

The PICKS

FEATURE WINES

Bodegas Muga 2021 Rioja Reserva

We've been loving Spanish wine lately, so the first feature of the year is Bodegas Muga 2021 Rioja Reserva for \$39.99. This is a classic Rioja blend of primarily Tempranillo plus Garnacha, Graciano, and Mazuelo. Bodegas Muga and Rioja itself are uniquely situated in Northern Spain where the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Continental climates meet, creating a very special terroir. The grapes in this bottle are hand-picked and aged for three years, two of those in French and American oak, before heading to market. When he was in Chicago last year, Juan Muga himself said, "Wait until you taste the '21 Reserva..." Well the time has come, Juan. "Striking in the glass and seriously dense on the nose, with tightly wound black and red fruits, sweet wood spice, and an old world red earth minerality. In the mouth, this modern classic is impactful, featuring a quiet explosion of flavors including just-ripe wild strawberries, fig, light red flowers, toasty wood and spice." With 94 points from Wine Advocate, "It's a textbook example of their style in a very good year, with power, concentration and clout, elegance and freshness. It was a very harmonious year; the cycle was long and the tannins ripened to perfection." This... this is a wine for a steak. What more can I say? Oh yeah. Riojas age extraordinarily well, so feel free to keep this in the cellar for a few years, or even another 10-15 if you're patient enough. It'll be worth the wait.

WINE PICK

Reverdito 2022 Simane Nebbiolo

We're off to Italy for the Pick, Reverdito 2022 Simane Nebbiolo. Michele Reverdito has been making his own wines since 2000 with vineyards that his father started acquiring in the '60s... the good ol' days. He has deep respect for the land, using absolutely no chemicals anywhere in his production, and he vinifies each vineyard separately, so you are tasting a unique part of Italy in each of his bottles. While this bottle is not a Barolo (which we do have in the bar for you to purchase), it is the same grape from nearby in the Langhe... a baby Barolo, as we like to say, and for only \$19.99. "Off-the-chart aromatically, the nose flies with summer cherries, fleshy pink plums, candied cardamom, and strawberry-hibiscus-rose. It's juicy and generous, but then Nebbiolo's high-five tannin and acidity suck the moisture out of your mouth (in a good way). Super classic, yet easy to drink by itself."