

ADVENTURES

October 2021









2019 SAVENNIÈRES CHÂTEAU D'ÉPIRÉ

e have imported few wines longer than Château d'Épiré's Savennières. This *blanc* represents so much about what we look for in French wine: terroir, tradition, and value. To start, Savennières is arguably France's greatest site for Chenin Blanc. With its schist soils—which give the wine nerve and structure—and proximity to the moderating Loire River, Savennières offers ideal conditions for serious and age-worthy Chenin. The Bizard family, who has overseen a domaine here since the eighteenth century, vinifies this dry white wine in stainless-steel tanks housed within a former Roman chapel dating back to the twelfth century, roughly when the Plantagenets from nearby Angers assumed the throne of England. The resulting *blanc* is fresh and zesty, but it also displays impressive texture and heft. With notes of pear, stones, and citrus, this beautiful, approachable Chenin delivers versatility and such terroir-driven character, it is destined to serve you well again and again for at least the next five years. —TOM WOLF



\$26.00 per bottle \$280.80 per case

					
2019 Savennières Château d'Épiré	Chenin Blanc	35-year-old vines, on average Schist	Serve <i>cold</i> 48–52° F Do not decant	Pear, stones, citrus Zesty, textured, medium-bodied	Drink now through 2025
2019 Langhe Nebbiolo Tintero	Nebbiolo	20-year-old vines Clay, limestone	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant recommended	Black cherry, roses, blood orange Classic, versatile, savory	Drink now

KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

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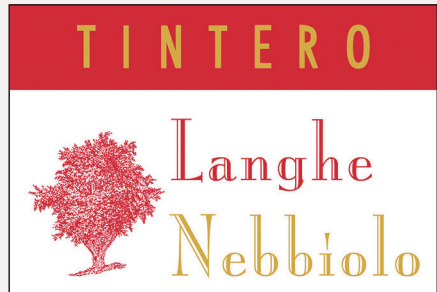
2019 LANGHE NEBBIOLO TINTERO

Piemonte may have gained its renown at the hands of Barolo and Barbaresco, but if you know where to look, you can find as much pleasure and reward in the region's best bargains as you can in its loftiest bottlings. Marco Tintero is a specialist of the former, producing wines of remarkable value east of those two noted zones, in the spectacular hills around the town of Mango. Tintero creates this *rosso* from the same variety that stars in Barolo and Barbaresco, but this is weeknight or *aperitivo* Nebbiolo, a lighter and more delicate rendition of what many consider to be Italy's greatest red grape. You still encounter Nebbiolo's trademark backbone of tannin, but it's been tamed over the course of one year in barrels and *botti*, making for a bottle that is perfect alongside *tagliatelle al ragù* or even just some cuts of *salumi*.

—TOM WOLF

\$14.00 per bottle

\$151.20 per case



ABOVE Tintero's vineyards. © Dixon Brooke

COVER Épiré's proprietor, Paul Bizard, and former cellarmaster. © Gail Skoff

TOMATO AND CHEESE TART FROM THE LOIRE

BY CHRISTOPHER LEE

Tomato tarts appear on many French tables, in endless variation. In California, we're lucky to have wonderful tomatoes available in just about any grocery store and in many forms—countless varieties of heirlooms in a rainbow of colors, beautiful red slicers, excellent hybrids. Local farmers' markets are terrific sources. Choose whatever kinds you find attractive. Heirlooms are wonderful, diverse tomatoes of assorted flavors, but they are fragile on the shelf and in the pan; they are best served the day they are picked. I prefer Early Girls, a hearty, deeply flavored, short-season variety developed for our climate, which are brilliantly suited to dry farming. In our area, we often have Early Girls until the end of the year, and they sometimes hold on longer than that in some climates.

Wine is notoriously difficult to pair with the acidity of tomatoes, though in this recipe the cheese and pastry mitigate any conflict. I find this perky tart wonderful with either of October's Adventures wines. Chill the Langhe Nebbiolo slightly if the weather is on the warm side.

One 9-inch pastry shell	1 cup heavy cream
1–1½ inches deep,	1 cup milk
baked blind (see below)	¼ teaspoon thyme leaves,
1½ pounds ripe tomatoes	coarsely chopped
of your choice	8 ounces Cantal cheese, grated
¾ teaspoon sea salt	(Gruyère and Comté are good alternatives)
1 whole egg	1 tablespoon black peppercorns,
3 egg yolks	preferably Tellicherry, coarsely cracked

Place the unbaked pastry shell in the freezer for 30 minutes. Line it with a layer of aluminum foil pressed gently onto the shell. Bake the shell for 12 minutes at 375° F until pastry begins to color. Remove foil and cool to room temperature.

With a sharp knife or on a mandolin, carefully slice tomatoes crosswise into even ¼-inch-thick slices. Lightly salt tomatoes with ½ teaspoon sea salt and place on a perforated pan or in a large sieve to drain for 15 minutes. Lay tomatoes on a double layer of paper towels to absorb some of their moisture. Gently blot tomatoes to remove surface moisture. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together whole egg and yolks. Add cream, milk, thyme, and remaining salt, and whisk to combine. Sprinkle tart shell with half of the cheese. Layer the sliced tomatoes in a slightly overlapping circular pattern on top of the cheese. Whisk the egg custard again and pour evenly over the tomatoes. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and cracked pepper. Bake at 375° F for 40–45 minutes, until top is golden.

Makes one tart or 6 servings