



Tim's Wine Market

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This month we are focusing on terroir driven, but less expensive, easy drinking wines, from established producers. While most wineries like to focus attention on their flagship bottlings, those that command the highest prices, for many their livelihood depends on selling more affordable offerings. Our selections this month look at those wines, where they receive almost first class attention but priced for consumption in coach.

2019 Zuccardi "Serie A" Malbec - \$15

To call the Zuccardi family "influential" is an understatement. Sebastian Zuccardi, a third-generation winemaker with a passion for experimenting, is producing a staggering range of wines across Argentina, and Chile too. The family cultivates several unique vineyards in Argentina's Uco Valley, a mountainous growing region 3,000 feet above sea level. One of Argentina's most prolific growing regions, the Uco Valley is also its most diverse, with dozens of unique soil types and vineyards, making it ideal for Sebastian's myriad projects. Recently, the family has been recognized for their commitment to sustainable wine growing, and since 2008 they have maintained a research and development lab where Sebastian cultivates all manner of grape varieties to study their potential.

Beginning in 2013 the Zuccardi family began construction on a winery in the Valle de Uco that would allow them to make the wines close to their vineyards, not a four hour drive away from their original winery in Santa Rosa. In 2018 they opened the new winery, dubbed Piedra Infinita, which was named the World's Best Winery, beating out 1500 other applicants. The new facility was built incorporating much of the rock that was removed from the surrounding land so that they could plant their vineyards where the grapes for this wine are farmed.

The family has extensive, non-contiguous vineyards in the Valle de Uco and from them they produce a series of expensive, single vineyard bottlings of Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon and Bonarda. However they also have vast plantings of younger vines, mostly around the winery, and they use these to craft an entry level series to show off the house style at a lower price. Dubbed Serie A, the goal was to create a wine sourced from all the family's vineyard holdings in the Uco Valley, at an everyday price. Despite the size of the vineyards, much of the fruit is harvested by hand, with some of the lower-altitude plantings making use of manual harvesting. The fruit is brought to the winery in Mendoza and mechanically destemmed before crushing. After a 5-7 day cold soak, the wine undergoes native yeast fermentation. 20 days skin maturation comes next, before the wine is transferred to concrete tanks and French oak barrels, where it matures for 10 months. When it is ready to bottle, the wine from barrel and the concrete-fermented batch are blended together and filtered before bottling.

When you open this wine, I strongly suggest decanting for at least half an hour. This wine evolves nicely on the nose, with notes of cassis, redcurrant, red plum, and green bell pepper. Drink now through 2024 with lamb and couscous, beef short ribs, or grilled skirt steak.

2018 EZY TGR Willamette Valley Pinot Noir - \$21

EZY TGR ("Easy Tiger," in case the label didn't give it away) is another side project from our friend John House, a Winter Park native turned Willamette Valley winemaker. John and his wife Ksenija have carved a unique niche in the Willamette wine industry creating a white wine only brand called Ovum. Their focus is on Riesling, Muscat, and Gewurztraminer all fermented to complete dryness, often in large concrete eggs, hence the name. Thanks to their efforts many of the old vine plantings of these varieties, often from the 1970's, have been preserved rather than converting to Pinot Noir. However, often the growers they work with also grow Pinot Noir, and right now there is a pretty large glut of that variety. Overproduction is a relatively new problem faced by the growers in the Willamette Valley as both quality and quantity have risen every vintage since 2016. Several of his growers offered John their grapes at a reduced rate, which gave him the idea of producing a varietally correct example of Willamette Pinot Noir at a price that works for by-the-glass placements.

Although the price point for this wine is not that high, John and Ksenija, who's day job is assistant winemaker at Argyle, put some serious effort into the production. After harvest by hand, these grapes are brought from their respective vineyard sites to the winery, where about 80% of the fruit is destemmed. Spontaneous

fermentation then occurs, using only native yeasts. Daily pump-overs are utilized in order to keep the cap submerged and to preserve aromatic structure. Post fermentation, the wine undergoes a traditional 18-month maturation in neutral French oak, to bring out more of the earthy, terroir-driven qualities of Pinot Noir.

When you open this wine, you will want to decant it for at least half an hour, allowing its aromatic complexity to really shine through. Once you do, you will be greeted with notes of tart red cherry, raspberry, black tea, wet leaves, and bergamot. Drink now through 2025 with grilled salmon, lamb chops, or beef carpaccio.

Beef Carpaccio

I recently acquired the David Tanis cookbook, **Market Cooking**, which reacquainted me with his no-nonsense cooking style. For many years David worked as a chef at Chez Panisse in Berkley, California, one of America's earliest farm-to-table restaurants. I strongly recommend his other cookbooks, **Heart of the Artichoke** and **A Platter of Figs**, which I have gone back to now as well. Both recipes this month are taken from his New York Times column, and are typical of his style; high quality ingredients prepared in a simple way. While raw meat is not everyone's taste, it works really well with both wines.

Peel shallot, cut in thick slices and place in a small bowl. Add red wine vinegar and a pinch of salt. Toss and let marinate for at least 10 minutes.

Cut beef into four 1 1/2-ounce slices. Trim away any fat or gristle. Put each slice between 2 layers of heavy-duty plastic wrap or parchment. Gently pound beef flat with a meat mallet to a thickness of about 1/16 inch and a diameter of about 6 inches. Refrigerate flattened slices for a few minutes, until chilled (do not remove plastic). May prepare up to this point several hours ahead.

To serve, peel top layer of plastic from each slice. Invert each slice onto a chilled plate. Peel away remaining plastic. Top each slice with some pickled shallot, an anchovy, capers, fennel, arugula and chives. Season each portion with salt and pepper and drizzle generously with olive oil (about 1 tablespoon). With a vegetable peeler, shave Parmesan into curls. Garnish carpaccio with Parmesan and lemon wedges and serve immediately.

1 large shallot
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
Salt and pepper
6 ounces lean beef, like tenderloin or top round
4 anchovy fillets, rinsed (optional)
1 teaspoon capers, rinsed
1 small fennel bulb, very thinly sliced
A few arugula or parsley leaves
2 teaspoons finely chopped chives
Fruity extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
1 ounce Parmesan cheese, for garnish
Lemon wedges, for serving

Wild Salmon With Chive Oil and Lime Crème Fraîche

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Lay the salmon fillets on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Coat salmon with olive oil and season with salt and pepper on both sides. Bring to room temperature.

Make the chive oil: Put 1 cup roughly chopped chives in a blender or food processor. With the food processor running, slowly add oil and a pinch of salt. You should have a bright-green oil. Transfer chive oil to a small bowl. Put crème fraîche in a small bowl. Stir in lime zest and juice. Season with a little salt.

Bake salmon on top rack of oven for 8 to 10 minutes, until just done. When you see juices begin to rise to the surface of the fish, remove fish from oven. (It is better to err on the less-cooked side; the fish continues to cook a bit from residual heat.)

4 (6-ounce) pieces wild king salmon fillet
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper
1 cup roughly chopped chives, plus 2
tablespoons thinly sliced chives, for garnish
3/4 cup grapeseed oil or another neutral oil,
such as safflower
1 cup crème fraîche
Zest and juice of 1 small lime

To serve, transfer fish to individual plates or a platter. Dollop about 1 tablespoon of limey crème fraîche on each fillet. Drizzle chive oil over the top and sprinkle with chives. Garnish with blossoms and watercress sprigs.