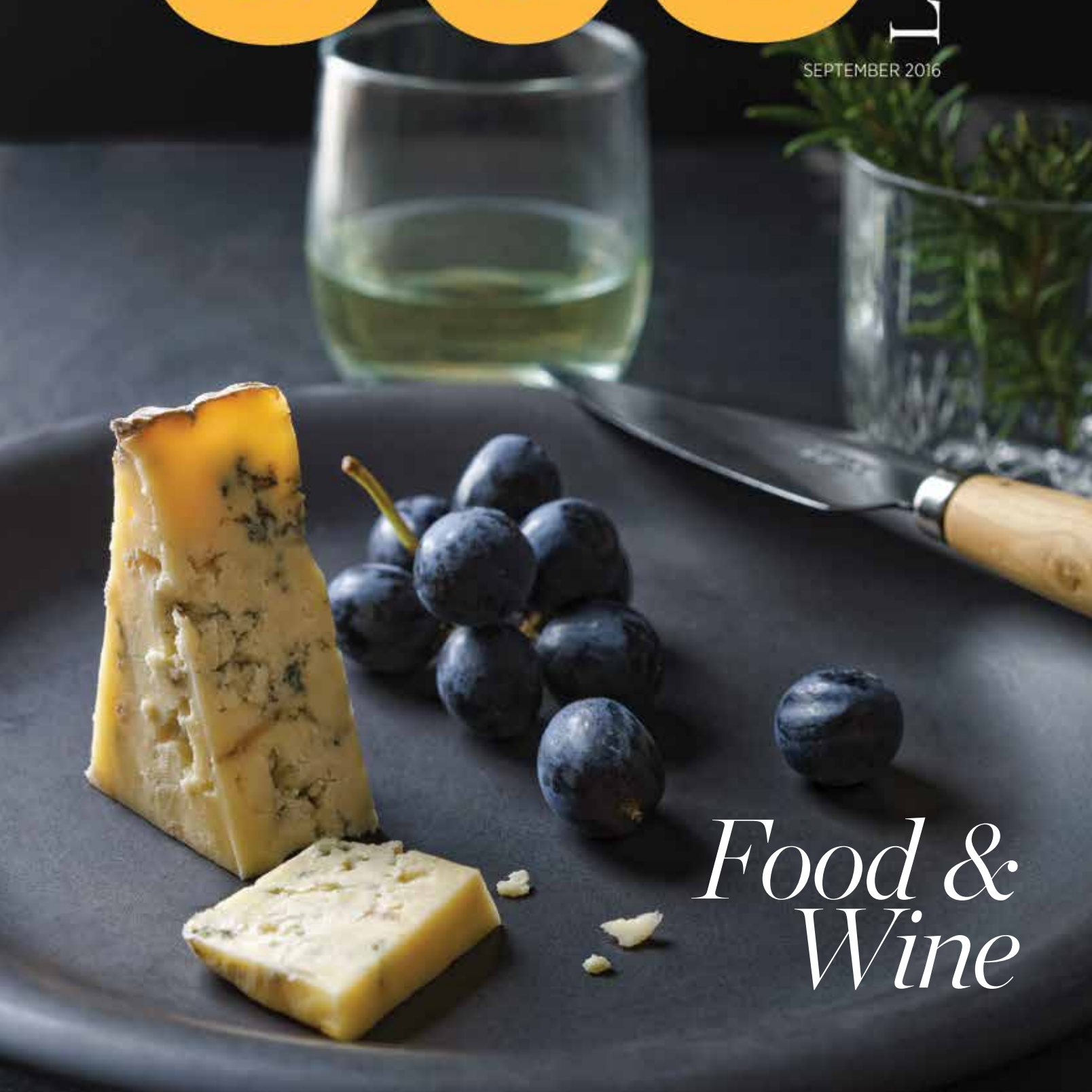


# 805 LIVING

SEPTEMBER 2016



*Food &  
Wine*



# MEATLESS MATCHES

Pairing tips for vegetarian meals.

BY SHAUNA BURKE

**IF THERE ARE TWO CLASSES OF FOOD AND DRINK** that are inherently made to complement each other, vegetables and wine surely top the list. The idea of pairing the two is certainly not new, but it has been a bit overshadowed by our unrelenting love of animal protein. Since people eat the same animal proteins all over the world, the challenge is to find what pairs best with the rest of the plate—the grains, vegetables, and fruits. Today’s dinner plates, both at home and in restaurants, are increasingly plant-based, so it only makes sense that diners and sommeliers are searching for the best wines to tackle the job. What follows are several alluring and food-friendly wines along with pairings and ideas that bring these earthy elements together.

## Sparkling

**RIVERBENCH 2012 CORK JUMPER  
BLANC DE NOIRS SPARKLING WINE**  
SANTA MARIA VALLEY, \$45  
RIVERBENCH.COM

*Blanc de noirs*, meaning “white from black,” is so named because its white juice is pressed from 100-percent red or black grapes without their skins. This creates a sparkling wine that is bold enough to cut through fatty richness yet light enough to pair with a simple green salad. Not to mention, it’s pretty good on its own. Try a sinful adult mac and cheese made with soft smoked Gouda and white cheddar, topped with buttery toasted rye bread crumbs.

## Rosé

**BECKMEN VINEYARDS 2015 PURISIMA  
MOUNTAIN VINEYARD GRENACHE ROSÉ**  
BALLARD CANYON, SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, \$25  
BECKMENVINEYARDS.COM

Nothing quite says “Leave me be, I’m relaxing on the patio” like a glass of chilled rosé. Californians don’t have to end rosé season once summer comes to a close, and that’s a good thing since rosé is a workhorse of wine pairing. It loves caprese salad, a bowl of mixed olives, vegetable paella, or fresh red berries. Try it with a salad of watermelon, feta cheese, and arugula, drizzled with a citrusy vinaigrette.

## White

**TABLAS CREEK VINEYARD 2015 VERMENTINO**  
ADELAIDA DISTRICT, PASO ROBLES, \$27  
TABLASCREEK.COM

Vermentino is a varietal with increasing plantings in the United States, and when Tablas Creek decided to plant the white grape on its property it surely paid off. This wine is crisp and clean, with a luscious and lingering mouthfeel. It’s the perfect wine for late summer or early autumn. Pair it with grilled country bread slathered with garlic aioli, topped with sliced radishes and *fleur de sel*. It also works well with light pasta dishes, like capellini tossed with olive oil, freshly squeezed lemon juice, and sea salt.





**CLAIBORNE & CHURCHILL 2015 EDELSZWICKER**

CENTRAL COAST, \$22  
 CLAIBORNECHURCHILL.COM

Edelszwicker is a dry Alsatian-style blend of gewürztraminer, riesling, pinot gris, and pinot blanc, which pairs beautifully with goat's and sheep's milk cheeses. Claiborne & Churchill's winemaker, Coby Parker-Garcia, also notes that the wine "shows off lively gewürztraminer spice that begs for spicy ethnic food."

**TATOMER 2015 PARAGON GRÜNER VELTLINER**

EDNA VALLEY, \$28  
 TATOMERWINES.COM

Grüner veltliner steps up to the plate to pair with notoriously difficult ingredients like funky French cheese, asparagus, and artichokes. For a scrumptious pairing, toss trimmed asparagus spears with olive oil, salt, and pepper, grill or broil until the tips turn golden brown and the stalks are tender but still firm, and then top with a poached egg.

**Reds**

**AU BON CLIMAT 2015 PINOT NOIR**

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, \$24  
 AUBONCLIMAT.COM

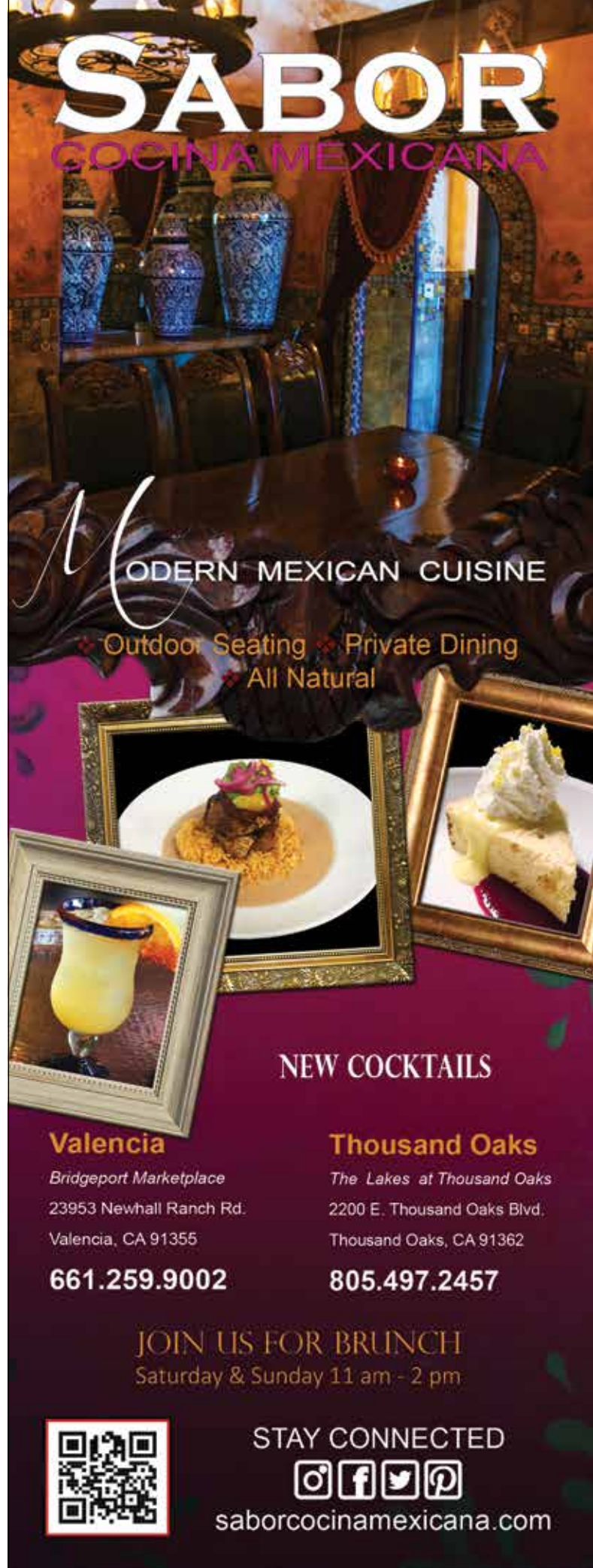
A traditional pinot noir, with a nod to Burgundy, will show considerable earthiness on the palate. It's just begging for equally earthy and rustic food pairings, like beet and fennel risotto topped with a handful of fresh, soft herbs or grilled chanterelle and *maitake* (aka hen of the wood) mushrooms drizzled with soy sauce.

**ADELAIDA CELLARS 2013 RESERVE CABERNET FRANC**

ADELAIDA DISTRICT, PASO ROBLES, \$65  
 ADELAIDA.COM

Cabernet franc is one of the most food-friendly red varietals on the planet, mainly due to its natural high acidity, making it a good match for tomato- or vinegar-based sauces and stewed beans or legumes. Adelaida winemaker Jeremy Weintraub describes his reserve cab franc as "highly aromatic in the nose and dense and structured in the mouth, with less astringency than you'd find in cabernet franc from Bordeaux or in the Loire Valley, but with lively, pronounced acidity." A black lentil and tomato ragout with lots of fresh herbs is a great pairing with this wine. ♦

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