

WINE COLLECTIVE

selected by Jacqueline Pirolo

April 2022: Galicia, Spain

This month we travel to Galicia (Gah-lee-thee-ah), Spain, in the Northwestern tip of the country, with over 700 miles of mostly deserted beaches and rocky coastal cliffs once considered by the Romans to be the end of the world. This verdant land looks more like Ireland, with a dazzling array of seafood, as well as huge traditions with folk music and bagpipes. But, you already know that we're in it for the love of their indigenous grapes - lesser known and lesser grown - with the most adventurous stories.

There are five denominated (D.O.) wine regions in Galicia. Today, Rías Baixas, closest to the Atlantic coast, is the largest and best known where Albariño is the dominant grape, but through the 16th century, Ribeiro, which means "river bank" in Gallego (the Portuguese/Spanish dialect of Galicia), was one of Europe's most active wine communities. Centuries of apathy followed by a desire for more volume saw indigenous varieties like Treixadura and Albariño bumped aside by high-yielding grapes. Ribeiro, however, has spent the last decade on the comeback trail. We are here for its comeback, as well as the sheer physical nature of a wine region like Ribeira Sacra, with terraced, vertigo-inducing vineyards dotting incredibly steep hillsides, Ribeira Sacra, on first take, appears better left for the goats. This month we're getting crazy like a goat. Enjoy!

Remember, there is always more.
Shoot me an email if you'd like to purchase another bottle (or case) of something that you loved.
jacqueline@macchialina.com. Thank you!
#MacchInMyGlass

WINE 101

In Spain, Galicia is pronounced
"Gah-lee-thee-ah"
and treixadura is pronounced
"tre-SHA-do-ra".

Some additional helpful pronunciation tips:

tx: "ch"
tz: "ts"
x: "sh"
c: "th"

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KITCHEN NOTE

Pirolo's Eggplant Caponata

Traditional Sicilian fried eggplant,
tossed with a spicy anchovy, caper,
oregano, tomato sauce. Eat right out of
the jar with good bread or crackers, as a
spread on a sandwich, or tossed in pasta
as a sauce.

There are many ways to make a Caponata
but in the words of Chef Mike Pirolo
"zucchini, take a time out. We're going
straight eggplant here."

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Ailalá Ribeiro Blanco 2020

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Producer: Nelly France
Producer: Ailalá-Ailalelo
Name: Ailalá Blanco
Variety: 100% Treixadura
Vintage: 2020
Location: Ribeiro D.O., Galicia, Spain
Follow: @ailalawine

Ailalá-Ailalelo is a young and fresh concept winery located in the highly regarded Avia Valley of Galicia's Ribeiro DO intent on bringing a sense of fun and excitement to these indigenous varietals. The name represents the local dialect for 'Olé, and the song that goes along with it. This joyful partnership is between oenologist Inma Pazos and Xosé Lois Sebio of the esteemed Coto de Gomariz, they only make two wines that express the incredible terroir of the region.

Ailalá Blanco comes from stunning vineyards from within the Avia Valley. The fruit is handpicked early in the morning and brought immediately to the cellar. This juice is a unique example of a 100% Treixadura, a wine that is not common, even though this fruit is native to Galicia and Portugal. After four months remaining on the lees with regular batonnage. Lees are the sediment of winemaking, usually made up of dead yeast and bits of grape seeds and solids. Winemakers sometimes like to keep these solids in contact with the wine as a way to extract flavor, aroma and texture. The solids can then be filtered before bottling, or the wine can be racked, leaving the solids behind. Batonnage is the French word for stirring settled lees back into wine.

The finished wine has aromatics of lemon curd, apricot, white flowers, and seashells. The dense palate is loaded with ripe melon, sweet lemon, white peach, blood orange, and grapefruit peel. It is very persistent and has delicious acidity to let it age and develop well with time. Serve chilled.

Entre Os Rios Komokabras 2020

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Producer: Adega Entre Os Rios
Name: Komokabras
Variety: 100% Albariño
Vintage: 2020
Location: Galicia, Spain
Follow: @adegentreosrios

On the Galician coastline, on the slopes of the Barbanza peninsula, José Cursat is turning a time-honored viticultural legacy on its head - which is probably why this wine is named Komokabras - meaning crazy like a goat! The Cursat family have been growing grapes in the Vinos da Terra do Barbanza e Iria IGP for generations, and though José still works alongside his father, the winery has become known for producing oxidative, long aged, natural Albariño in an area dominated by conventional producers jamming out grocery store wines.

The South-West facing, 50-year-old Albariño vines are situated on the North Shore of the Ría de Arousa. The farming is mostly organic, however owing to Galicia's wet climate they reserve the right to use fungicide in exceedingly wet vintages. All of José's wines begin with a 12+ hour pre-soak with the skins before gentle pressing and spontaneous fermentation. Blended shortly before bottling, the point of this Albariño is to shock and excite you, as this isn't that cliché light, crisp Albariño that we have all know and love. José is looking for sites where he can achieve this.

Serve slightly chilled.

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Fraga de Corvo
Monterrei Godello 2020

Producer: Fragas do Lecer
Name: Fraga de Corvo
Variety: 100% Godello
Vintage: 2020
Location: Monterrei D.O., Galicia, Spain

Fraga do Corvo was named by the locals of the area in Monterrei near one of the vineyards because of the Corvos, or crows, that sit on the electric power lines near the vineyards and perform a "natural" grape selection each September. The crows eat some of the fruit and by doing so create lower yields and thus provide higher concentration of sugar and nutrients in the fruit.

This wine has complexity to it because of sitting on the lees for 7 months and due to it being Verdello, a specific clone located only in Monterrei that has adapted to the terroir and gives higher acidity. This juice is 100% Godello, which is a single clone Verdello, from 15- to 25-year-old vines in granite-based sand and slate. The manual harvest and grape selection are done bunch by bunch. The wine is never filtered, nor clarified for added structure. On the nose it reveals floral aromas, intense fruit notes of apple and pear, citrus, and aromatic herbs. On the palate it shows creamy texture, with well-balanced and pleasant acidity of fresh fruit, mineral, luscious with a well-rounded finish.

Serve chilled.

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Ailalá
Ribeiro Tinto 2017

Producer: Ailalá-Ailalelo
Name: Ailalá Blanco
Variety: Sousón, Brancellao, Ferrol Caiño Longo
Vintage: 2017
Location: Ribeiro D.O., Galicia, Spain
Follow: @ailalawine

Ailalá-Ailalelo is a young and fresh concept winery located in the highly regarded Avia Valley of Galicia's Ribeiro DO intent on bringing a sense of fun and excitement to these indigenous varietals. The name represents the local dialect for 'Olé, and the song that goes along with it. This joyful partnership is between oenologist Inma Pazos and Xosé Lois Sebio of the esteemed Coto de Gomariz, they only make two wines that express the incredible terroir of the region.

The Ailalá Tinto comes from beautiful Avia Valley vineyards and is brought in immediately after being hand-picked early in the morning. The Tinto is primarily all Sousón, although the field does include small amounts of Brancellao, Ferrol, and Caiño Longo that are involved in the field blend. Natural fermentation takes place in stainless steel, and then a short time is devoted to French barrels to round out this beautiful red. The result is fresh and lively with spicy character and delicious acidity and soft tannins. A wine to grace most every dinner table, the Tinto is perfect for enjoying in any setting, this wine is fresh and delicious enough to stand on its own.

Serve slightly chilled.

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Guímaro Tinto Ribeira Sacra

Producer: Guímaro
Name: Guímaro Tinto
Variety: 100% Mencía
Vintage: 2020
Location: Ribeira Sacra, Galicia, Spain
Follow: @adegasguimarooofficial

Pedro Rodriguez descends from a long line of colleteiros, independent producers who make wine from their own grapes, with his parents Manolo and Carmen still working the vineyards alongside him daily. Their grapes grow in the Amandi area, considered Ribeira Sacra's most prime subzone with south facing vineyards planted on slate just above the river Sil. The family also finds it suitable for their small finca of mixed agriculture, raising chickens, rabbits, pigs, and cultivating a sizable vegetable patch. The family's agrarian dedication resulted in the establishment of their adega in 1991 with the name of their winery naturally coming from Pedro's grandfather. His nickname was guímaro, or rebel in Gallego, the local Galician dialect that splits the difference between Spanish and Portuguese. Ribeira Sacra means "Sacred Banks" in Gallego.

The Romans came to this green, northwest corner of Iberia some 2,000 years ago and were the first to terrace the slopes and plant vines in Ribeira Sacra. Historically, the most famous Galician wines come from the Amandi area.

Guímaro Tinto is the Adega's "joven" (young) wine. It comes from multiple plots of Mencía vines, along with a small amount of other co-planted native varieties, with an average age of 40 years old. This un-oaked tinto is all about immediate pleasure with pure, lush red fruits, spices, and slate-laden minerality.
Serve slightly chilled.

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Bodegas Fulcro Rías Baixas Finca A Pedreira 2020

Producer: Bodegas Fulcro
Name: Rías Baixas Finca A Pedreira
Variety: 100% Albariño
Vintage: 2020
Location: Rías Baixas, Galicia, Spain
Follow: @moldesmanuel

Bodegas Fulcro is a young winery established in 2009 focusing on indigenous boutique varietals. The Bodegas is minuscule at this time, only 1.1 hectares (2.7 acres) divided in two single vineyards - only 24 bottles entered Florida - so we are very, very lucky to have this.

Situated in the original and oldest area of Rías Baixas with vine and right in front of the Atlantic Ocean, the climate is mild throughout the year but can be terribly humid, and all vines are planted on a pergola to avoid mildew. Another key factor to the style of the wines is the soil, driven mainly by granite and rocks.

Manuel Moldes Morana or Chicho is working on several boutique projects from Bierzo to introduce red and white cuvees using local varietals. The age of his vines ranges from 25 years to 70 years. In the cellar, the wines go through natural fermentation but does not go through malolactic. Then they are aged in stainless steel tanks and oak barrels. Great contrast: ripeness and bright acidity. Chicho is a newcomer who, thanks to his passion and support from his elders, has crafted some of the most interesting wines in the region.

Serve chilled.