



Guiding the Wine Neophyte

Discovering great wine and food pairing
Experiencing Wine Country

Contact the Wine Snob @ VinoSnob@aol.com

Robert Mondavi - Coastal Cabernet 95

North Coast, CA \$12 Good

Despite the lighter thin color and a mild yet astringent nose, this value wine has a nice medium body. The flavors are balanced with nice cherries and a touch of oak. Surprisingly fun drinking wine!

FOOD: Fared well with grilled sirloin, but a lighter fare is a better match.

Chateau Sancho - Syrah blend 95

Saint Chinian, France \$12 Very Good

A deep rich color of burgundy red accompanied by a nose exuding earth, oak and tar. Typical of a French style wine, all of the flavors strike at once with black cherries, oak, hints of pear, other berries and a chocolatey oak finish. Certainly a full body wine that delights the palate with its long and rich flavors.

FOOD: Paired well with lasagna but should map better to grilled beef.

Kunde - Estate Bottled Syrah 96

Sonoma Valley, CA \$18 Good

Bright fruit! Sharp flavors exude fun in this broad palate that lingers pleasantly before mildly segueing to the finish of spice and oak.

FOOD: Worked well with a pork chop in a mushroom glaze.

Kunde - Magnolia Lane Sauvignon Blanc 97

Sonoma, CA \$11 Almost Yummy!

The impressive nose reveals that this is not an ordinary Sauvignon Blanc. Inspecting the bottle more closely reveals that the Sauvignon Blanc is augmented with 10% Semillon and 5% Viognier. The first sip reveals the essence of a Viognier with nice floral characteristics followed by some spice and acidity. The palate almost gets confused, as the finish appears sweet when paired with a spicy seafood accompaniment. Overall this wine is relatively complex and full of citrus flavors (primarily grapefruit) and spice with a prevailing soft texture throughout.

FOOD: Worked very well with a lightly spiced crabmeat with risotto.

Zabaco - Barrel Fermented Chardonnay 94

Sonoma County, CA \$10 Damn Near Yummy!

Crisp and bright with sharp citrus, primarily lemons, swirling in a soft sea of light creaminess. The softness of lemon and cream fades as the pleasant spice rounds out the wine on the finish.

FOOD: A good drinking wine and requires no accompaniment. Will pair well with mild appetizers but is most ideal as a spring outdoor sipping wine!

Elio Altare - Barbera - 96

Italy \$17 Very Good*

Burgundy red color with hints of brown on the meniscus. Initially this wine is tight but given time to breathe, cherries come to the foreground with some mild pomegranates to present a very rich and tasty wine. Overall a medium body with some astringency and a great amount of depth. A nice solid finish of smooth oak and lingering fruit.

*Needs to be tasted again when more mature... may prove to be yummy!

FOOD: Perfect with grilled filet mignon!

Castel San Valentino - Pinot Grigio 97

Alto Adige, Italy \$9 Very Good

The nose is deceptive with reminiscence of a Sauvignon Blanc, however absent the acidity. This Pinot Grigio is very refreshing, yet rich, smooth and long lasting. The palate displays crisp citrus of grapefruit and mild spice of lemon.

FOOD: Absolutely marvelous with: 1) sliced Parmesan cheese, 2) stuffed clams, and 3) panchetta stuffed scallops.

Peachy Canyon - Zinfandel "Dusi Ranch" 95

Paso Robles, CA \$23 Yummy



The deep ruby color and the earthy/porty cherry nose create the expectation of phenomenal fruit! Low and behold the wine delivers!

Cherries/berries run rampant on the palate in this big & yet growing bigger bodied zin! Exhibiting broad & deep flavors, the fruit runs deep with essence of black cherries & blueberries amidst a complex & concentrated palate. This well-balanced wine ends in synergy with a finish of mild tobacco & oak on a bed of balanced fruit!

FOOD: Versatile, great with Chinese style spare ribs or Veal Parm & Pasta.

Peachy Canyon - Zinfandel "Westside" 95

Paso Robles, CA \$20 Damn Near Yummy!

Color is consistent with the above Dusi ranch, but the nose reveals a spicy cherry! Rich concentrated cherries (reminiscent of Ludens!) are accompanied by prunes and hints of pomegranates. The overall fruity palate co-exists with oak and spice throughout the palate! This is a full body zin with traditional zin spice, mild tannins & prunes providing the finale for this full-bodied wine.

(Needs time to breathe & reduce alcoholic astringency!)

FOOD: This wine exuded personality when tasted with potato au gratin!

Guest Reviews from the Wine Slob

Mason Sauvignon Blanc, Napa Valley 1997. \$11

WOW, that was great even after 2 bottles. Unfortunately I only have one bottle left and having trouble locating more. This has fruit flavors that jump at you. Barrel fermented unfiltered means nothing to me. Maybe the Snob can help. I had this wine with, and then without, New Zealand mussels (sweet as butter) topped with olive oil, butter, reggiano Parmesan cheese and parsley. Don't overcook these mussels; use the grill or the oven but no microwave.

Markham Vineyards Barrel Fermented Chardonnay 1996. \$10

Nice full body that tasted better after it warmed to almost room temperature. I bought some more. Went well with smoked Norwegian salmon.

Chateau St. Jean Sonoma County Chardonnay 1996. \$10

Not as sweet as the Markham but goes great with grilled swordfish. I would buy it again to go with white meat, fish, or turkey.

Daniel Gehrs Fume En Vogue. \$9

If you find this wine buy 2 because they are hard to find. I didn't know what a Fume En Vogue was and I'm not sure I do now. It was a fruity and somewhat sour white wine. This is a great deck wine or for swilling by the pool. Very refreshing and will go with anything.

Casa Lapostolle Cabernet 96 and Sauv, Blanc 97. \$9 and \$7

Each year this Cab gets better (the Wine Snob gave this a "Yummy!") and every year their Sauvignon Blanc is delicious. I bought a case of each.

Chris Connors is the "Wine Slob" specializing in grilled foods & frugal wines!
A contributing writer for the Wine Snob