

3401 Mt Diablo Blvd
Lafayette, CA 94549
(925) 299-9070



5443 Clayton Road
Clayton, CA 94517
(925) 672-4003

Domaine de Nizas Blanc, Vin de Pays d'Oc 2007

Le Mas, or “little farm,” is an original blend of Atlantic and Mediterranean influences; 90% sauvignon blanc and 10% viognier. The rim is a pale straw color with green undertones. Low temperature fermentation (16-18°C) in stainless steel preserves the vibrant fruit characteristics. A small portion of the Viognier is fermented and stirred in French oak barrels, while the entire lot matures on its lees for three months. While the sauvignon brings its freshness and minerality, the Viognier makes the bouquet even more intense and complex adding its notes of apricot and exotic fruits. The hint of oak gently adds its toasted flavors to the complexity. With a round, well balanced and lively palate, this is an elegant, aromatic white to enjoy now.

\$ 14 value. *Thieves' price: \$9.99*

Grilled Avocado & Tomato Salad (serves 4-6)

Ingredients:

10 tomatoes, quartered
4 avocados, peeled, halved, and pitted
Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
1 red onion, sliced
1/2 lemon
1 cup pesto sauce
1/2 cup pine nuts
Parmiggiano-Reggiano



Directions

Preheat a grill over medium heat.

Cover a large tray with tomato quarters, and set aside.

Place avocado halves in a bowl and drizzle with olive oil. Place each half on a hot open grill for about 30 to 45 seconds. Remove and place on top of the tomatoes arranged on tray. Drizzle with olive oil again.

In another bowl, cover the red onion slices with the juice from the lemon half and olive oil. Place onions in the empty avocado pit holes. Cover with the lemon/olive oil mix. Then, top with pesto, distributing generously on all sides. Sprinkle pine nuts and cheese on top, to taste.

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Molissimo IGT, Molise 2006

Sandwiched between Puglia (south) and the Abruzzi (north) is the tiny province of Molise, along the Adriatic coast. Today, most of the region's viticulture is based on traditional vineyards that are over 30 years of age. Only recently has there been an effort to modernize the vineyards and to improve the quality of the wines produced here. Thanks to the efforts of a few private vintners, Molise's winemaking industry has started a process of recovery, crowned by a new DOC designation in 1998. The IGT category of Terre degli Osci refers to the Oscan people who inhabited Molise in prehistoric times. By definition, the red wines (rosso) contain at least 85% montepulciano, and in the case of Molissimo, the remainder is made up of the ancient aglianico. A rustic profile, with bold red fruit and spice flavors, and medium body.

\$ value. Thieves' price: \$9.99

Rigatoni with Vegetable Bolognese (serves 6)

Ingredients

1-ounce dried porcini mushrooms
1 1/2 cups hot water
3 carrots, peeled and chopped
1 onion, peeled and chopped
1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
2 garlic cloves
1/4 cup olive oil
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme leaves
1 teaspoon chopped fresh oregano leaves
2 teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
5 ounces assorted mushrooms (like shiitake, cremini, and brown), stemmed and chopped
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1/2 cup red wine
1/2 cup mascarpone cheese
1 pound rigatoni
pasta
1/4 cup Parmesan



Directions

Place the dried mushrooms in a small bowl and cover with 1 1/2 cups very hot water. Set aside and let the mushrooms soften.

Place the carrots, onion, bell pepper, and garlic in a food processor. Pulse the vegetables until finely chopped but still chunky. Place the olive oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chopped vegetables, thyme, oregano, salt, and pepper and cook until tender, about 6 minutes. Strain the porcini mushrooms, reserving the porcini mushroom liquid. Add the porcini mushrooms, fresh mushrooms, and tomato paste and continue cooking, stirring to dissolve the tomato paste, until the mushrooms are softened, about 5 minutes. Add the porcini mushroom liquid and red wine. Bring the liquid to a boil, reduce the heat to low, and let the mixture simmer until the liquid is reduced by half, about 10 minutes. Add mascarpone cheese and stir just until the cheese is incorporated.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the pasta and cook until tender but still firm to the bite, stirring occasionally, about 8 to 10 minutes. Drain pasta, reserving 1/2 cup of the cooking liquid and add to the vegetable mixture. Add some of the reserved pasta cooking liquid, if necessary, to moisten the sauce. Toss with Parmesan and serve.

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Ken Brown Chardonnay, Santa Rita Hills 2005

Planted by Richard Sanford and Michael Benedict in 1971, this vineyard is the birthplace of the Santa Rita Hills appellation, and helped bring recognition to the great potential of the region. This chardonnay comes from the original vines planted to clone 108, which became the most widely planted chardonnay clone in California. Situated on a north-facing slope, the vineyard is cooled by ocean breezes and coastal fog. Well-balanced and harmonious, this wine is stylish and crisp with fresh aromas of white peach and green apple, accented by hints of seashell and an elegant minerality. Despite its richly layered texture, its natural acidity helps the brilliant finish linger on and on. This beautiful example of the Central Coast's best vineyards shows us why Ken Brown is considered a pioneer.

\$30 Value. Thieves' price: \$19.99

Pan-Roasted Dorado w/ White Bean Mash & Tomato Relish **(serves 6)**

Ingredients

3 tomatoes, medium diced
1/2 bunch scallions, thinly sliced
2 red onions, small diced
1 teaspoon ground cumin, plus 1 tablespoon
1/3 cup olive oil, plus 1/3 cup
4 tablespoons aged Sherry vinegar

1 serrano, very finely diced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
8 ounces white beans
Water, for boiling
1 bay leaf
1 white onion, cut into large diced
4 garlic cloves, sliced
2 tablespoons dry oregano
12 (3-ounce) mahi-mahi fillets, skin off
Olive oil, for cooking

Directions

In a mixing bowl, combine tomatoes, scallions, red onions, 1 teaspoon cumin, 1/3 cup olive oil, sherry vinegar, and serrano. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Set aside for 2 hours.

In a large stock pot place white beans and cover with 3 times the amount of water. Add bay leaf. Boil until beans are tender at least 1 hour. Strain beans.

In a medium size saute pan, saute onions and garlic with 1/3 cup olive oil until translucent. Add oregano and 1 tablespoon cumin until aromatic.

In a food processor, puree beans and onion mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Season the mahi mahi with salt and pepper. In a medium size saute pan, heat a little olive oil and cook the mahi mahi for 3 to 4 minutes on each side.

To serve, place puree in large serving platter. Set fish on top of puree and top with tomato relish.

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JRE “Petite Rouge”, Sonoma County 2006

As you may have seen on our “Staff Picks” web page, we are big fans of the wines John Eppler is creating. In 2006, he had access to the same beautiful petite sirah he had been using for a few years, but his growers also had a mélange of other varieties available. The grapes for this palate-tingling red were harvested from two vineyards in northern Sonoma County and one in Rutherford, in the central Napa Valley. Including 41% syrah, 8% cabernet sauvignon and 7% petite verdot, this expressive youngster boasts firm tannins and an alcohol content of 15.2%. Nearly opaque in color, with a purple edge that clings to the glass. Aromas of boysenberries, black currants, and violets. Ripe and rich, with flavors of cassis, dark plum, and mocha. Decant for an hour or more, or buy a few more and keep 1-4 years.

\$20 Value. Thieves' price: \$14.99

KC-style Pork Ribs (serves 6)

Ingredients

2 slabs pork spare ribs, 3 pounds each
Kansas City Barbeque Sauce, recipe follows

Dry Rub:

2 cups brown sugar
1/2 cup dry mustard
1 tablespoon cayenne pepper
1 tablespoon smoked paprika
1 tablespoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon onion powder
1 tablespoon salt
2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper

Kansas City BBQ sauce:

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 (about 2/3 cup) small onion, finely diced



3 cups water
1 cup (2 (6-ounce) cans) tomato paste
1/2 cup brown sugar
2/3 cup apple cider vinegar
1/4 cup molasses
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
In a small sauce pot on medium-high heat, heat the oil and add the onion, cooking until translucent.
Add the remaining ingredients in a large bowl and mix together. Add to sauce pan and let simmer for 30 to 45 minutes. Use to baste the pork spare ribs.
Yield: 3 cups

Directions

Remove the thin white membrane off of the bone-side of the ribs. Mix together the brown sugar, dry mustard, cayenne, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Massage the rub into the ribs and let sit for 3 hours or overnight.

If cooking on the grill, place the ribs meat-side down next to medium-hot coals that are about 225 degrees F. The indirect heat will cook them slower, making them tender. Allow to cook for 1 hour. Turn ribs every half hour and baste with the Kansas City Barbeque Sauce. Cook until the ribs are tender, about 3 to 4 hours.

If cooking indoors, place in a roasting pan with a rack. Slather the ribs with the Kansas City Barbeque Sauce and tent a piece of aluminum foil over them. In a preheated 350 degrees F. oven, place the ribs, basting with the sauce every 30 minutes and removing the foil for the last 30 minutes and cooking until fork tender, about 2 1/2 to 3 hours.