

January

### Australian Shiraz/Viognier

**The Region:** The warm climate and rich sandy loam soils of Australia's Riverland region could produce high yields, but the artisan grape growers at Salmon Gum Vineyards remove half the fruit at budburst and limit irrigation. With smaller numbers of berries and water-stressed vines, the resultant grapes display highly concentrated flavor, aroma and body.

**The Wine:** Blending red and white grapes brings lush balance to this lively, deep garnet wine. Ripe berry fruit and violet aromas from the Shiraz are balanced by floral and stone fruit notes from the Viognier, with beguiling hints of orange blossom followed by toast and smokiness. There's sufficient acidity to give it structure, but the overall impression is soft and velvety. The long, gentle finish is ripe and appealing with surprising complexity.

**The Food:** A great choice for game or meat dishes, it also works spectacularly with ratatouille and even soft fruit, especially combined with soft-ripened or goat cheeses. It's also great all by itself as an elegant sipping wine.

**Ageing:** Appealingly bright and fruity when young, it will develop more of its floral aromas after six months, and after a year will begin to show violets and blackberry flavors and continue to deepen in flavor.

**Sweetness Code:** 0 (dry)

January

### Pacifica White

**The Region:** The Pacific Rim has micro-climates and terroir as diverse and excellent as any in the world. With Semillon from the blazing sunshine in Australia, Chardonnay from the crisp valley air in Okanagan, British Columbia, and Sauvignon Blanc and Viognier from the hot sunny mornings and cool afternoons of California's North Coast, each vineyard also has unique soil ranging from sandy river bottom loam, to stony red clay, and nearly pure limestone.

**The Wine:** Pacifica White showcases bright fruit, excellent structure and a long layered finish running out from a veritable fruit salad of flavors and aromas. Complex pear and honey notes, grassy citrus and grapefruit, ripe apple, fig, melon, peach, and pineapple all mellow into spicy, honey, butter, butterscotch and hazelnut flavors that linger beguilingly.

**The Food:** Full-bodied yet supple, this wine has a range of fruit characters and enough acidity to stand up to a wide range of foods. Off dry, but perfectly balanced, it works well with spices, seafood, clams, mussels in saffron cream, and especially with Asian food.

**Ageing:** While this wine is delicious right on bottling day, drinking it early would prevent it from showing its best. Sauvignon Blanc dominates early with acidity, herbs, and citrus. Semillon brings out melony-honey notes after six months, Viognier gives stone fruit, flowers, ripe apricot, and candied citrus notes at a year, and Chardonnay follows with green apple and mellow notes of white fruits and minerals after twelve to eighteen months.

**Sweetness Code:** 1 (perfectly balanced and luscious)

February

### Italian Primitivo

**The Region:** Puglia forms a long narrow peninsula, making up the heel of the boot of Italy. Dry and warm, it basks in the Mediterranean sun, and has a long, rich history of grape growing. The Apennine mountains give an excellent range of elevations and soil types, and this region produces more wine than any other in Italy, specializing in intensely ripe grapes from its hillsides.

**The Wine:** Italian Primitivo is deeply colored, rich and concentrated, exuding aromas of blackberry, plums, tobacco, prunes and red cherries, with the Italian signature of firm tannins and a long, gripping finish with notes of vanilla and toast. While deep and intense like most Italian reds, it retains acidity to balance fruit character and marry well with food.

**The Food:** Primitivo shines in the company of assertively flavored foods like lamb, pork, grilled beef, ribs, roasted red meats, wild game, spicy cheeses, and pizza. Its firm backbone of acids and tannins makes it work well with rich and spicy foods like Italian sausages or lasagna.

**Ageing:** Medium-bodied but with good grip and intensity, this wine will begin to open up after six months, the richer flavors will show at twelve months.

**Sweetness Code:** 0 (dry)



The logo features the word "Selection" in a large, elegant, cursive script. Below it, the words "LIMITED EDITION" are written in a smaller, clean, sans-serif, all-caps font.

March

### **Austrian Grüner Veltliner**

**The Region:** Grüner Veltliner is almost unique to the Niederösterreich, Austria's growing region along the Danube River, north of Vienna. It finds its finest balance in loess, the fine-grained, densely compacted glacial dust that has blown into the vineyards over many thousands of years. This unique terroir gives the wines a nearly monolithic structure that is mysteriously nimble; forceful without being overbearing; big without being heavy.

**The Wine:** Grüner Veltliner produces stunningly intense and concentrated wines that start with citrus and grapefruit aromas, hinting from the very beginning at the variety's most distinguishing characteristic, the spicy fragrance of freshly ground white pepper. Astonishingly complex and full of exotic tropical fruits, in addition to white pepper they can also show herbed aromas of fresh green beans or asparagus -- surprisingly delicate, it comes from the mineral soil.

**The Food:** The steely dryness and bracing acidity of Grüner Veltliner works brilliantly with mussels, salmon, grilled halibut, fish stew, and grilled oysters.

**Ageing:** This wine has huge ageing potential. After three months in the bottle it will present bright, simple flavors of citrus, but after a year the tropical fruits will come out to duel with the white pepper, and after eighteen months to two years the minerality will show through, evoking a spicy dryness.

**Sweetness Code:** 0 (dry)



April

### **Portuguese Douro Tinto**

**The Region:** The Douro valley is Portugal's premium wine region. Situated along the Rio Douro (River of Gold), the scenery is spectacular and the soil is just about perfect for growing quality wine grapes. The climate is continental, very hot and desert-dry in the summer; cold and wet in the winter. Douro's most memorable feature is its difficult terrain. Most of the slopes are so steep that the only way to grow anything is by creating terraces, the painstaking construction of dry stonewalls to support the banks of soil.

**The Wine:** A blend of Touriga Nacional, Tinta Roriz and Touriga Franca, the names may be unfamiliar, but Tinta Roriz is the same grape as Spanish Tempranillo. Together they make an intensely aromatic wine with an impressive depth of fruit and complexity. Black fruits such as cassis along with mulberry and raspberry predominate and are complemented by plums and tobacco, followed by the resinous aromas of violets and rockrose. High tannin levels and good natural acidity mean the wine has excellent potential for ageing without loss of structure or balance.

**The Food:** Incredibly flexible as a food wine, Douro Tinto will match perfectly with roasted lamb or duck, barbecued meats, grilled eel, and meat sauces. The finesse and complexity also make it intriguing just on its own.

**Ageing:** This wine will show black fruit, plums, and a firm structure of acid and tannins. Six to twelve months will reveal more floral aromas and a hint of ripe berries and cassis. After eighteen months to two years, it will release violet perfumes and deep notes of tobacco.

**Sweetness Code:** 0 (dry)