



Tim's Wine Market

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When most people hear the name Provence it conjures up images of quaint seaside villages, mega yachts in the marina and Rosé wines flowing like water. Actually this is pretty accurate, but it does not tell the whole story of the wines of this area. Geographically the region of Provence extends from the border of Italy west to the Rhone River, with the Alps to the North and the Mediterranean to the South. While Provence Rosé is becoming a ubiquitous term, there are actually many different sub-appellations within the region, each producing wines with unique character. Lost in the ocean of Provence Rosé is also some world class red wines, which used to be the majority of the production before WWII. This month we celebrate Provence and show the incredible range of wines with two fantastic picks, and TWM exclusives for Florida.

2022 Chateau Saint Jean Lez Durance “Liberty” Rosé - \$19

France's Alpes-de-Haut-Provence region is strikingly different from the beaches and fishing villages of the Mediterranean coast. As the name implies, this is a mountainous region of southern France, bisected by the River Durance and narrow mountain passes which have been in use since the Middle Ages. As a border between Italy and France, this region saw increased prosperity during the Crusades and the Renaissance. In fact, part of the region was under the rule of the Knights of Malta for centuries, including the city of Manosque where this wine is produced. Though the current owners cannot trace their lineage back quite as far, Chateau Saint Jean Lez Durance has produced wine under the direction of one family for over 250 years.

The d'Herbès family have owned the property since 1754. Although, like many French country estates, wine was grown here in small amounts, in 1880 the property was revitalized to become a full-fledged winery. Each generation has contributed towards one important aspect of the winery, from obtaining appellation status to securing additional vineyard parcels in neighboring villages. Jean-Guillaume and Constance Herbès, current proprietors, successfully petitioned for organic certification in 2016 and have embraced traditional and low-intervention methods in the vineyard. They are currently transitioning to biodynamic viticulture and incorporating plantings of historic grape varieties well suited to the region's warm climate.

To make this wine, fruit is sourced from multiple old-vine parcels in the villages of Manosque and Pierrevert. The “Liberty” is a new cuvée from Jean-Guillaume and Constance composed entirely of Cinsault, a departure from the traditional field blends of the region. All fruit is harvested and destemmed by hand before fermenting in stainless steel. Once dry, the wine sees an additional 2-3 months on the fine lees before filtration and bottling.

When you open this wine, you will want to serve it chilled, but not ice cold; around 50 degrees should suffice. To achieve the desired effect simply take the wine out of your refrigerator for 15 minutes before serving. Once chilled down, this wine delivers notes of pink grapefruit, cherry pit, pink peppercorn, and hibiscus petal. Drink now through 2024 with grilled salmon with dill, prosciutto-wrapped asparagus, or baked brie.

2018 Domaine le Galantin Bandol Rouge - \$32

When we think of Provence, it can be tempting to summarize this sunny region of France as Rosé country, especially when tasting examples such as the “Liberty” detailed above. However, the reds of Provence are enjoying a renaissance among international consumers, largely spearheaded by the distinctive wines of Bandol. South and east of Marseille, Bandol is a growing region beloved by locals and wine geeks alike, with a history of viticulture dating back to early Greek settlement around 600 BC. However, the region's “modern” history begins in the 1930s, when growers (including the legendary Peyraud family at Domaine Tempier) began to champion the Mourvèdre grape. Formerly, this ancient variety had been torn out and re-planted with the higher-yielding

Grenache and Cinsault as part of a general shift towards quantity over quality. As a result, the reputation of Bandol wine had begun to suffer.

However, these growers insisted that Mourvèdre was not only better suited to the region's rocky soils, but suitable for extended aging as well, with a long history of production in the appellation. Many refused to tear out their older vines, citing that their low yields led to increased concentration and quality. Some producers even presented 60-year-old bottles to the committee, touting the virtues of long-lived traditional Bandol. Finally, amidst the chaotic political landscape of occupied France, Bandol was granted AOC status. In the post-war years the region would regain its prestige, with Mourvèdre as the dominant red variety and a new generation of winemakers ready to take the reins.

One such winemaker was Achille Pascale, who purchased Domaine le Galantin in 1960. After spending the better part of a decade re-planting native varieties his first commercial harvest was in 1972. That first crop was so small he chose to only vinify as a Rosé. However, over the next 25 years he would develop the domaine's signature style, full-bodied, aromatic rosé and complex, age-worthy reds. His children, Céline and Jérôme, now run the estate, where they practice organic and environmentally friendly viticulture. In part, this is mandated by the appellation (AOC Bandol forbids mechanized harvesting), however, like many other producers of quality Bandol, the Pascale family want to produce an authentic, terroir-driven wine with as little manipulation as possible.

This wine is sourced from the municipality of Plan du Castellet, where much of the fruit used in the Bandol AOC is produced. The family owns several older parcels in Plan du Castellet and a few in the village of Bandol itself, rare in an age where resort developers have purchased much of the remaining land. This wine is typically a blend of 90% Mourvèdre and 10% Grenache from some of the family's oldest vines. All fruit is harvested by hand and partially destemmed in the winery, with around 20% stem inclusion for additional tannin and complexity. Once fermentation is complete the wine is racked to larger French oak barrels, between 2-6 years old, for 22 months before bottling.

When you open this wine, you will want to decant for up to an hour, though if you can bear the anticipation, longer is always better. Once this wine has time to open up, get ready for an aromatic tour de force with notes of dried red cherry, dried fig, fresh rosemary, crushed thyme, dried lavender, and pipe tobacco. Drink now through 2033 with roast pork shank, grilled beef kebabs with vegetables and rosemary, or duck confit and potatoes.

Shrimp Provençal

After I made the decision to feature two Provence wines for the Explorer Club I started researching classic dishes of the region. Then I remembered having lunch in 2000 at Clos St. Magdeleine in Cassis, enjoying several dishes while looking out across the perfectly azure sea from their terrace. We grazed over several dishes but the one that stood out to me and my travel companions was their shrimp Provençal, which while simple, really is one of the specialties of the region. Serve this either with saffron rice, or grilled pieces of bread to dip into the sauce. - **Tim**

2 teaspoons olive oil

1 pound shrimp, shelled and deveined

2 tablespoons slivered almonds, toasted

4 cloves garlic, peeled and minced

1 tablespoon drained capers

1/2 pint grape tomatoes, cut in half

1 tablespoon butter

1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley

1/4teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

Freshly ground pepper to taste

Heat a large, heavy-bottomed nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Add the olive oil. Add the shrimp and sauté 1½ minutes. Add the almonds and garlic and sauté until the shrimp are cooked. Stir in the capers, tomatoes and parsley. Cook for 1 minute. Add butter and swirl to melt and thicken the sauce. Stir in the salt and pepper to taste. Divide among 4 plates and serve immediately.