

SUMMER TOMATOES PRESERVED UNDER OIL

BY CHRISTOPHER LEE

Early Girl tomatoes have become my favorite. I often preserve them in the simplest way to have on hand as a tasty ready-to-eat condiment. Early Girls were hybridized in France in the 1970s, and not long after, they arrived on our soil. Their flavor and texture equal that of heirloom varieties, but they are less fragile than heirlooms and have a pronounced sweetness. They're delicious on their own in any preparation. Use your favorite extra-virgin olive oil in this recipe. Their usefulness is as vast as your imagination. Serve them spooned over sheep's milk ricotta, bufala mozzarella, or burrata on grilled country bread rubbed with garlic. They're also great tossed with fresh fettuccine and sprinkled with grated Pecorino Romano. Stir them into risotto with anchovies and Parmigiano-Reggiano. Sop up the leftover oil with a crust of bread, roast vegetables in it, or toss it into panzanella bread salad. If I have it on hand, I toast a piece of homemade bacon and roasted garlic sourdough bread for a killer open-face tartine. The tomatoes marry well with either the Chiaretto rosé or the Ermitage du Pic Saint Loup.

4 pounds small, ripe dry-farmed

Early Girls

4–5 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced

6 sprigs fresh basil or a few stems of

fresh thyme stripped of their leaves

2 fresh bay leaves or 1 dried

1½ cups extra-virgin olive oil

2 teaspoons sea salt

Optional: ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

1 tablespoon red wine

or 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar

Core the tomatoes and cut larger ones in half. Place tomatoes stem side down or cut side down in a shallow casserole. Strew garlic slices and herb sprigs around tomatoes along with bay leaves. Pour olive oil over tomatoes. Sprinkle with sea salt, and chili flakes, if using. Bake uncovered on the top shelf of a 375° F oven for 40–45 minutes, until tomatoes are well charred and collapsing onto themselves. Allow tomatoes to cool. Drizzle red wine or vinegar over tomatoes. Serve immediately or, when cool, transfer to a glass or ceramic container and cover. Tomatoes will keep two or three days at room temperature, or a week refrigerated. If storing cold, be sure tomatoes are below surface of oil and out of contact with air, to avoid molding.

Makes about 2 quarts

Christopher Lee is a former head chef of Chez Panisse and Eccolo restaurants in Berkeley and co-founder of Pop-Up General Store in Oakland. Visit his website: oldfashionedbutcher.com.

ADVENTURES









September 2021

2020 BARDOLINO CHIARETTO “NICHESOLE” CORTE GARDONI



It's aperitivo hour and you're sitting under the shade of a tree on the eastern bank of Lake Garda, looking out onto dozens of sailboats gliding along, seemingly in no hurry to be anywhere. Someone offers you a spritz, but *no, grazie*—you're more in the mood for a glass of exquisite rosé. They come back with a frosty carafe of a pale pink nectar. You pour yourself a glass, take a sip, and ask, “Where's this from?” You're surprised to hear the reply: “Just down the road.” This region may not bear the renown of Tuscany, Piedmont, and Sicily, but if it is famous for anything—other than the vistas—it is for the dry rosé called Chiaretto. This one comes from the Piccolis, who have owned vineyards in these parts for more than four centuries. The family's experience and the underrated excellence of this terroir of glacial moraine—south of the lake and at the western limit of the Veneto region—explain why this bottle offers such outstanding character and class. With notes of white peach, melon, and grapefruit, this Chiaretto is the quintessential Italian *rosato* for a summer evening al fresco. —TOM WOLF

\$17.00 per bottle \$183.60 per case

					
2020 Bardolino Chiaretto “Nichesole” <i>Corte Gardoni</i>	50% Corvina, 25% Rondinella, 25% Molinara, Barbera, and Sangiovese	15- to 50-year-old vines Moraine	Serve <i>cold</i> 48–52° F Do not decant	White peach, melon, grapefruit Crisp, zesty, generous	Drink now
2019 Pic-Saint-Loup “Tour de Pierres” <i>Ermitage du Pic Saint Loup</i>	50% Syrah, 40% Grenache, 10% Mourvèdre	30- to 40-year-old vines Red clay	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant recommended	Black cherry, stones, blood orange Full-bodied, dense, fresh	Drink now through 2025

RIGHT *Pic Saint Loup.* © Château Fontanès

COVER *A view of Gargnano, on the western bank of Lake Garda.* © Gail Skoff

2019 PIC-SAINT-LOUP “TOUR DE PIERRES” ERMITAGE DU PIC SAINT LOUP

In very few appellations throughout France and Italy do we import the wines of three or more domaines. Joining Bandol, Meursault, Morgon, and a few others in that short list is Pic Saint Loup, situated forty-five minutes north of Montpellier. We are devout fans of this Languedocien AOC nestled at the foot of the dramatic formation by the same name, which rises out of the land like a massive, rocky shark fin. Behind the domaine Ermitage du Pic Saint Loup is the trio of Ravaille brothers, who somewhat extraordinarily not only have continued to make wine in harmony for three decades, but also have done so following biodynamic practices for nearly as long. In this warm, southern climate, their approach, as well as the cooling influence of the nearby Cévennes mountains, makes all the difference, resulting in wines like this Syrah-based Tour de Pierres that are remarkably fresh and mouthwatering despite being dense and full-bodied. —TOM WOLF

\$22.00 per bottle \$237.60 per case



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