

2023 Chateau la Freynelle Blanc Bordeaux, France

Chateau La Freynelle is a 75-hectare estate (185 acres) in the village of Daignac, in the heart of the Entre-Deux-Mers region of Bordeaux. The story started in 1789 when Jean Barthe, a general under Napoleon Bonaparte, settled in the area and planted the first vines of what would then be called Château La Freynelle. For seven generations, the property was passed on from father to son. In 1992, Veronique Barthe, the first daughter born into the family since the French Revolution, inherited the family estate at the age of 22 years old. This was the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the estate. Her first decision was to do estate bottling at the property, which had never been done before. She also replanted her entire vineyard and invested in a brand-new cellar. She has taken her wines to the highest level possible and the wine regularly receives press accolades. Recently, she has also been working closely with the consultant enologist Stéphane Toutoundji on her agricultural practices and her vinification.

Most of the production is dedicated to red wine, but she also makes white wine and a rosé. The vines are 25 years old on average and lie in clay-limestone soils. For the red wine, after harvest, the grapes are destemmed, crushed, and fermented in a stainless steel tank. The wine is aged in stainless steel tanks and barrels. Her cuvée of 100% Cabernet Sauvignon ages in barrels. These are bottled 12-16 months after harvest. For the white wine, after harvest, the grapes are destemmed, pressed, and fermented in stainless steel tanks at low temperatures. The wine is bottled a few months after harvest. Estate-grown and bottled for all wines. Sustainable practices.

Today, Chateau La Freynelle is one of the finest and leading properties in the Entre-Deux-Mers area. It produces two red wines (a Merlot blend and a 100% Cabernet Sauvignon), a white wine (Sauvignon Blanc blend), and a limited-release rosé (100% Cabernet Sauvignon).

A blend of 60% Sauvignon Blanc, 30% Semillon, and 10% Muscadelle. Intensely aromatic nose of lemons, grapefruit, and white peaches from the Sauvignon and honeysuckle and acacia flowers from the Muscadelle. The Semillon gives richness and roundness in the mouth. Crisp and fruity on the palate with a silky long finish. Serve chilled. This lovely dry white wine can be enjoyed alone or paired with seafood, pasta, chicken, veal, and pork. Drink now.

Notes from www.aquitainewine.com



Fish à la Minute

In home cooking, à la minute refers to a recipe that can be made in a flash, and this recipe is a fine example.

Ingredients:

4 (5.5-oz) thick fish filets, or 1 large filet (about 22 oz)
1 tbsp olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tbsp finely diced shallot
1 tbsp chopped curly parsley

20 ml white vermouth
1/3 cup dry white wine
3 tbsp bread crumbs
2 tbsp unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
2 tbsp heavy cream (optional)

Directions:

Clean and trim the fish filets and use a sharp knife to make light crisscross incisions on the skin side of the fish. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C).

Brush a large baking dish with a light coating of olive oil and lay the fish filets, skin side down, in the dish. Season with salt and pepper, then scatter the shallot and parsley on top.

Pour the vermouth and wine over the fish and sprinkle the top of each filet with a layer of bread crumbs followed by the butter cubes.

Place in the oven on the lower rack and bake for 20 to 25 minutes (depending on the thickness of the fish). When done, the fish should be cooked through, and the bread crumbs beautifully crispy and golden. Optionally, for a creamy sauce, stir in 2 table-spoons (30 ml) of cream with the cooking juices before serving. Enjoy immediately with any kind of side.

Serves 4 | Recipe <https://www.thefrenchcookingacademy.com/recipes/fish-a-la-minute>



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2022 Kuleto Frog Prince Red Blend California

Located on the eastern edge of the Napa Valley in the hills above Lake Hennessey and the town of Rutherford, this extraordinary mountaintop estate features 82 individual vineyard blocks, three distinctive soil types, and a range of elevations and exposures. From this rich and diverse palette of fruit, Kuleto Estate produces a small portfolio of exceptional estate-grown wines.

Kuleto Estate wines are 100% estate-grown, produced and bottled. With 82.9 acres of vines planted between 800 and 1,450 feet, each of the 100+ micro-blocks must receive individualized treatment to maximize their potential. Winemaker Giovanni Verdejo has been working at Kuleto since 2002 and has mastered the art of cultivating the unique personalities of each block into some of the finest mountain estate wines in Napa Valley.

When selecting those vineyard blocks or rows or vines that might be appropriate for the Frog Prince blend, they looked for the more subtle characteristics of the varieties, e.g. fresh fruits versus cooked, red fruits versus blue or black, a bit less alcohol, a bit more acid, and perhaps a bit of dried herbs. In many cases, the different varieties are fermented together to create something wholly unique.

The 2022 Frog Price is a blend of Malbec, Petite Sirah, Cabernet Franc, Tempranillo, Zinfandel, and Merlot. Aromas of raspberry, ripe cherry, and dried herbs. The nose leads into the palate filled with layer upon layer of red fruit. A vigorous acidity carries throughout and is further accentuated by firm tannins that taper off hand in hand on the finish. This classic wine pairs with a juicy grilled steak. Drink now.

Notes from www.kuletoestate.com



Reverse Sear Steak

One of the best methods for steak: start it low, cook it slow, then quickly sear or grill for a beautiful crust.

Ingredients:

Thick-cut beef steak(s), at least 1 1/2 to 2 inches thick, such as ribeye, strip, porterhouse, T-bone, tri-tip, or filet mignon
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
Vegetable oil (if finishing on the stovetop; optional)
1 tablespoon (15g) unsalted butter (if finishing on the stovetop; optional)

Directions:

Generously season steak(s) all over with salt and pepper. If desired, set steak(s) on a wire rack set in a rimmed baking sheet and refrigerate, uncovered, overnight to dry out the exterior. Otherwise, proceed with the next step.

If Cooking in the Oven: Set steak(s) on a wire rack set in a rimmed baking sheet. Preheat oven to anywhere between 200 and 275°F (93 and 135°C); if your oven goes lower, you can set it to an even lower temperature, though it will take longer to cook. Place steak(s) in the oven and cook until an instant-read thermometer registers 105°F (41°C) for rare, 115°F (46°C) for medium-rare, 125°F (52°C) for medium, or 135°F (57°C) for medium-well. This will take about 20 minutes for rare steak and up to about 40 minutes for medium-well; cooking time can vary dramatically depending on many factors, so check often.

Just before steak(s) come out of the oven, add 1 tablespoon (15ml) oil to a cast iron, carbon steel, or heavy stainless steel skillet and heat over high heat until smoking. Add steak(s) and butter to skillet and cook until each side is well browned, about 45 seconds per side. Using tongs, hold steak(s) sideways to sear edges. Serve right away; there's no need to let reverse-seared steaks rest.

If Cooking on the Grill: Light one chimney full of charcoal. When all the charcoal is lit and covered with gray ash, pour out and spread the coals evenly over half of coal grate. Alternatively, set half the burners of a gas grill to high heat. Set cooking grate in place, cover grill, and allow to preheat for 5 minutes. Clean and oil grilling grate.

Set steak(s) on cooler side of grill and let cook uncovered, turning occasionally, until an instant-read thermometer registers your desired cooking temp (see above).

Transfer steak(s) to a platter and tent with foil. If you are using a charcoal grill and your coals have died down, build up the biggest fire you can. If using a gas grill, make sure all burners are turned to their highest heat and allow the grill to preheat with the lid closed.

Return steak(s) to the hottest part of the grill and cook, turning frequently, until crisp and charred all over, about 1 1/2 minutes total. Serve right away.

Serves 6 | Recipe <https://www.serious-eats.com/reverse-seared-steak-recipe>



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