

Wine Pairing

First Course-

Wine Pairing

LAMBERT DE SEYSSSEL - 50Z GLASS

Seysssel may be unknown to many oenophiles today, but the vineyards of this small appellation are regularly mentioned in documents dating back to at least the 11th century, and with the development of sparkling wine production methods in the 19th century a new Seysssel mousseux was created that quickly gained great popularity. Even Queen Victoria is said to have enjoyed the region's sparkling wines during spa stays in neighboring towns. The "Royal Seysssel" label (originally called "Royal Carte Bleue"), launched in 1901 by the Varichon and Clerc families, was considered for many years to be the best sparkling Seysssel on the market. But when the operation was purchased in the 1990s by a large Burgundian négociant, quality suffered badly, and in 2007 the owners finally closed the local winery, keeping only the rights to the name 'Varichon et Clerc' in order to shift the name recognition in the market to their other sparkling wines. Dismayed to see what their great local wine had come to, Seyssselans Gérard and Catherine Lambert teamed up with Olivier Varichon, great-grandson of the founder, to buy back the Royal Seysssel label and recreate the light, floral wine that was once so renowned.

The sparkling wines of Seysssel indulge in the same méthode traditionnelle production techniques used for Champagne, and Lambert de Seysssel takes it one step further by aging the Royal Seysssel for at least three years before disgorging it, giving the wine more complex, distinguished aromas and a fine perlage than the competition, which ages only the legal minimum of nine months. The house style is also quite dry (low dosage) in order to preserve the character of the grape varieties.

Second Course-

Wine Pairing:

DOMAINE D'AUPILHAC "LOU MASET" 50Z GLASS

Three generations of Fadats have farmed the large, eighteen-hectare lieu-dit known as Aupilhac, in the village of Montpeyroux, across the river Hérault from Daumas Gassac and Grange des Pères. While the Fadats have farmed this land since the nineteenth century, and the vineyards date even farther back to the time of the Romans, it was not until 1989 that the current member of the Fadat family, Sylvain, finally registered the domaine as a vigneron indépendant. Aupilhac is a special parcel for many reasons. Nestled below the ruins of the village's château, these terraced vineyards of limestone scree and marl enjoy perfect southwest sun exposure, giving dense, chewy wines loaded with Mediterranean soul. Sylvain is not one to shy away from hard work. In an ancient volcanic amphitheatre littered with marine fossils and big chunks of limestone, he has done what few vignerons dare to do nowadays: he spent years clearing the land of boulders and shrubbery before finally planting a vineyard. The white and red produced in the stunning Cocalières site benefit from high elevation—the parcel lies well above the village at 350 meters above sea level—and cooler, northern exposure, yielding wines of incredible purity, finesse, and electrifying minerality. This was not only an enormous financial investment, but also back-breaking labor.

What happens in the cellars is equally compelling. Domaine d'Aupilhac's wines find a terrific balance of ripe fruit and silky tannins, power and grace. When aged, these wines achieve a complexity rarely found in wines sold for many times the price, while their wildness and intensity makes them equally appealing young.

Third Course-

Wine Pairing:

DOMAINE DE DURBAN, MUSCAT BEAUMES-DE-VENISE 20Z GLASS

To walk through the high-altitude vineyards at Domaine de Durban is to walk through an astounding span of history. On the site of a former Roman healing springs destination, a mere handful of soil reveals well-preserved, ancient Roman roof tiles and medieval pot shards. The domaine and its vineyards sit atop a picturesque plateau in the Vaucluse, sheltered by the Dentelles de Montmirail, just above the village of Beaumes-de-Venise. The scenic views put one at pause considering the timelessness—wine has been a part of the culture here for millennia, and ancient philosopher Pliny the Elder was the first known to praise the Muscat from this place. During the Middle Ages, it was a fortified farm, where it has run regularly since 1159. Jacques Leydier bought the property in the 1960s when the farm had fallen into disrepair. Today, his grandsons, Henri and Philippe, are running the domaine. This magical spot has assumed a higher purpose today, producing some of the most memorable wines of the Southern Rhône.

The Leydiers are particularly proud of their Muscat de Beaumes-de-Venise, a vin doux naturel, as they are among the last to craft it in the traditional style. Leydier's old-fashioned vinification keeps the spirits as low as possible, so that they may hold on to the bright freshness in the grapes. One can find more powerful Muscats, but none as tasty and fine.