## LEEK AND POTATO GRATIN

by Georgeanne Brennan

Layers of thin sliced potatoes interspersed with a scattering of lightly caramelized leeks, then baked with cream and Gruyère produce a meltingly rich dish that meets its match in Alex Foillard's perfectly balanced Brouilly. A variation of this gratin was a favorite of one of my neighbors in Provence who long, long ago introduced me to leeks, and I wish I'd had this wine then to share with them.

½ clove garlic, crushed

3 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon unsalted butter

3 large leeks

 $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon sea salt

2 pounds russet potatoes

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

1½ cups heavy cream

3/4 cup shredded Gruyère cheese

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Rub garlic all over the inside of a  $1\frac{1}{2}$ - to 2-quart gratin or baking dish. With 1 teaspoon of the butter, grease the dish.

Trim and clean leeks. Cut in half lengthwise. Cut the white and pale green ends into thin rounds, discard the greens, or reserve them for another use.

In a frying pan, over medium-high heat, melt 2 tablespoons of the butter. When it is foaming, add leeks, sprinkle with a little of the salt, and reduce the heat to medium. Sauté, stirring from time to time until leeks are soft and turning slightly golden along the edges. Remove and set aside until ready to assemble the gratin.

Using a mandolin, if possible, or a very sharp knife, slice the potatoes into  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inchthick rounds. Make a snugly overlapping layer of potatoes in the gratin dish, sprinkle with a little salt and pepper, and with  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the leeks. Repeat 2 more times, ending with a layer of potatoes.

In a saucepan over medium-high heat, heat cream until the edges just begin to show small bubbles. Pour cream over potatoes, top with cheese, and cut the remaining

tablespoon of butter into pieces, dotting them

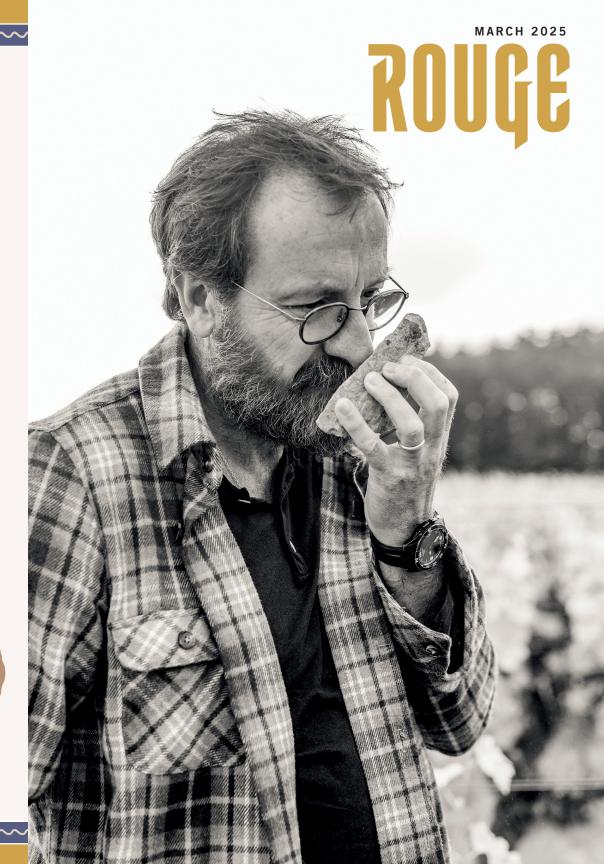
across the cheese.

Place the gratin dish in the preheated oven and bake until potatoes can easily be pierced with the tines of a fork and the top is golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. After 15 minutes, check to see if the top is browning too quickly. If yes, reduce the heat to 350°F. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Serves 4

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The James Beard award–winning cookbook author Georgeanne Brennan is also the author of the best-selling food memoir *A Pig in Provence*. She continues to write about food and cooking from her longtime homes in Provence and in Northern California, where she co-owns an aperitif wine bar. You can find more of her recipes at www.georgeannebrennan.com.



## 2023 SAUMUR CHAMPIGNY "CUVÉE DOMAINE" THIERRY GERMAIN

T'S FUN TO IMAGINE Thierry Germain's alternate trajectory had he stayed in his home region of Bordeaux instead of decamping to the Loire Valley in the 1990s.

He would have no doubt risen to become one of the region's foremost vignerons—as he has in the Loire—because that's just the kind of unstoppable ambition and vision Thierry has. But he perhaps wouldn't have found the freedom to

Pairs well with lentil shepherd's pie, fried chicken, and herb-crusted rib roast.

push the boundaries and constantly experiment the way he has in the Loire, a hotbed of progressive farming and natural winemaking. A champion of both, Thierry is devoted to the region's great red grape, Cabernet Franc. Like all of his reds, his Cuvée Domaine shows a beautiful side of this variety: at once fresh, succulent, and savory, with notes of plum, blackberry, leather, and earth, it represents one of the best introductions to Cab Franc imaginable. Serve it with a lentil shepherd's pie or fried chicken for a simple, yet exquisite meal. — $Tom\ Wolf$ 

\$29.00 PER BOTTLE \$313.20 PER CASE

2023 Saumur Champigny "Cuvée Domaine" Thierry Germain	Cabernet Franc	4- to 70-year-old vines Sand, clay, tuffeau limestone	Serve cool 56–60°F Decant optional	Blackberries, leather, earth Fresh, succulent, savory	Drink now through 2028
2021 Brouilly Alex Foillard	Gamay	50-year-old vines Granite	Serve cool 56–60°F Decant optional	Pomegranate, red berries, black tea Earthy, sensuous, complex	Drink now through 2030

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## 2021 BROUILLY ALEX FOILLARD

T THE SOUTHERN END OF THE BEAUJOLAIS' TEN CRUS, Brouilly and the Côte de Brouilly enjoy a sort of sibling dynamic. Encompassing the lower slopes and flatlands that wrap around the Côte de Brouilly, whose vines cascade down the famous Mont Brouilly, Brouilly's terroirs stand out for their sand and pink granite rather than the Côte's iconic igneous blue stone. If the general rule is that Brouilly wines are the Côte de Brouilly's slightly softer, more sensuous siblings, Alex Foillard's rendition is the exception, proving to be as deep and complex as the best examples from the Côte. Chalk this up largely to its origin. "La Folie," one of Brouilly's best vineyards, is named because of its frequent heavy winds that might drive a vigneron crazy. La Folie's combination of old vines planted in thin soil and wide-open exposure to the sun and wind yield concentrated berries that result in a structure and minerality akin to that of the Côte de Brouilly. But this beautiful red has plenty of Brouilly's more sensuous side, too. Teeming with notes of pomegranate, red berries, and black tea, this is perfect for the first picnic or cookout of spring. —Tom Wolf

\$43.00 PER BOTTLE \$464.40 PER CASE



ABOVE Gamay vines. © Jimmy Hayes
COVER Thierry Germain. © Jimmy Hayes