



Bigger Than Your Head

eating & drinking: the good, the bad, and the rest of it

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Ten Savory White Wines

Posted by Fredric Koepfel

As far as white wines are concerned, Spring and Summer tend to be the domains of bright, light, delicate wines that go down easy as aperitifs while we're sitting out on the porch or patio or lounging in a bosky dell on a frolicsome picnic. Nothing wrong with those scenarios at all. Now that the weather is in transition, however, when there's a touch of chilly, rainy uncertainty in the air and our thoughts are sliding toward more substantial fare than cucumber and watercress sandwiches — no crusts, please! — the logical choice would be white wines with a bit more heft, flavor and savor. The 10 examples under review today provide those qualities in diverse ways, because they are, naturally, diverse wines. Grapes include sauvignon blanc, riesling, roussanne and marsanne, vermentino, verdicchio and trebbiano. Some of the wines saw no oak while others received extended barrel aging. Their points of origin range from various spots in Italy and several regions in California, from Alsace in France to Pfalz in Germany. Above all, and I cannot emphasize this note too strenuously, every one of these wines was a joy to drink, first because they are so different each to each, and second because in their eloquent variations they reflect integrity of intentions in the vineyard and the winery, an integrity dedicated to the expressiveness of a location and grape varieties. Each wine mentioned here made me feel as if I were sipping liquid gold.



GALLICA ALBARINO 2015

Calaveras County

Rosemary Cakebread made only 180 cases of her Gallica Albarino 2015, Calaveras County, so you should call the winery right now and try to reserve a few bottles. The grapes derive from the Rorick Heritage Vineyard, located at about 2,000 feet elevation in the Sierra Foothills; the wine — including a touch of muscat blanc — aged nine months in stainless steel tanks and neutral French oak barrels. A pale yellow-gold hue presages aromas of yellow plums and pears, figs, acacia and heather that evolve to a slightly leafy, grassy quality. What a joyful, lively, expressive personality this wine offers; the texture is supple, suave and elegant, all elements defined by balance and seamlessness yet edging to wild, spicy, savory qualities in the chiseled finish. 14 percent alcohol. Now through 2019 or '20.

Excellent. About \$36

