

Bridge Street Social

March '25 WINE FAM

Happy Almost Spring!

This edition's theme is loosely based on natural wine . Not orange wine or a lot of skin contact. Just wine made more naturally with no chemicals or a lot of interference in the wine making process. We venture to Valtellina, Australia (twice), and Beaujolais this time around. Cheers!

There are some real stand-out wines planned for the 2025 releases, with some fun wine dinners (Franus, Plumpjack, Casel de Giglio, and FAILLA!) on the horizon as well. Being in the fam, you'll always get first dibs on wine dinner tickets.

Cheers!

Mike Luther
owner/executive chef

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Spinifex Wines – Barossa Valley, Australia

Papillon (2021)

Over the past 40 years, Australia in general and the Barossa Valley in particular have really made a name for themselves when it comes to producing wines with Rhone grapes in surprising and innovative ways, and Spinifex is no exception.

Established in 2001, sustainability and environmental responsibility have been foundational to their practice since the beginning; they are truly stewards of the land. They have joined many other winemakers in this area in taking the traditional Rhone varietals and making them distinctly Australian, with the diverse soil types and growing climate available, but always with a nod to the classic style.

A blend of grenache and cinsault, this 2021 Papillon punches well above its weight class in terms of flavor, considering its relatively young age and medium-bodied mouthfeel. On the nose you'll get dried florals, smoke, some mushroom-y earthiness and a slight barnyard funk that is distinctly grenache. On the palate you'll first encounter dried cranberries and cherries with a very three-dimensional structure that slowly fades into a softer, friendlier mouthfeel. A few more sips and you'll be detecting tobacco and cola alongside delicate tannins. I would suggest firing up the grill and smoking lamb shanks or a pork shoulder to enjoy with this wine, alongside some grilled portobello mushrooms. Serve with a brightly dressed green salad and you have the meal to enjoy on a late spring evening.

Rae

Your Resident Somm and Barkeep Extraordinaire

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Delinquent Wine Company – Riverland, South Australia
'Hell Series' Disgorged Pét Nat Fiano (2022)

The Delinquent Wine Company is located in Riverland, a region of South Australia. The region has a warm, temperate climate that does not receive much rain and can get incredibly hot during the summers. Delinquent's Founder, Con-Greg Grigoriou, aims to showcase quality wines with grape varieties that can withstand Riverland's climate and soil, and has found that Southern Italian grapes are best suited for this, generally needing less water and are drought resistant. All Delinquent's wines are made with minimal intervention, and the core group of wines are naturally fermented in stainless steel with native yeasts, while the "Hell Series" demonstrates additional nuances and textural changes from the use of oak aging.

This bottle features the Southern Italian grape Fiano, a fascinating grape with a rich texture and provides an acidic backbone to this wine. Dry and crunchy, this is a very clean and pretty serious pet nat. Fiano provides the acid driven backbone of the wine and, when fermented in oak, brings that beautiful, toasty brioche on the nose and a creamy mouthfeel and roundness that fleshes out the wine. A lovely light carbonation is pleasant and inviting, adding to that creamy easiness. Yum, fun, but deadly serious.

Lighter foods would pair well with this wine, so as not to overpower the delicate and lighter body of the wine. A pear and arugula salad with goat cheese comes to mind, with weight matching the wine and supporting the pear notes that the wine has to offer. Fatty meats and cheeses on a charcuterie board would also play well with the light bubbles and creaminess of the wine. If you wanted to lean towards a slightly heavier dish, creamy pastas or a fatty skin-on chicken thigh recipe would be the way to go. For dessert, an apple tart or a creme brulee would be a wonderful way to finish off the bottle.

Ben

Your fledgling sommelier

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Bonnet-Cotton – Côte de Brouilly, Beaujolais, France
Gamay (2022)

A Table Wine of All Time.

Hailing from Domaine Cotton-Bonnet—named after the sole proprietors Pierre Cotton and Marine Bonnet—this wine is a 100% Gamay wine produced entirely from grapes grown and harvested from two plots that have a mixture of granitic and silty soil. The grapes are hand-harvested and undergo a carbonic maceration process, and then aged in foudres—large wooden vats—for eight months. The resulting wine is then bottled, unfiltered and unfinned. The wines from Bonnet-Cotton are highly allocated and very little makes it way to Michigan. We are proud to be able to bring you this powerful, yet delicate Beaujolais.

Much discourse within the world of wine is dedicated to the region of Beaujolais, with many oh-so-serious wine drinkers stating the products out of this region lack sophistication and complexity. I personally believe this kind of argumentation hurts the already overly complicated and, oftentimes, intimidating world of wine. “Sophistication” certainly has its importance in the world of wine, but so do “fun” and “approachable”—two words I would personally use to describe this wine.

From the very beginning, this wine lets the drinker know not to take it too seriously. Featured front and center is a stylized character with a distinct cuboidal appearance and over-exaggerated facial features, and the phrase “Gamay power” is boldly written on the arm holding, presumably, a bottle of “100% Cotton”. Gamay power, indeed; this hazy, purple and violet

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wine is a poster child for Beaujolais wine, through and through.

The carbonic maceration process—a winemaking technique most often associated with Beaujolais—is the process by which carbon dioxide gas is pumped into a sealed vat with the grapes, causing that CO₂ gas to seep through the grape skins into the flesh of the grapes, causing intracellular fermentation of the juice until the grape eventually bursts. The resulting final product from this process—including and exemplified through this “100% Cotton”—is typically a wine that is low-tannin and high-acid, with plenty of fruit-forward aromas and flavors. Indeed, this wine does not have many complex notes or subtle, hidden flavors. The nose is a bouquet of boisterously ripe, bursting red fruits, such as strawberry, sweet cherry, and cranberry; a bit of over-ripe blueberry; and a mild bit of juicy black cherries. Some fun secondary aromas and flavors many tasters may note are those of bubblegum and banana—a result of both the vinification process as well as the granitic soil. Perhaps the most subtle notes resulting from this wine is a slight bit of fresh, wet mushroomy soil—but this is far from a primary or even secondary note.

This is not a complex, bold, or highly structured wine, but its high acid formulation does allow it a fair amount of easy flavor pairings. I initially opened and tasted this wine with a baked salmon seasoned with dill, feta cheese, and olive oil. This was a delightful pairing, and a delicious resulting meal; the lightweight inorganic granite and silt notes helped to exemplify the herbaceous, savory notes of the seasonings and garnishments, while the high acid helped to cut some of the fatty nature of the salmon, allowing the natural flavor of the fish to shine through. Other fatty and rich proteins, or those of a savory nature—such as a roast turkey, chicken, or even duck—would pair well with this wine.

Remy

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Your resident somm and barkeep star

January '25 WINE FAM

Nino Negri – Valtellina Superiore, Italy
Nebbiolo (2020)

Nino Negri has been in Chiuro, in the heart of the Valtellina, for over a century. The Valtellina wine region is situated in the Rhaetian Alps in Northern Italy, near the Swiss border and the Ada River. It belongs to the larger region of Lombardy. This region is famous for its high-quality and classy red wines produced almost exclusively from Nebbiolo grapes (although there is a little merlot in this one), also locally known as Chiavennasca. The refinement and success of Valtellina wines are a result of unique winemaking methods, delicate grapes, and excellent terroir. These elements help to create a style of wine found nowhere else in Italy, or the world, appreciated by numerous wine connoisseurs.

This wine owes its name to the 15th century fortified palace called "Castello Quadrio di Chiuro", home of the Nino Negri winery, built for Stefano Quadrio, governor of Valtellina in the 15th century. The wine represents a perfect marriage between the austerity of Nebbiolo and the international touch of Merlot. The Merlot cultivated on the terraces in Valtellina is characterised by very sweet fruity notes and soft, velvety tannins that manage to soften the Nebbiolo, providing a different expression of Valtellina Superiore characterised by its immediacy and drinkability.

Pair this with game meats, roasted red meats, and mature cheeses.

Elliot

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Server Extraordinaire