



UNCORKED BY THE SEA

Cellar Club October 2023



2021 François Villard Viognier "Contours de Deponcins"- France

François Villard has firmly established himself as one of Condrieu's greatest winemakers. His wines are bright, poised and vivacious with a spine-tingling minerality, combined with amazing depth and intensity. François has 7 hectares of vineyard, which include parcels in Condrieu, as well as small pockets of Côte-Rôtie and Saint-Joseph. He firmly believes in the importance of the soil, more so than exposure, although he has both working in his favor. Viognier is one of the most important white grapes of the northern Rhône where it is used both to produce single varietal wines and as an important blending grape. This wine is a young-vine Viognier from two villages known for Condrieu, Saint-Michel-sur-Rhône and Verin. The soil is sandy granite and mica. Fermented and aged in used barrels for eleven months. Picked late to give them extra body and complexity, but still maintain a thrilling mineral streak and clean acidity. Bright white peaches, apricot and spices aromas on the lively nose. On the palate, this Viognier has an intense minerality, countering the naturally low acidity of the grape to make it vibrant.

Pairings: Viognier generally goes well with the sort of dishes that match well with chardonnay and oaked chenin blancs, with a spicier twist. Seared scallops, grilled lobster and baked crab, creamy/buttery cheeses and sweet root vegetables- carrots, parsnips and sweet potatoes, or spicy butternut squash. It is also an excellent match for mild spicy Chinese, Indian, Mexican and Thai dishes.

2020 Rotem & Mounir Inopia Blanc Cotes du Rhone- France

Mounir Saouma's philosophy is straightforward. He has worked to improve drainage in his vineyards, works with organic manures, and doesn't mind the low yields he is getting in his plots. From this plot, Mounir has been able to acquire additional vineyards, and today farms a total of 21 acres across eight vineyards in all five villages of the appellation (Chateauneuf-du-Pape, Bedarrides, Sorgues, Courthezon, and Orange). The terroirs he works with are reflected in the cellar, as well, where a combination of barrels, foudres, cement, and eggs are used. The wines are never punched down, never racked, and never sulfured until a light addition a month before bottling. They age for between 24-36 months, including this white, which as you might expect has an outsized focus here. This has all the complexity of White Chateauneuf-du-Pape, featuring every grape allowed in the appellation. This white blend dances nicely between heft, richness, acidity and crispness. This wine is intensely perfumed and vibrant nose of citrus, flowers and an almost salty note. It has intensity of flavors and structure, with a beautifully balanced freshness.

Pairings: This wine pairs with Crab, Lobster, Tuna, Salmon, Rich Seafood, Fish Stew. Paella, Soufflé, Quiche, Chicken, Turkey, French Cuisine, Asian Cuisine, and Thai.