

Our goal with the Natty Club is to provide you with a fresh take on the classics while digging deep into wine's roots. This month, we've packed two wines that feel like benchmarks for their style, a brambly-fruited red and an orange.

THE CELLAR D'OR

WINE & CIDER

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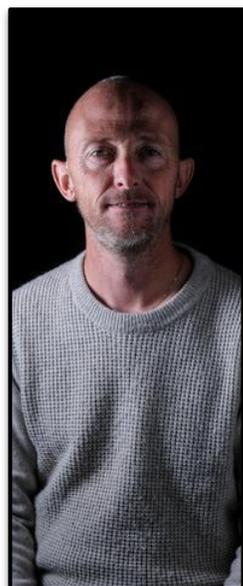
2020 Eros de Vincent — Christian Binner

Key Words: Alsace, France Organic Hand-Harvested 25 Days Skin Contact 8 Months Lees Aging in Foudre No Sulphur Added

Christian Binner's 'Eros De David' aromatic orange from Alsace is one of these wines we've come to rely on year after year. Folks are still trying to contextualize orange wine and I find the need to take care when making an orange wine recommendation. I can go one of two directions... 1.) I give them a classic example of orange wine ('classic' loosely referring to more tannic-earthly styles)... 2.) I give them a juicy yummy orange wine with fruit. 'Wait... wine isn't always yummy?' Think of it like this — fried chicken is arguably yummiier than... I don't know, 95% of food — but it doesn't mean it's the most *tasteful thing*, nor will it work for every food situation for every person.

For example, an increasing number of folks have stopped into the shop to ask for Georgian orange wine. The country is credited as one of the birthplaces of the category. Often, Georgian orange is aged in amphora, contains little to no added sulfites, and is made in a rather unkempt oxidative style. It's a rugged, big, chewy style of orange wine that accentuates the oddities of the style. But... in essence... these rustic characteristics, however classic, are not the reason behind the recent resurgence of orange wine. Rather, it's the juicy-floral drinkable styles that garner social media hype and get people into natural wine bars. They taste good and they're fun. Just like fried chicken.

Eros de David (comprised of 40% Pinot Gris, 40% Riesling, 20% Sylvaner) hits a sweet spot. The aromatic varieties that lend themselves so well to producing this juicy-floral style are naturally found in the vineyards of Alsace. Binner's 'Pirouette' line — which 'Eros de David' is a bottling of — is comprised of patchwork of growers who would otherwise have sold their grapes to a bulk wine producer. Instead, Binner bottles each growers juice *separately*. Eros de David is one of these bottlings from a single 0.5 hectare plot of vines. This aromatic Orange has the orange-peel tannin and savory qualities of the 'classic' styles of 'Middle-Europe' but also the juicy tangerine-soaked strawberry fruit people flock for.



Christian Binner

2019 Merlot - Deux Punx

Key Words: Carneros, California Spontaneous Whole Berry Fermentation Unfiltered & Unfined 10 Months Aging 73 Case Production

I still sense whiffs of it... Merlot microaggressions... I'm honestly done talking about the whole thing. Not because Merlot doesn't deserve to be defended, but I'm pretty sure people have no idea why they frown at Merlot. Just a vague idea that they are supposed to not think of Merlot with the same allure as Cabernet Sauvignon and therefore... therefore... UGHGH. OMG just get over yourselves and drink some good Merlot. It's likely born out of folks chasing the most inky, high alcohol wines possible — a style better equipped to take on a smattering of new oak. Well, if grapes are a vehicle for oak — then, yes, Cabernet Sauvignon can take on new oak better than loftier, elegant, lifted styles of Merlot. But, what a goofy frame of reference for how to categorize a grape. I don't care *that much* about Merlot, but I do if people think it sucks.

Deux Punx is a collaboration. I love these small production wines made by small teams of people from California. It's honestly where some of the better price to quality ratios live for natural wine. They're sharing facilities, drawing their own labels... and might not outright own their vineyards but work hand in hand with the people that do. For me, the people behind these wines are part of what make them special. It's funny how many California wineries try to impress with regality, when in essence, it's simply a show of wealth. If you are making \$200/bottle Cab, you know exactly the type of people you are producing wine for, and what they like and you know there are people who will never be able to try your wine. I want to drink the labor-of-love-wine made by the small team that pulled their life savings together to make a wine... for me to drink. When the people making your wine don't even have a winery or anything to say for it but the wine itself — it can actually be a *good indication of quality and craft*. This is Deux Punx.

A mouthful of crushed raspberry fruit drives past the broad red plum backdrop in this Merlot. I honestly couldn't stop drinking this and sort of forgot to take a great tasting note — because Merlot is freaking delicious. But there is a good amount of extraction here that gives this Merlot a ton of palate presence while it gushes with the vibrant natty fruit.



Two halves of the two halves of Deux Punx