

picasso's the soup

BOIA DE WINE CLUB

December 2025

Off Axis Classics

When we started this club three years ago, it was always the idea that we would try to subvert expectations. I know first hand from my time on the floor (as a server, a bartender, a somm and then a manager) and especially as a consumer how easy it is to stick to what we know. It becomes a vicious albeit delicious cycle of confirmation bias, wherein we are reassured that what we like is the best because everytime we have it it's great. And maybe that one time we tried something new it sucked, and we were further convinced!

Rather than tell you why something different was good too we wanted to *show* you. To put something in your hands as proof of that the great big world of wine was out there with all it's hidden treasures. Sometimes we miss the mark, and hopefully sometimes we nail it right down, but at the very least we hope it's always interesting. This month we're revisiting classics that have gone to school and learned the rules just so they could break them. A little like opening a Michelin starred restaurant but putting it in a shopping plaza. ;)

The Tasting Chart

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 - SPICY FRUIT - FRUITY INCENSE

HERB & EARTH - BARNYARD - BALSAMIC VINEGAR

DRIED FRUIT & HONEY - HONEY & NUTS

The Color Guide

STRAW

YELLOW

GOLD

WHITE



GOLD

ORANGE

AMBER

CONTACT

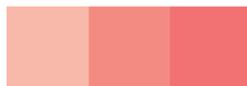


COPPER

SALMON

PINK

ROSÉ



GARNET

RUBY

PURPLE

RED



Maestracci, 'E Prove' Corse Calvi Rouge

Region: Calvia, Corsica, France

Varietals: 35% Niellucciu, 35% Grenache, 15% Sciaccarellu, 15% Syrah

Farming Practices: Sustainable

From the coastal appellation of Calvi in Corsica, Domaine Maestracci works with indigenous varieties such as Niellucciu and Sciaccarellu, grapes historically tied to rustic, local consumption rather than international markets. While Niellucciu is genetically linked to Sangiovese, Maestracci's maritime vineyards and granite soils pull the wine far from Tuscan expectations, emphasizing freshness over structure.

Aromatically, the wine leans floral and herbal, with violet, dried rose, wild strawberry, and maquis scrub (evergreen bushes), rather than dense fruit or oak. The palate is driven by acidity and soft tannin, intentionally avoiding the power often associated with Mediterranean reds. This approach breaks from tradition by reframing Corsican reds as elegant, food-driven wines, rather than rustic curiosities. Showing how island terroir and thoughtful farming can redefine a grape's identity, Maestracci has become iconic for white, rose and red wines from the largest of France's islands.

L'Alliance Extérieure Bordeaux Blanc

Region: Bordeaux, France

Varietals: Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon

Farming Practices: Organic

The 'Extérieure' cuvée is built on a conceptual break from rigid appellation thinking. L'Alliance brings together grapes sourced from parcels in Barsac, Entre-Deux-Mers, and Côtes-de-Francis, a necessary measure as winemakers Valérie and Daniel Alibrand lost most of his crop to hail in this vintage. Established in 2005 in Fargues, they specialize in hand-harvested Sauternes and high-quality, dry white Bordeaux wines. They've made a name for themselves with their very low yields and meticulously crafted wines, employing similar techniques to the celebrated Château d'Yquem.

Where they start to break away is in the emphasis of low-intervention: native fermentations, restrained (or no) new oak, etc. Texture and energy come from the vineyard and lees, not from cellar engineering. White Bordeaux traditionally is all about structure and ageability (think Sémillon's weight with Sauvignon's acidity) is often suited for cellaring. Extérieure is built for immediacy. White flowers, citrus blossom, and fresh herbs (courtesy of the Sauvignon Blanc), with a supple palate (thank the Semillon), all softened by the used oak barrels employed for texture, not taste.

Alvaredos-Hobbs Godello

Region: Galicia, Spain

Varietal: 100% Godello

Farming Practices: Minimal Intervention

Godello has long been overshadowed by Albariño in Galicia, often treated as a simple, early-drinking white. Alvaredos-Hobbs challenges that narrative by applying meticulous vineyard work and Burgundian-inspired élevage to the variety, elevating it beyond its traditional role.

White flowers, pear skin, chamomile, and wet stone (can you tell i've got a type? haha), tension and texture. Add a little lees contact and oak to round out and deepen without masking Godello's mineral core and there you go, a Godello all it's own. This is a break from tradition not in grape choice, but in intent—treating Godello as a serious, age-worthy white capable of nuance and complexity. It repositions the variety as one of Spain's most compelling terroir-driven wines.

And if the wine wasn't a break from tradition, the founding collaboration of Alvaredo-Hobbs certainly is—renowned winemaker Paul Hobbs (yes, that Paul Hobbs) and Galician viticultor Antonio López Fernández teamed up to bring us these world class Godellos and Mencias from the steeply terraced, south-facing slopes of the River Sil between Ribeira Sacra and Valdeorras.

Le Roi des Pierres Sancerre Rosé

Region: Sancerre, Loire Valley, France

Varietal: 100% Pinot Noir

Farming Practices: Minimal Intervention

Sancerre is globally defined by Sauvignon Blanc, yet Le Roi des Pierres looks backward to move forward. Highlighting Pinot Noir in a region where it has long existed but is rarely celebrated. This rosé revives an older Loire tradition that predates modern market focus, and seriously gives Provence a run for its money. By showcasing Pinot Noir in rosé form, this wine breaks from Sancerre's contemporary identity (even Sancerre Rouge is not uncommon), reminding drinkers that tradition is often broader and more flexible than our current perception accounts for.

The wine is pale, floral, and mineral, showing rose petal, red currant, crushed strawberry, and chalk, with a dry, savory finish. It's more gastronomic than decorative, emphasizing structure and acidity over fruit sweetness.

Le Roi des Pierres means the 'King of Stones' referring to Loire's royal history (it's been the seat of the crown since the 10th c.) but also to the silex that marks the region. It only covers about 15% but Le Roi grows both its Sancerre blanc and rose on it, giving the wines aging potential with its distinct mineral and acid structures.

OTU Estate Pinot Noir

Region: Awatere Valley, Marlborough, New Zealand

Varietal: 100% Pinot Noir

Farming Practices: Sustainable

Pinot Noir is most often judged against Burgundy, a comparison that can limit its interpretation elsewhere (i've ranted and raved plenty about this, y'all know). OTU rejects imitation, focusing instead on how Pinot translates place over pedigree, often in smaller sites. The break from tradition is also in their refusal to chase Burgundian benchmarks (you hear it all the time- "burgundian style", "burgundian method", etc). They prove that elegance doesn't require lineage or law, only intention.

The Awatere Valley along with the Wairau Valley and Southern Valleys make up the main growing regions of Marlborough, located on the northern tip of the southern island. 'Awatere' means fast-flowing river in the local Maori dialect, as the area is marked by the Awatere river moving south, parallel to the coast.

Rose petal, wild strawberry, forest floor (if you ever sit with Shawn at the bar, this is his favorite tasting note in his favorite wines), and a touch of spice, carried by bright acidity and fine tannin. What's not to like? And from a region that has suffered under the weight of its popularity -cat pee Sauvignon Blanc for the win! or lose depending on how you look at it- it is wonderful to taste a little of what New Zealand really has to offer.

Somm's Pick!

Barbichette 'Cache-Cache' Magnum

Region: Seneca Lake, Finger Lakes, New York

Varietal: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Farming Practices: Minimal Intervention, Zero-Zero

We often talk about estate fruit but négociant winemakers Louisiane Remy and César Vega are doing a very cool thing up in the northern Finger Lakes. Their project built around questioning what "traditional" viticulture should look like by embracing hybrid and unconventional grape varieties rather than just *vinifera*. By centering hybrids—grapes long dismissed as inferior—Barbichette challenges old hierarchies and reframes what quality can look like.

They grow organically along the slopes of Seneca Lake, where deep water traps heat all summer that moderates extreme temperatures in the winter (I bet that's coming in handy right now!). Cache-Cache ("hide and seek") reflects both the vineyard philosophy and the wine itself—playful, accessible, and intentionally off-script.

Aromatically, the wine is highly expressive, with notes of lilac, jasmine, citrus blossom, and fresh herbs, supported by crisp acidity along a light, juicy palate. The texture is easy with minimal tannin and modest alcohol, making it feel closer to an alpine or Loire white than a typical New York wine. Cache-Cache isn't trying to imitate Europe; it's carving out its own identity, proving that innovation, resilience, and joy can be just as compelling as pedigree.

BIO

d/e