

2021 Campuget 1753 Viognier IPG Gard, France

Chateau de Campuget in Costieres de Nimes in southern France is a beautiful Domaine dating back to 1640. The property has belonged to the Dalle family since 1941. Chateau de Campuget wines are produced by respecting tradition while utilizing the most modern oenological techniques. Although equipped with stainless-steel tanks and modern tools, wines are made and matured in a traditional way, and quality is strictly controlled from the vineyard to the bottle. Chateau De Campuget's main varieties are Syrah and Grenache Noir for the grapevines classified in AOC. For white wines, the winery uses Roussanne and Grenache Blanc in Costieres de Nimes and Chardonnay and Viognier in Vin de Pays.

The white grape synonymous with the northern Rhône, Viognier (pronounced vee-on-ye-ay) also leads a dual life and is also found blended with Syrah in red wines both at home and abroad. On its own, Viognier produces golden-colored, aromatic white wines with pronounced stonefruit aromas (apricots and peaches are often cited) alongside a full-bodied and often textural palate.

As Viognier's fortunes revived in the 1970s and 80s beyond, the variety progressively moved down the Rhône valley and into the south of France where it is often grown in the likes of the Languedoc to produce commercial, single-varietal wines and as a component in blended white wines, lending its heady perfume and full-body to the mix. It is one of the six principal varieties approved for use in the white Côtes du Rhône blanc appellation and is often found blended alongside the Rhône valley staples, Roussanne and Marsanne. Outside of the wider Rhône, Viognier is rarely found in appellation-level wines and more often produced under IGP (the former Vin de Pays) labels such as IGP Pays d'Oc or IGP Gard.

This exhibits a bouquet of honeysuckle, apricot orange marmalade, and tropical fruits. On the palate, the balance and roundness are very pleasant. Medium-bodied, and generously fruity but structured, it owes its freshness and precision to the happy acidity. For a complementary pairing, echo Viognier's sweet, spritzy side with a stone fruit galette or a baked brie with apricot jam. To play with contrasts, serve Viognier with grilled and spicy foods, like a spicy shish kebab, where its smooth, fruit-forward creaminess will add levity to the smoky char and soothe the heat. Drink now.

Notes from www.campuget.com & www.wine-searcher.com



Chicken and Apricot Masala

This recipe demands little effort and delivers a huge amount of flavor.

Ingredients:

1cup dried apricots
½teaspoon hot red pepper flakes
1teaspoon ground cumin
1teaspoon ground coriander
4cloves
4cardamom pods, lightly crushed
1tablespoon minced garlic
1tablespoon minced ginger

¼cup peanut oil
1cinnamon stick
2onions, peeled and finely chopped
1teaspoon salt
3pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, diced
4medium tomatoes, cut into ½-inch dice
2tablespoons tomato paste, diluted in ½ cup water
3tablespoons chopped cilantro leaves

Directions:

Soak apricots overnight in 2 cups cold water, or cover with 2 cups hot water and soak until swollen and softened, 2 to 3 hours. Prepare masala: In a small bowl, combine hot pepper flakes, cumin, coriander, cloves, cardamom, garlic and ginger. Add ¼ cup water, and stir to make a paste. Set aside. In a large sauté pan over medium heat, heat oil and cinnamon stick. Add onions and salt, and sauté until onions begin to soften, 2 to 3 minutes. Add masala, and stir. Add chicken, and stir for about 5 minutes. Add apricots and their soaking liquid, diced tomatoes and diluted tomato paste. Cover and simmer until chicken is cooked through, about 30 minutes. Check cooking liquid about halfway through; if chicken is covered with liquid, remove cover for remainder of cooking. Transfer to a large bowl, sprinkle with cilantro and serve hot.

Serves 6 | Recipe <https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/5593-chicken-and-apricot-masala>



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2017 Zorzal Eggo Cabernet Franc Mendoza, Argentina

Zorzal is a young, boutique winery that was founded in 2007 by the Michelini brothers, Gerardo, Matias, and Juan Pablo ("Juampi"). They completed their first vintage in 2008. The winery and vineyards are located in a section of the Uco Valley called Gualtallary ("Gualta"), outside the town of Tupungato, at approximately 4,500 feet above sea level. The Zorzal winery is the highest winery in Mendoza. The estate consists of 70 hectares on a unique blend of sand, stones, and limestone and is planted to multiple varieties including Malbec, Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc, and a few others. The grapes are all hand harvested and Juampi's vision is to have a light hand in the winemaking to let the fruit and terroir shine. The winery practices organic methods in the vineyards and uses only indigenous yeast in the winemaking process.

Zorzal tends to pick its grapes a little earlier than most in Mendoza to retain freshness and acidity in its wines instead of the overblown ripeness that is too often seen. They are already considered to be a rising star in Argentina with their focused wines and enticing expression of multiple varieties above and beyond their stunning Malbecs. They also make a series of wines called EGGO, consisting of Malbec, Cabernet Franc, Sauvignon Blanc, and Pinot Noir completely fermented and aged in large concrete eggs. The EGGO wines are more limited in production.

This hand-harvested, single vineyard wine from Gualtallary is composed of 100% Cabernet Franc. This unique wine is completely fermented and aged in a large concrete egg and sees no oak. This subtle and nuanced wine shows soft plush tannins with raspberries, ripe black currant, and an underlying chalk-driven finish. Fresh wet soil, hazelnuts, figs, and savory spice dominate this barnyard and earth-driven wine. The Eggo wines showcase the perfect combination of a chalky, terroir-driven wine, with vibrant fruit and a long smooth finish. Cabernet Franc blends pair well with grilled steaks and chops, portobello mushrooms, green olives, pepper, rosemary, and mint. Drink now.

Notes from www.skurnik.com

"This is pure Cabernet Franc cropped from seven-year-old vines on alluvial soils high in calcium carbonate. It fermented with 10% full clusters in concrete vats, where it matured with the full lees until bottling at the end of the year. It's very varietal, herbal and spicy, with good structure and body, great balance and power, with fine-grained, chalky tannins." **Wine Advocate 92**



Focaccia with Olives and Rosemary

This recipe was inspired by one from olive oil expert Lidia Colavita. You can make a meal around the bread by offering it as an accompaniment to bean soup.

Ingredients:

2 cups warm water (105°F; to 115°F;)	3 tablespoons olive oil
2 teaspoons dry yeast	24 black or green brine-cured olives (such as Kalamata or Greek), pitted, halved
4 1/2 cups (about) all purpose flour	1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary or 1 1/2 teaspoons dried
2 teaspoons salt	

Directions:

Place 2 cups warm water in large bowl. Sprinkle dry yeast over; stir with fork. Let stand until yeast dissolves, about 10 minutes.

Add 4 1/4 cups flour and salt to yeast mixture and stir to blend well (dough will be sticky). Knead dough on floured surface until smooth and elastic, adding more flour by tablespoonfuls if dough is sticky, about 10 minutes. Form dough into ball. Oil large bowl; add dough, turning to coat. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in warm area until doubled, about 1 1/2 hours. Punch down dough; knead into ball and return to same bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in warm area until doubled, about 45 minutes or less

Coat 15x10-inch baking sheet with 1 tablespoon oil. Punch down dough. Transfer to prepared sheet. Using fingertips, press out dough to 13x10-inch rectangle. Let dough rest 10 minutes. Drizzle 2 tablespoons oil over dough. Sprinkle olives and chopped rosemary evenly over. Let dough rise uncovered in warm area until puffy, about 25 minutes.

Preheat oven to 475°F. Press fingertips all over dough, forming indentations. Bake bread until brown and crusty, about 20 minutes. Serve bread warm or at room temperature.



Serves 8 | Recipe <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/focaccia-with-olives-and-rosemary-322>

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