



Tim's Wine Market

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By J.P. Donnelly-Davis

Logistics and supply chain delays remain, unsurprisingly, a thorn in our side when it comes to crafting the club selections around a coherent theme! However, fortune smiled on us this month as our first feature, which, coincidentally, was slated to come in last month, showed up on our doorstep just as we made the second selection. Looking at both of these wines, we then noticed a common thread, that terroir and its importance, played a major role in both of our selections. Always the most important factor in the Old World regions, it is becoming increasingly important in the New World as well. Especially with grapes and regions where the conventional wisdom was process over place. Here are two wines whose sense of place cannot be denied, celebrating the unique micro-climates and soil types of their respective regions.

Three Wine Co. Petite Sirah 2018 - \$24

Three Wine Company is the brainchild of Matt and Erin Cline, California natives with a passion for the traditional winemaking techniques of their state and driven by the desire to create terroir-focused wines with integrity. A UC Davis grad, Matt began his journey working for his brother at the aptly-named Cline Cellars, assuming the role of winemaker in 1985. Several of his wines, including his single vineyard Zinfandels from 1990, earned high ratings and established Cline Cellars as one of the elite producers of that variety. In 2001 couple launched their first independent project, Trinitas Cellars, with Matt making the wines and Erin in charge of marketing. This was a project that focused on warm-climate varieties such as Petite Sirah, Mourvedre, and Zinfandel, all of which are cultivated under their current label. They sold Trinitas in 2008 and the same years created Three Wine Company, which pursues the same vision of old California varieties grown primarily in Contra Costa Count.

In tune with California's wine-growing past, and history of wine itself, Matt and Erin operate a little differently than many of their contemporaries. Rather than gravitating towards one singular style, or exclusively trendy varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon or Chardonnay, the couple utilize their extensive knowledge of California's heirloom vineyards to source the best fruit for each wine. Matt's philosophy is that good wine is made in the vineyard, and it is the winemaker's job not to mess it up, a sentiment that will sound awfully familiar to long-time customers of Tim's Wine Market! As such, he and Erin work with a network of trusted growers across California's Central Coast, each of whom brings high quality, distinctive fruit to the Three Wine Company crush pad.

The fruit for the Three Wine Co. Petite Sirah is sourced from an older vineyard in Contra Costa County, where the predominant soil type is sandy loam, which is similar to beach sand. The high diurnal range of the region, with warm, sunny days and cool nights, helps to prolong the growing season, perfect for a late-ripening variety such as Petite Sirah. Between the sandy soils and age of the vines, yields are naturally low, which further concentrates the flavor. Sustainable viticulture is very much at play in their Contra Costa sites, further reinforcing Matt and Erin's belief that good wine is made in the vineyard. After the grapes are harvested by hand, all fruit is brought to the Clines' winery in Clarksburg. The grapes are de-stemmed and there is extended skin maceration in order to bring out the dark purple, almost black, color common to Petite Sirah. The wine is then racked to gently-used French and American oak barrels where it matures for 12 months before bottling.

When you open this wine, you will want to decant for up to an hour- Petite Sirah is a high-tannin variety through and through, and needs a little time to breathe. On the palate, this wine delivers intense notes of blueberry preserve, cassis, crushed blackcurrant, cedar, and clove. Drink now through 2024 with ribeye steaks, grilled Portobello mushrooms with cheese, or anything involving short ribs- this is a hearty wine that stands up to hearty dishes!

DV Catena "Tinto Historico" 2019 - \$24

It is no exaggeration to say that the history of modern Argentine wine is closely tied to the Catena family. Italian-born Nicola Catena left his homeland and crippling poverty to make a name for himself in the New World in 1898. He settled in Mendoza where his background as a winemaker and farmer made him a natural fit. It was here that his interest in single-varietal wines, particularly Malbec, first came to light. In 1902 he planted his estate vineyard exclusively to this variety, due to the grape's natural heat resistance and ease of cultivation. With his passing, eldest son Domingo took the reins and

purchased many of the surrounding vineyards. Unlike his father, Domingo produced many Bordeaux-style blends, which had become the fashion for Mendoza at the time, although they always placed a heavy emphasis on Malbec.

Third-generation winemaker Nicolas Catena Zapata faced numerous challenges. During the 1960s, hyperinflation in Argentina saw the family's winery cease to turn a profit. Focus shifted, by necessity, towards cheap, bulk wines. Later, as the military junta took power and sanctions were levied against Argentina in the wake of the Falkland War, Nicolas was offered a position at UC Berkeley. He used what he learned visiting boutique wineries in California to shift the direction of his family's business and focus on quality over quantity. Focusing on specific vineyard sites, and single varietal wines, Catena Zapata quickly caught the attention of critics and the international market. Today, all of these values are represented by his daughter, Dr. Laura Catena, current owner of the estate. Dr. Laura has continued her family's legacy and further classified the single vineyards of the region, in addition to founding the now world-famous Catena Institute of Wine.

The DV Catena "Tinto Historico," named for her grandfather Domingo, is a blend of fruit from the family's four oldest single vineyards. History is at the heart of this wine as the majority of the Malbec used is sourced from the high-altitude Gualtallary vineyard, first planted by Nicola himself at the turn of the 20th century. This site is prized for its limestone and stony soils which provide minerality and freshness to the blend. Other significant vineyard sites boast soils of alluvial clay and sandy loam which facilitate a long, stable growing season. Due to the difference in altitudes, fruit from these vineyards is harvested at different times, always by hand, at optimum ripeness.

In the winery, each vineyard parcel is vinified separately in stainless steel, with an extended cold maceration on the skins in order to extract additional aromatics. The juice then ferments on native yeasts before an additional 22-day skin maceration which brings out tannin and color. Once dry the finished wine is then blended, and spends 12-14 months in new and older French oak barrels before bottling. This vintage the final blend consists of 75% Malbec, 19% Bonarda, and 6% Petit Verdot.

When you open this wine, you will want to decant for at least half an hour. On the palate, this wine delivers notes of black plum, wild blackberry, blackcurrant leaf, cassis, and star anise. Drink now through 2026 with skirt steak, grilled chicken skewers, or charcuterie and marinated olives.

Slow Cooker Barbecue Brisket

I am blessed to own a pellet smoker, which makes barbecue brisket a relatively easy thing for me to produce. There are some times when the process is too fussy, and cooking this beefy, albeit tough cut, is easier using a slow and steady braise. This recipe combines the flavor of smoked brisket with ease of using a slow cooker. I typically default to this Cooks Country recipe, which is very easy and the results are superb. Use only a flat cut brisket, not point cut, or the results will be too greasy. This recipe also works great with both wines, which have plenty of power and tannin to match the rich flavor.

½ cup packed dark brown sugar
3 tablespoons minced canned chipotle chile in adobo sauce
1 tablespoon ground cumin
1 tablespoon paprika
Salt and pepper
1 (5-pound) beef brisket, flat cut, fat trimmed to ¼ inch
2 onions, chopped fine
2 tablespoons tomato paste
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 tablespoon chili powder
½ cup water
¼ cup ketchup
1 tablespoon cider vinegar
¼ teaspoon liquid smoke

Combine sugar, 2 tablespoons chipotle, cumin, paprika, 1 teaspoon salt, and 2 teaspoons pepper in bowl. Using fork, prick brisket all over. Rub sugar mixture over brisket, wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 8 to 24 hours.

Microwave onions, tomato paste, garlic, oil, chili powder, and remaining 1 tablespoon chipotle in bowl, stirring occasionally, until onions are softened, about 5 minutes; transfer to slow cooker. Stir in water. Unwrap brisket and nestle fat side up into slow cooker. Spoon portion of onion mixture over brisket. Cover and cook until beef is tender, 9 to 10 hours on low or 6 to 7 hours on high.

Transfer brisket to carving board, tent loosely with aluminum foil, and let rest for 20 minutes.

Using large spoon, skim fat from surface of sauce. Whisk in ketchup, vinegar, and liquid smoke. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Slice brisket against grain into ½-inch-thick slices and arrange on serving dish. Spoon 1 cup sauce over brisket and serve, passing remaining sauce separately.