumilla	Murcia	Spain
	880	2013	Kata	Cabernet/Petit Syrah	325	Napa	California	USA

More geeky facts about some of the wines that may be off the beaten path...

Bobal is another indigenous wine of Spain. It tends to be rich in color and flavor as well as high in acidity which makes this wine an excellent food companion. Corvina is one of the principles in valpolicella wines. This medium-bodied type tends to be tart, cherry and almond flavored. Dolcetto "little sweet one" grows primarily in Italy's Piedmont region. The fruit is very forward but not overwhelming: the wines are rich and easy to enjoy. Pinot Meunier is one of the three grapes allowable in Champagne; however, it is exceptional on its own as a still wine. I like to describe it as a creamier pinot with various layers of signature flavors. Counoise is another "nerd" variety. Typically a rhone variety used to blend the Chateau neuf du Pape wine. Alone it is peppery, soft fruit, earthy with great acid. Gamay is the grape that put Beaujolais on the map. However, don't hold that against it. The branding of the "Nouveau" has bastardized this variety. This wine is zippy, with great rustic fruit and low tannin. This is an amazing shift for those who are tired of Pinot noir. Mencia is the red variety originated from Bierzo, Spain. It has remained relatively obscure until only recently. It is floral, earthy with plum and cherry flavors, rustic and delicious. Thought to be a distant cousin to Cabernet Franc but the jury is still out... Carignan, (aka Mazuelo, Samsó, Carinena) is argued to derive somewhere on the France/Spain border. Big and bold with aggressive tannin and high alcohol that produces spicy and robust black fruit wines. It is often blended with softer varieties that are found in Priorat. Zinfandel is probably the most recognizable grape on this list. Often the "spicy" style that intrigues the palate. Many debate that it is Primitivo or a derivative of the variety but without question is a "go to" grape: typically higher in alcohol, with loads of ripe fruit and extra peppery spice. Monastrell (also Mourvedre & Mataro) is a common field variety not notable in the Rhone--it is also an essential blending grape in Spain, the lead in Tempier Bandol and of late, one of the "new" players in New World activity. In the Canary Islands, look to its indigenous variety, Listan Negro, a volcanic derived varietal that is as complex as it is versatile--producing medium-acid, medium bodied, smoky, easy going wines that are great with seafood and rich meats. Schioppettino is the nearly extinct red wine hailing from Friuli that is making its way back on the scene. Full bodied without being heavy, earthy, with balance and finesse...one of my new favorite wines. Another new (yet old) Italian varietal on the scene is Frappato--of Sicilian decent thought to be a cousin of Sangiovese--charming & polished reminiscent of a more earthy & full-figured Pinot Noir.