

# Speaking of wine

By Russ Disotell

With 2,500 plus years of wine-making history it seems strange to have to alert people to the fact that there are some outstanding wines coming out of Greece. There always have been, but few until now, that made it to the LCBO's shelves. It also may be laid at the feet of Retsina, the aromatic, resinated wine that was the face of Greek wines in Ontario for



was the face of Greek wines in Ontario for decades. The pine scented, pine flavoured charmer was not a hit here, beyond the Greek community, and folks like me. (trust me, it is spectacular with Greek cuisine, cutting through the rich fatty flavours).

But if you are a seafood or fish lover listen up. Run, don't walk to the LCBO and snatch up a bottle or two of Santo Santorini Assyrtiko 2016 (CSPC# 459032, \$15.00) because it just might become your favourite white to accompany the ocean's bounty. Refreshing, crisp and aromatic, there is a lot to like about this pearl of the Aegean. Aromas of citrus, gooseberries, melon, green apple and pear dominate the complex, tantalizing nose. The palate is crisp, herbaceous and lively; the perfect combination for a summer aperitif or food pairing. Firm acidity is perfectly balanced with generous citrus, yellow plum, white grapefruit and honeydew fruit, with herbal undertones of dill, parsley and lemon grass. The finish is lengthy, complex and very refreshing.

Assyrtiko makes a fantastic summer sipping wine, but shines with food. Local freshwater catches such as bass, pike and perch match up very nicely. Seafood such as shrimp, mussels, calamari and especially oysters are perfect with the Chablis of Southern Europe.

Herb crusted lamb or pork is also in it's wheelhouse. Summer fare such as hummus, eggplant, olives and tomato and cucumber salads, with feta cheese also pair nicely.

Cabernet Franc is something of an Ontario specialty. One of the most consistent producers is Chateau Des Charmes, as witnessed by their Cabernet Franc 2015 (CSPC# 162602, \$14.95), which should be in everyone's summer wine selections. Consider Cabernet Franc as a lighter, livelier, more aromatic cousin of Cabernet Sauvignon. Blackberry, Cassis, plum, and lightly peppery underpinnings of oregano or tarragon dominate both the inviting, open nose and the complex palate. Fruit is nicely balanced by dusty tannins and food friendly acidity. The finish is lingering and bright.

Cab Franc is a versatile food wine, pairing with roast chicken, pork, veal, beef, lamb or sausage. It is also a wonderful match for cooked or stewed tomatoes because of its crisp nature. Keep this in mind for matching tomato-based barbecue sauces. Enjoy! **LH**

*Russ Disotell enjoyed a twelve-year career with the LCBO. He spent the last four years as Product Advisor in Vintages purchasing where he was a member of the buying panel and endured the arduous task of tasting products every week! Since leaving the Board he has written columns and articles on wine, helped develop wine lists and conducted wine tastings. Russ has been writing for Living Here Magazine since it's inception in 2013 and we are grateful for his insights and recommendations to our readers on finding the perfect wine to go with food, friends and family!*