

THE PRODUCE ISSUE

HOW TO MAKE
THE MOST OF
YOUR SUMMER

Gourmet

THE MAGAZINE OF GOOD LIVING

**WATERMELON
SUNDAE**

**FRESH
TOMATO PASTA**

**SUMMER
VEGETABLE
TERRINE**

**ROASTED
TOMATO TART**

**TWO-BERRY
SHORTCAKES**

**HUSK-GRILLED
CORN**

**WILD BLUEBERRY
ICE POPS**

**ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR.
ON FISHING**

**CHEFS WHO GROW
THEIR OWN**

RESTAURANT ROULETTE:

**THE "LOCAL"
SEASONAL" SCAM**

U.S.A. \$3.99
CANADA \$4.99
FOREIGN \$4.99



For this month's menus and beyond BY GERALD ASHER

**FARMERS MARKET DINNER**
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Today's California Sauvignon Blancs banish all memories of the pseudo-French Fumés of the '70s, the heavily oaked wannabes of the '80s, and the unripe ("herbaceous") aromas of the '90s. Finally, the wine has found its elegant, refreshing, delicately aromatic self. I chose the Guenoc '05—gently redolent of quince and

melon—to go with the goat-cheese toasts and vegetable terrine. Benziger's North Coast '04 has a riper, rounder feel (perhaps because of the extra time in bottle), as does Patianna's shimmering 2004. Kenwood's Sonoma '05, creamy smooth, has a hint of ripe grape on the nose, and the Frog's Leap '05 is brisk but pleasantly subdued. My favorite is the Spottswoode '04—lively, graceful, complete, and long—but its distribution is very limited (you can order from the winery at 707-963-0134).

For the rack of lamb, I turned to the classic match, Cabernet Sauvignon. Some might quibble with my saying that Stags Leap District—toward the bay end of Napa Valley and open to cool morning fog but also facing the afternoon sun—offers the balance and breed of Bordeaux's St.-Julien (as opposed to Rutherford's approximation of the more muscular Pauillac). But back when a 1973 Cabernet Sauvignon from Stag's Leap Wine Cellars was ranked first among French and California wines at the famous 1976 blind tasting in Paris, it was an endorsement not just of California, of Napa Valley, and of Warren Winiarski, the man who had made the wine, but of Stags Leap District itself. To my taste, Cabernet comes closest to perfection on this particular slope. Impeccably balanced, refined yet complex, the Stag's Leap Wine Cellars S.L.V. Estate '02, the current vintage, is a classic example of all that the district has to offer. But to drink right now, I prefer the Robert Mondavi Stags Leap '01, a seamless wine of finesse and length, with that elusive cigar-box aroma. The Clos Du Val '02 is a brighter, more forthright expression of Cabernet. Shafer's Napa Valley '03, though only 64 percent from Stags Leap District, has the racy style, glow of fruit, and supple length that are the district's hallmark. Shafer does produce a Stags Leap Cabernet, its Hillside Select, but the 2001 is long gone from merchants' shelves, and the 2002 won't be released until later in the year. In the meantime, its Napa Valley 2003 offers glorious consolation.

SIMPLY SEASONAL MENU
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A menu that brings together fresh tomato sauce, salmon with lime butter, arugula, and grilled corn needs a wine that is both flamboyant and succulent. The answer is Roussanne. In the Rhône Valley, it had been disappearing because of its fragility and modest yields. But Roussanne's sappy texture and exotic flavor add dimension to the Rhône's more prevalent Marsanne, and by the 1990s it began gradually finding its place again. At about the same time, the Perrin brothers of Châteauneuf-du-Pape introduced Roussanne into their then-

new California vineyard. Cuttings soon spread to the vineyards of several adventurous growers who started to offer it as a pure varietal wine. One of the first was Zaca Mesa, of Santa Ynez Valley in Santa Barbara County. Its 2004, barrel-fermented and held in wood to age on its lees, makes an opulent and creamy impression. It unfolds slowly and draws the components of our menu together splendidly. Rosenblum's Roussanne '04, using grapes from Fess Parker's vineyard, also in Santa Barbara County, is more assertive and mouth-filling—there's a touch of pineapple in its aroma and flavor—while the Anglim '04, from the Fralich Vineyard in Paso Robles, is both discreet and exquisite. Austin Hope's 2003 Roussanne, from the Mer Soleil vineyard in the Santa Lucia Highlands, has an extraordinary nose, like sunburned grapes and honey together, that you will either love or hate.

California 2004s in which Roussanne is blended with other Rhône varieties vary in style: from the gently plump but authoritative Bec Blanc (with Marsanne and Grenache Blanc) from Beckmen Vineyards, to Arrowood's mildly fruity Côte de Lune Blanc (with Marsanne and Viognier), the flowery Shell and Bone of Edmunds St. John (with Viognier and Marsanne), and Terre Rouge's understated Roussanne blend (with Marsanne and Viognier) called Enigma, a wine that will keep everyone guessing. ☞

**RECOMMENDED WINES****FARMERS MARKET DINNER****CALIFORNIA SAUVIGNON BLANCS**

Benziger, North Coast '04	\$13
Frog's Leap, Rutherford '05	\$17
Guenoc, Lake County '05	\$11
Kenwood, Sonoma '05	\$13
Patianna, Mendocino '04	\$18
Spottswoode, Napa Valley '04	\$32

STAGS LEAP DISTRICT CABERNET SAUVIGNONS

Clos Du Val '02	\$62
Robert Mondavi '01	\$40
Shafer, Napa Valley '03	\$55
Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, S.L.V. Estate '02	\$110

SIMPLY SEASONAL MENU**CALIFORNIA ROUSSANNES**

Anglim, Fralich Vineyard, Paso Robles '04	\$22
Austin Hope, Mer Soleil Vineyard, Santa Lucia Highlands '03	\$30
Rosenblum, Fess Parker Vineyard '04	\$19
Zaca Mesa, Santa Ynez Valley '04	\$25

CALIFORNIA ROUSSANNE BLENDS

Arrowood, Côte de Lune Blanc, Saralee's Vineyard '04	\$20
Beckmen Vineyards, Le Bec Blanc, Purisima Mountain '04	\$20
Edmunds St. John, Shell and Bone, Paso Robles '04	\$25
Terre Rouge, Enigma, Sierra Foothills '04	\$22