

# EXPLOR

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## **UNION SACRÉ 2020 SYLVANER, RANCHO SISQOUC VINEYARD, SANTA MARIA, CA**

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Union Sacré is a project formed by two long-time friends with different backgrounds unifying around a common goal: to produce Alsatian-influenced wines from the central coast of California.

Xavier is a WSET certified, oenology degree holding ex-boxer from France, Philip is a self-taught designer from Michigan who kind of misses living in a van. Between the two of them, Xavier and Philip have 25+ years of experience working in Central Coast wineries. Xavier has been cellar master or assistant winemaker for some of the Central Coasts' most luminous wineries, including Sans Liege, Arcadian, and Herman Story. Philip cut his teeth at Proof Wine Collective before taking on the creative director role at Herman Story and Desparada. The wines of Union Sacre are focused on elegant, single vineyard, single varietal wines that are table friendly.

We love this 100% Sylvaner from them because it is exceedingly rare to find the varietal grown in California and done this well. Notes of white flowers, Granny Smith apple, pear combine with just enough body to support the high levels of acidity present in this wine. Try pairing this Sylvaner with milder Thai dishes or our signature Crab Dip with Sriracha!



**MAY 2021**

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## **XAVIER FRISSANT 2014 "M' DE LA TOUCHE," CÔT, TOURAIN AMBOISE, FRANCE**

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We love this wine because it is 100% Côt from the Loire region of France, a grape that is more popularly known throughout the rest of the world as Malbec.

However, there is little resemblance between the popular Malbecs of Argentina or the brooding wines of Cahors and a wine such as this, made from the same grape from the Loire region. Once past the dark hue, you enter the unmistakable world of energetic, nervy, and mineral Loire wines. The low alcohol keeps the wine bouyant, and the finish is long.

The Frissant estate has passed from father to son for eight generations continuing this age-old tradition of Malbec from one of its original places of origin. While slightly older in vintage, we've found this wine to be very alive and dynamic. When first opened, notes of blueberry and mocha are present. After about an hour or two of breathing time, a more rustic edge is revealed with freshly turned, muddy, earthy notes showing up. After several more hours, both the fruitier aspects and the structural components become harmonious, offering a fantastically complex wine at a great value as well as a different perspective as to what Malbec can be when grown in different regions.

Try pairing this wine with simple, rustic French fare like braised meats, stews, or even with a mature farmhouse cheese with toasted bread and berries.



**MAY 2021**

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## DOMAINE DE SAJE 2018 "MARQUIS ANSELEME MATHIEU," CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE, FRANCE

For many years, Jérôme Mathieu worked alongside his brother André at Domaine Mathieu, managing the estate passed down from their parents. In 2015, André's eldest son came of age, and the brothers amicably agreed to split the domain to have clear lines of inheritance. Jérôme, who lives in his grandfather's house in the center of the village, subsequently spent 2015-16 revamping his grandfather's old cellar to prepare to make wine under his own roof as of 2016. He created Saje and began to use this label with the 2013 vintage – a vintage he made with his brother and, as with the 2014 and 2015 vintages, divided along agreed partitions.

While Domaine de Saje is relatively young, the Mathieu family is the oldest wine producing family in Châteauneuf. The wisdom of the ages is something keenly felt, and goes a long way toward explaining Jérôme Mathieu's staunch traditionalism. It's worth noting that this is one of the few growers who never went down the super-ripe rabbit hole that so many of the appellation's producers dove into during the last twenty years (in an unfortunate commonality with Napa Valley).

Based on 85% Grenache, followed by a field blend containing all the 13 permitted varietals of the region (including white grapes), this cuveée come from three of the estate's oldest parcels, some dating back over 100 years and is only made in limited quantities in excellent vintages.

Deep notes of wild Provence herbs along with a pronounced scent of hot rocks are accompanied by dark, spiced plum and cherry along with an elegant, floral lift, that ends with notes of fig. Exceptionally balanced and layered, we believe that this wine will continue to age gracefully into the next decade but is definitely enjoyable in its youth.

Try pairing this fantastic blend with traditional rustic French dishes like Cassoulet or for a more modern twist, Korean BBQ.



MAY 2021