

Molly's BOTTLE CLUB - April 2024

happy eclipse and GAMAY month!

did you know there are Crus in Beaujolais? it's true - in fact there are 10 Crus of Beaujolais which is sorta crazy for such a tiny little region.

And they are quite distinct which makes it even more fun! We can't explore them all in this month's club but we can start soooo fun!!

Sandrine Henriot Beaujolais-Village

from: Beaujolais, France

winemaker/ farmer: Sandrine Henriot

grape: Gamay

facts & random info:

Sandrine used to work with Roland & Joëlle Pignard who were instrumental in the early days of the "return to the old ways" movement. So when they offered for her to take over about 3ha (6-ish acres) of biodynamic vineyards in Régnié, Morgon and Beaujolais-Village (all Grand-Cru's of Beaujolais) like duh! of course you say yes to that. Like the Pignard's, Sandrine works the vineyards with a horse and uses herbal teas (nettle, horsetail, wicker) and fermented extracts of nettle and comfrey to combat mildew or any bad bugs. Harvest is manual and the whole bunches remain in vats for about 7 and 10 days before being pressed and allowed to finish fermenting.

tasting notes: for me, this wine jumps out of the glass with a stunningly, bright red color and aromas of violet, raspberry, cherry and white pepper, with light red fruits on the palate, refreshing and a bit earthy with tart berry fruits and minerals in the finish

pairing ideas: a classic 'chillable' red that would be stunning with friends at the beach and if you brought a charcuterie & creamy cheese plate - all day YES!

Roasted chicken with potato's and a lovely green salad.

Domaine Selene 'Cuvee Printemps'

from: Blacé, Beaujolais, France

winemaker/ farmer: Sylvere & Mathilde Trichard

grape(s): Gamay

facts & random info: In a tiny village just east of Brouilly (a Grand-Cru of Beaujolais), Sylvere came home and is making some incredible wines. After working with one of my hero's at Domaine Belluard in Savoie, he came back to Beaujolais and worked at Domaine Lapalu <insert drool here>. So when he took over his uncle's 4ha of vines (which luckily had been farmed organically and biodynamically since 1998), he was well-prepared to grow & make wines without inputs or additions. As is required in Beaujolais, the wine goes through semi-carbonic maceration and then are aged in concrete - yumyyy!!!
Bottled without fining or filtration.

tasting notes: The carbonic definitely shows up in the both fruity and fresh vibes! and the concrete aging brings that structured minerality. All the red fruit - raspberries, wild strawberries, red currants even hints of red plums balanced with silky tannins and tart acidity.

pairing ideas: smoked ham & cheese sandwich or left-over roasted chicken sandwich!!

mac & cheese that you tried to make like your mom but used the wrong cheese (truffle gouda) and forgot the butter but which ended up being really, really good anyway!!

Les Amethystes

from: Villié Morgon, Beaujolais, France

winemaker/ farmer: Michel Guignier

grape(s): Gamay

facts & random info: there is a super funny story here but we'll have to talk about it later cuz there isn't enough room and it's better in person! Michel is a 4th generation winemaker who is passionate about making wine that reflects its place and we're lucky cuz with vineyards all over Beaujolais, he can & does.

In his words - *"I tend my vines biodynamically by choice and personal conviction. My aim is to bring you natural, chemical-free wines. To this end and taking Biodynamics as my inspiration, I learned to connect with and forged a heightened sensitivity to nature's rhythm for both vines and wine, reawakening the dignity and worth of my craft."*

we've had some good laughs and meals over the years and I can honestly say that he is one helluva guy as well as a great winemaker.

In fact, one of the greats (Lapierre) buys some grapes from Michel and that's high praise indeed.

Two of his wines from Cru vineyards ::

Chiroubles

tasting notes: with vines 40+ years old, there is a distinct minerality backbone that is waltzing with black cherry and currant maybe some light spice, pomegranate and high-toned forest herbs

pairing ideas: dare I say roast chicken again? but seriously, I think an herby-roasted chicken with all the classic accompaniments would be perfect with this wine.

that being said, a generous chunk of Quickie's bandage-wrapped English cheddar and a bit of plum jam was bomb AF as well!!

Morgon

tasting notes: 61 year old vines on soils of decomposed granite and schist in La Roche Pilée and Les Grands Crus vineyards, I mean what's not to like?!! as in OMG - this wine is sorta blowing my mind but maybe it needs a bit of age?!!

deep, dark fruit - italian plum and mulberries! black currant, red currants & hints of spice. Loads of earthy notes - like the way red clay smells after the rain velvety tannic structure that reminds me - this baby could use a decant or some age (i'd say about 8-10yrs)

pairing ideas: super simple steak or grilled hamburger from B&C sub halloumi with a little of the smoke from the grill and I'm in heaven

hard cheeses - think aged comte

although stinky camembert could be pretty yummy here!