



*willy wonka's factory*

# **BOIA DE WINE CLUB**

**January 2025**

# Sugar, Spice, and Everything Nice *(revisited)*

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When we explored this theme last in November of 2023, the focus was on the kind of spices you bake with or infuse into liquor, spices that brought warmth. This time around we're looking at the sharp and savoury side of spice, touring through Spain, Italy, Argentina and Austria. Riesling makes an appearance to satisfy our sweet tooth, while Sangiovese takes center stage as our Somm's Pick.

We're going to learn a little about grape families and their history through Argentina's perspective, a country whose wine culture is woefully misrepresented on the international stage. Thanks to the patience and care of Edu Soler of Ver Sacrum & La Cayetena during a tasting earlier this month, I learned quite a bit about Argentina's hidden depths. Some of you may have had Ver Sacrum's Geisha in your October box: Drink your veggies!

questions, comments and concerns – [gaby@boiaderestaurant.com](mailto:gaby@boiaderestaurant.com)

# The Tasting Chart

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**CLARITY:** CLEAR - DULL - OPAQUE

**BODY:** WATER - LIGHT - MEDIUM - FULL - WHOLE MILK

**TANNIN:** LIGHT - MEDIUM - MEDIUM PLUS - HIGH - SANDPAPER

**SUGAR:** BONE DRY - DRY - OFF-DRY - SEMI-SWEET - SWEET

**ACIDITY:** LOW - MEDIUM - HIGH - MOUTH PUCKERING

**FLAVORS:**

FRUIT & FLOWERS - FRUIT & HERB - FRUIT BOMB - FRUITY DIRT

FRUITY ROCKS - SPICY FRUIT - FRUITY INCENSE - SPICED CIGAR BOX

HERB & EARTH - ROCKS - BARNYARD - BALSAMIC VINEGAR

VEGGIE SALAD - DRIED FRUIT & HONEY - HONEY & NUTS

# The Color Guide

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**STRAW**

**YELLOW**

**GOLD**

**WHITE**



**GOLD**

**ORANGE**

**AMBER**

**CONTACT**

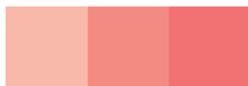


**COPPER**

**SALMON**

**PINK**

**ROSÉ**



**GARNET**

**RUBY**

**PURPLE**

**RED**



# Catena 'La Marchigiana' Criolla Chica Rosé

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**Region:** Mendoza, Argentina

**Varietals:** Criolla Chica

**Farming Practices:** Minimal Intervention, Organic

Nicolás Catena Zapata is credited with revolutionizing the Argentine wine industry and putting the region on the world's radar, an endeavor that's taken a mere 50 years to achieve. Catena Zapata and Argentinian wine are practically synonymous, and it's all thanks to Nicolás' unyielding commitment to quality. His 'La Marchigiana' line is dedicated to the 'ancestral' methods used when founder Nicola Catena first began the winery in 1898. These wines are fermented with native yeasts in clay amphorae and aged without added sulfites, and made from heritage varietals including Chardonnay, Bonarda, Malbec, and of course, Criolla Chica.

Criolla Chica is better known to the Chileans as Pais, the Californians and Mexicans as Mission and the Spanish as Listán Prieto. A crossing of the original Mission grape and the ancient Muscat of Alexandria (which you may recognize from previous wine club selections), Criolla Chica is a member of the highly mutative Criolla family which spans 43 different types. By combining this historic varietal with heritage techniques, you get a Rosé that is full of tart red fruits (plums, pomegranates) and white pepper that also acts as a snapshot of Argentinian wine history.

Fun Fact: In 1560s the first *vitis vinifera* vines were brought by the Spaniards to Argentina.

# Castro Ventosa Bierzo Mencia

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**Region:** Bierzo, Spain

**Varietals:** 100% Mencia

## **Farming Practices:**

Castro Ventosa, or the Castle of the Winds, is named after the ancient Roman ruins overlooking the village of Valtuille de Abajo in the Bierzo region of northern Spain. The Perez family founded the estate here in 1752, where they have owned and farmed vineyards ever since. Raúl Pérez is an award winning winemaker who you may recognize from the Boia De wine list (he's been a favorite).

This Mencia comes from over 300 plots of old vines at high elevation, where the sandy soils and altitude offer a bright, delicate freshness with the cold nights nicely preserves the acidity. Juicy berries and subtle tannins are set against a gravelly minerality (we find that pepper/spice and granitic or gravelly minerals often go hand in hand). This is a joyful medium bodied red anyone would like, food friendly but delicious on its own, great with a chill or served at red wine temp- it all works! The Mencia varietal is indigenous to Bierzo, with some thinking it is an ancient clone of Cabernet Franc.

We think its no coincidence that older vines or heritage varietals (grapes that have been in their terroir over a century) often present with spicier tasting notes. Something about the sustained connection with the land pulls the earth out of the ground.

# Idler Riesling

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**Region:** Württemberg, Swabia, Germany

**Varietals:** 100% Riesling

**Farming Practices:** Organic, Biodynamic

Baden and Württemberg are collectively known as Swabia, an area in Germany that is culturally, linguistically, and geographically distinct from the rest of the country. Both regions are significantly larger in size than other more famous wine regions (Mosel, Pfalz). Württemberg is especially cold and dominated by sandstone, limestone and marl, and is quoted as being the "Swabian Jura" according to one Punch article.

At the restaurant we play a game with the staff: What can we guess then about the Riesling from Idler, knowing what we do about the area? This type of terroir, mountainous, elevated, with acid preserving soils perfect for Riesling, we'd guess that it was delicate, dry but with the classic touch of sweetness that makes this varietal so compelling. The importer describes it as "salt and lemon crème fraiche" and we're inclined to agree with maybe a little something herbal on the nose too.

There's a good reason why you see so many Rieslings on the wine list at Asian restaurants (all of Asia, India included). The higher residual sugar hides beneath Rieslings bright acidity, but its presence cools spicy foods and softens shard edges. Try this with your next spicy stir fry, or sweet and sour bbq ribs- it won't disappoint.

# Weingut Stift Klosterneuberg 'Tattendorf' Sankt Laurent Reserve

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**Region:** Thermenregion, Austria

**Varietal:** 100% Sankt Laurent

**Farming Practices:** Minimal Intervention

Although Sankt Laurent and I have some serious bad blood between us (I mean that literally, I once sliced my fingers on the snapped neck of Rosi Schuster Sankt Laurent and the nerves still haven't healed, rude) I couldn't leave it out of a wine club themed around spice! Known in Austria as an thick skinned, fuller bodied varietal capable of producing rich reds full of berries, sweet tobacco, baking spice and black peppercorn, the Stift village level Sankt Laurent is exactly that. This one is technically a reserve wine, with 8 years of age softening up the rough edges revealing a bit more of the layers of its perfume.

Warning! This wine was bottled unfinned and unfiltered, and its had time to let the sediment drop out. Please store this wine upright if you're planning on drinking same day, or on its side and then carefully poured out into glass so the sediment collects in the dip. (We use a phone flashlight to shine through the bottle to keep an eye out).

# Somm's Pick!

## Sasso di Sole

### Brunello Riserva 2019

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**Region: Brunello, Toscana, Italy**

**Varietal: 100% Sangiovese Grosso**

**Farming Practices: Minimal Intervention**

A lively conversation with Marco Cuscito of Sasso di Sole inspired the somm's pick this month- charming as can be, Marco had a refreshing take on Montalcino that as a restaurant Wine Director I very much appreciated. Located on the northern side on the Montalcino hill, the Sangios found there are fresher, brighter and more accessible than their southern cousins. Climate change has helped them along, enabling the vineyards here to achieve the necessary ripeness while their cooler exposure keeps them from overripening.

Brunello Riservas have a strict set of standards that must be met: a minimum of 6 years (2 years in oak, 6 months in bottle). Sasso di Sole take it a couple steps further, making their Reserva only in the best vintages and from the best grapes. The Terzuoli family has been making wines on the hill since the 17th century, evolving their style of Montalcino wines as the terroir has changed.

**BIO**

**de**