

April
2021 **ADVENTURES**



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2019 FRIULI COLLI ORIENTALI PINOT GRIGIO LA VIARTE

Once upon a time, an Alsatian producer of Pinot Gris offered us the following assessment of white wines made from the grape variety's Italian equivalent, Pinot Grigio: "The climate is too cold, they harvest too early, and the wines are underripe and lacking character." There may be some truth to this, at least in the context he was referring to: mass-produced, commercially widespread bottles.

But when made artisanally, Italian Pinot Grigio can be exceptional. There are two in particular we love wholeheartedly, both originating in the same DOC, Friuli Colli Orientali, or "Eastern Hills of Friuli," near the Slovenian border. With its cool climate and well-draining flysch soils, this slice of northeastern Italy is home to top-notch terroir for Pinot Grigio—and many other varieties!—and Alberto Piovan and his meticulous team at La Viarte know precisely when to harvest it. Their Pinot Grigio may not be as rich or perfumed as Alsatian Pinot Gris, but what it lacks in opulence it more than makes up for in texture, vigor, and refreshment. With its mineral spine and notes of citrus and spring flowers, it is the perfect wine to start a night or pair with all sorts of specialties from the sea. —TOM WOLF



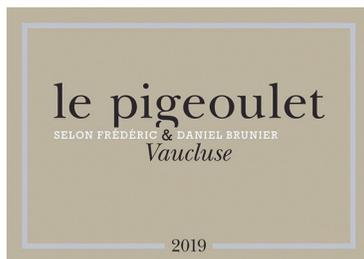
\$25.00 *per bottle* **\$270.00** *per case*



ABOVE *La Viarte* COVER From left to right: Daniel Brunier, Frédéric Brunier, Kermit Lynch, and the late Henri Brunier, 1985. © Gail Skoff

**2019 VIN DE PAYS DE VAUCLUSE ROUGE “LE PIGEOULET”
FAMILLE BRUNIER**

For decades, the Brunier brothers of Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe have produced a world-class *rouge* from the southern Rhône Valley’s most prestigious appellation, Châteauneuf-du-Pape. With their Pigeoulet, they prove just as capable of mastering the hedonistic country quaffer, which teems with northern Provence’s most irresistible qualities: the succulent red and black fruit, stony core, hint of black olive, and *garrigue*. The Bruniers farm the Grenache, Syrah, Carignan, Cinsault, and Mourvèdre that make up this cuvée on two distinct parcels: the first situated on the east side of the Rhône, near Châteauneuf-du-Pape, and the second farther east, along the lower, southwest-facing slopes of Mont Ventoux. The Bruniers’ vast experience in crafting elegant reds in this southern climate is on full display in the 2019 bottling. This was a warm year in the region, but the ethereal Pigeoulet showcases remarkable finesse and drinkability. Pair it with roast chicken or lamb, or alongside an assortment of hummus, baba ganoush, falafel, black olives, and the freshest pita you can find. —TOM WOLF



\$22.00 per bottle \$237.60 per case

					
2019 Friuli Colli Orientali Pinot Grigio <i>La Viarte</i>	Pinot Grigio	16- to 34-year-old vines Eocene marl and sandstone	Serve <i>cold</i> 48–52° F Do not decant	Citrus, spring flowers, stones Mineral, zesty, chiseled	Drink now
2019 Vin de Pays de Vaucluse Rouge “Le Pigeoulet” <i>Famille Brunier</i>	55% Grenache, 15% Syrah, 15% Carignan, 8% Cinsault, 7% Mourvèdre	25-year-old vines, on average Clay with sandy alluvial deposits	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant optional	Black cherries, black olive, <i>garrigue</i> Ethereal, stony, balanced	Drink now

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

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FRICO

BY CHRISTOPHER LEE

This delicious Friulian creation is made in different ways. You're seeking a golden browning of the potato and onion and an even melting of the cheese inside—one of the most seductive parts of cooking. Fortunately, these days we have non-stick pans (be sure yours is not Teflon). The brightness of La Viarte's Pinot Grigio provides an uplifting contrast to the cheesy potatoes. I also enjoy pairing the frico with the Bruniers' sensual, deep Pigeoulet. If you can't find Montasio cheese, the typical cheese for this dish, look for Piave or a firm Fontina.

1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced	1 teaspoon salt
3 ounces olive oil mixed with 2 ounces clarified butter	2 ounces Montasio and 2 ounces Grana Padano or Parmesan cheeses, coarsely grated
3 Russet potatoes, peeled, held in water	

Sauté onion in 1 ounce of the olive oil/butter mixture over low-medium heat, stirring often, until onions are evenly golden brown. Drain on a paper towel and allow to cool to room temperature.

Grate potatoes or use the grater plate of a food processor. Drain potatoes in a sieve, pressing with a spatula to expel water. Fluff potatoes so they do not clump together. Do not rinse or allow them to sit for too long—about 20 minutes is maximum—or they will discolor. Heat a non-stick skillet to medium and add 2 ounces oil mixture to pan.

Spread half of grated potatoes evenly in the pan. Salt potatoes lightly. Sprinkle cheese and onions on the potatoes. Place the other half of potatoes on top of the cheese, and lightly salt the potato layer. Press the cake down gently. Tuck in the edges with a spatula and smooth the top. Drizzle oil mixture in a stream around edge of frico until you can see sizzling. Adjust heat to maintain an even sizzle and fry on first side for about 12 minutes. Gently spin frico in the pan so bottom browns evenly. When bottom of frico is golden brown (peek with the spatula), place a flat dish on top of the skillet, invert the frico onto the dish, and then return the frico to the frying pan. Fry the frico on its other side, about 10 more minutes. Add more oil mixture around the edge to ensure that the frico browns properly; look for bubbling at the edge. When done, remove the frico from the pan and place on a paper towel to drain excess fat. Cut frico into equal pieces and serve. *Serves 4–6*

