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CITY VINEYARD

FINE WINE • CRAFT BEER • GOURMET FOOD

Silver Club September 2026

2024 Blandine Le Blanc Cotes de Gascogne, France

About the wine: Blandine Le Blanc is a fresh, aromatic white from southwestern France. It comes from the team behind Château du Cèdre, a respected producer in Cahors better known for its Malbec-based reds. This white takes a completely different direction, combining **Colombard, Ugni Blanc and Sauvignon Blanc** to create a bright, crisp, and wonderfully refreshing wine. Blandine is the kind of bottle that makes you want another glass. Crisp, flavorful and refreshing, it's a great alternative when you want something lighter than Chardonnay or Sauvignon Blanc but still packed with personality.

About the Region: The Côtes de Gascogne is tucked away in southwestern France, a region famous for producing lively, aromatic whites that offer tremendous value. The area's warm days and cool Atlantic influences help the grapes develop plenty of flavor while holding on to the acidity that makes these wines so refreshing.

Tasting Notes: Blandine opens with aromas of **lemon, grapefruit, green apple, and pear**, along with delicate floral and herbal notes. It's crisp and clean on the palate, with refreshing acidity, bright citrus flavors, and a pleasantly zesty finish. There's a little tropical-fruit character in the background, but the overall impression is fresh, lively, and uncomplicated. This one screams patio on a cooler, late summer, early fall Montana evening.

Food Pairing: This is a terrific apéritif wine, but it really shines at the table. Pour it with oysters, shrimp, sushi, ceviche, grilled fish, goat cheese, or a fresh summer salad. It would also be right at home alongside fish tacos or a simple lemon-herb chicken. The wine's citrusy freshness and lively acidity are terrific with sweet, lightly spicy mango salsa, while its crisp character keeps the whole pairing feeling bright and refreshing.

2024 G.D. Vajra Dolcetto d'Alba Piedmont, Italy

About the wine: G.D. Vajra is one of Piedmont's respected family-run estates, founded by Aldo and Milena Vaira in the Langhe. Their vineyards are farmed organically, and this Dolcetto is made to emphasize the grape's naturally bright fruit and lively character. The 2024 is sourced from estate vineyards around Barolo and Novello and is fermented and aged in stainless steel to preserve its freshness.

About the Region: Dolcetto d'Alba comes from Piedmont in northwestern Italy, the same beautiful corner of the world responsible for Barolo and Barbaresco. And despite the name, *Dolcetto* does **not** mean sweet! The wine is dry, with lively acidity and a pleasant touch of tannin. It's one of those Italian reds that doesn't demand a special occasion—you can simply open it and enjoy.

Tasting Notes: The 2024 is full of fresh cherries, blueberries, and blackberry aromas, with hints of violet, wild herbs, and a touch of almond. On the palate, it's juicy and energetic, with bright acidity, soft-to-medium tannins, and a deliciously fresh finish. There's plenty of fruit without feeling heavy, making this an excellent choice when you want a red that is flavorful but not overpowering. Think of this as the Italian red you reach for when you want something delicious, versatile, and uncomplicated. It has enough character to be interesting, but enough charm to disappear rather quickly!

Food Pairing: This is a natural with **pizza, pasta, lasagna, sausage, burgers, and charcuterie**. It's also fantastic with a simple roast chicken or mushroom dish. Try serving it just slightly chilled (or not!), it makes the fruit even more refreshing. **Chicken Parmesan!!** — The wine's bright acidity works beautifully with the tomato sauce, while its juicy cherry and berry flavors complement the crispy chicken and melted cheese.

2021 Gravel Bar Merlot Columbia Valley, Washington

About the wine: Gravel Bar is a Washington producer focused on making approachable wines that deliver plenty of flavor and value. Their 2021 Merlot showcases why Washington has become such a great place for this grape. It's generous and fruit-forward, with enough structure to make it interesting without losing its easy-drinking appeal. This is Washington Merlot doing exactly what it should do: big enough to be satisfying, smooth enough to be easy, and versatile enough to put on the dinner table any night of the week. It's also a great reminder that Merlot can be much more than the supporting player in a Bordeaux blend.

About the region: Washington's **Columbia Valley** is one of the country's best regions for Merlot. The dry climate and long, sunny growing season allow grapes to ripen beautifully, while cool nighttime temperatures help preserve acidity and freshness. The result is often Merlot with ripe fruit, good structure and a little more energy than you might expect.

Tasting notes: The 2021 Gravel Bar is loaded with **black cherry, plum and blackberry**, followed by notes of cocoa, vanilla, spice, and subtle oak. It's smooth and generous on the palate, with ripe tannins and a satisfying finish. There's enough richness to make it feel substantial, but it remains approachable and easy to drink.

Food Pairing: This is a perfect partner for **burgers, steak, barbecue ribs, meatloaf, and grilled sausages**. For something a little different, try it with a mushroom-and-blue-cheese burger—the earthy mushrooms and savory cheese play beautifully with the wine's dark fruit. Or try **grilled pork tenderloin with an apple-and-herb glaze** — The Merlot's ripe plum and blackberry flavors complement the slightly sweet apple, while its soft tannins work nicely with the tender, savory pork.

*This month's benefit for Wine Club Members **only** is \$10 off the Soter Vinyards tasting on September 15th at 5:30PM. Be checking your emails every month for our Wine Club member benefits! Remember also, every time you pick up your Wine Club each month, you receive 10% off everything you purchase!!*