

SALTSPRING ISLAND MUSSEL & SPRING ONION BRUSCHETTA

BY GARY PODESTO

Early summer is one of those “shoulder seasons” that many cooks find vexing because the best spring vegetables are waning and the mainstays of summer have yet to emerge. But the resourceful cook appreciates this limitation, relying on creativity to work with what’s available. Patrimonio Rosé “Cru des Agriates” from Domaine Giacometti is a unique wine from a rugged locale with a marine-influenced character that immediately brings to mind the flavors of shellfish, spring onions, and fennel. When the market stalls are filled with these humble vegetables, a quick ragout fortified with sustainably farmed mussels makes a simple, nutrient-packed meal. (If you still have some peas around, throw those in, too!) The region known as the Agriates Desert was once the breadbasket of Corsica, and the wine being produced there today is proof that much can be achieved when resources are limited.

Extra-virgin olive oil	½ cup dry white wine
4 ¾-inch-thick slices of country bread	1 tablespoon anise liqueur, such as Pernod or Ricard
2 garlic cloves, sliced	3 ounces unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes
2 spring onions, sliced	2 tablespoons wild fennel greens, chopped
½ head of fennel, thinly sliced	2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
2 small carrots, peeled and thinly sliced	½ lemon, zested
30 mussels, soaked and de-bearded, preferably from Saltspring Island	1 teaspoon fennel pollen

Heat ⅛ inch of olive oil in a Dutch oven or cast-iron pan over medium heat. Fry slices of bread on both sides until crispy but still soft in the center. Reserve.

Wipe out any excess oil. Add a splash of fresh oil, garlic, onions, fennel, and carrots, and sauté for 3 minutes over medium-low heat. Increase heat to high, add mussels, white wine, and anise liqueur, and cover for 2 to 3 minutes to steam.

Using tongs or a slotted spoon, remove mussels as they open and let them cool on a large plate. Discard any that don’t open. Carefully remove mussels from their shells and set in a bowl. Discard shells and add any residual liquid to mussel pot.

Bring mussel pot to a simmer and cook until vegetables are tender. Then reduce heat a little and whisk in butter a piece at a time until a nice sauce has emulsified. Lower heat, add mussels, fennel greens, and parsley, and warm through. Add a squeeze of lemon juice and taste for final seasoning.

Place a slice of toast on each plate and top with the mussel ragout. Finish with a little lemon zest, fennel pollen, and a drizzle of your best olive oil.

Serves 4



Gary Podesto is a cook at Chez Panisse restaurant in Berkeley, California, and is the chief culinary collaborator for the Climate Farm School. His work aims to revitalize the ritual of gathering around the hearth and table while promoting the values of edible education and regenerative agriculture. Learn more at www.garypodesto.net.

ADVENTURES

June 2024



2023 PATRIMONIO ROSÉ “CRU DES AGRIATE”

DOMAINE GIACOMETTI

orsica’s craggy Agriates Desert may not be quite as arid and barren as the Mojave, but it is nevertheless a dry, dusty, and windswept corner at the north end of the island that doesn’t immediately scream “wine paradise” the same way the rest of the Patrimonio appellation does, half an hour east. Forty years ago, when the Giacometti family purchased an estate and vineyard here, the previous owner told them, “Welcome to the village where it’s always raining somewhere else.” And yet, in the four decades since they settled in this desert, the Giacomettis have turned an unlikely pocket of Patrimonio into an outstanding source of whites, reds, and rosés. The last are celebrations of Niellucciu and Sciaccarellu, the ratios of which change every year depending on the conditions of the vintage. In 2023, this rosé is zesty, herbaceous, and spicy, evoking the aromatic shrubland, known as maquis, that abounds in the Agriates. Notes of tangerine, melon, and peach come together in a beautiful wine that would pair well with all sorts of salads, antipasti, and grilled seafood. —TOM WOLF

\$25.00 per bottle

\$270.00 per case



ABOVE

Giacometti’s vines in the Agriates Desert. © Domaine Giacometti

COVER

Cyriaque Rozier’s vines in Pic Saint Loup. © Château Fontanès

2022 PAYS D’OC ROUGE “LES TRAVERSES DE FONTANÈS”







CHÂTEAU FONTANÈS

his delicious country red might be the unlikeliest success story of southern France. Two decades ago, Cyriaque Rozier, vigneron of Château La Roque in Pic Saint Loup, was so inspired by a nearby plot of Cabernet Sauvignon vines planted in 1970 that he purchased it and, as a side project, started making wine under his own label. He wasn’t interested in fashioning some grand expression of the grape in the vein of Bordeaux, but rather a pure and joyous *rouge* that would exist happily on any table. I can’t think of anywhere else I’ve tasted this unique combination of grape, terroir, and farming: Cabernet’s classic notes of plum and currant bear a trace of southern French *garrigue*, and it’s all carried on a fresh and graceful frame, thanks to Cyriaque’s biodynamic farming and vinification in stainless steel *cuves* to retain as much freshness and purity of fruit as possible. This beautiful *rouge* is at once savory, soulful, and elegant, representing as perfect a candidate for your summer cooler or ice bucket as your favorite juicy reds from the Beaujolais or Loire. —TOM WOLF

\$20.00 per bottle

\$216.00 per case



					
2023 Patrimonio Rosé “Cru des Agriate” <i>Domaine Giacometti</i>	85% Niellucciu, 15% Sciaccarellu	Vines planted 1988, 1990, 1993 Granite	Serve <i>cold</i> 46–50°F Decant optional	Tangerine, melon, peach Zesty, herbaceous, spicy	Drink now
2022 Pays d’Oc Rouge “Les Traverses de Fontanès” <i>Château Fontanès</i>	Cabernet Sauvignon	Vines planted 1970 Clay, limestone, marl	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62°F Decant optional	Plum, currant, <i>garrigue</i> Savory, unadorned, joyous	Drink now

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