

# What is Greg Drinking?

April, as the kids say, just hits different. The transition from the doldrums of winter, even a relatively mild one, to mornings spent watching the grass finally grow is glorious. Shania Twain, a Canadian who would know something about the seasonal switches might have put it best: "Looks like we made it." So for the inaugural installment of "What is Greg Drinking?" I had to really think about finding a beverage that encapsulates the feeling of 'making it.' With the help of the exceedingly knowledgeable staff at Spencer & Lynn package store in downtown Mystic, a new take on one of my favorite styles emerged: Clairet!

Let us start with a quick quiz to see if this wine is for you. Do you like French wines, specifically from the Bordeaux region? Rosé: all day or no way? Chilled pink adult beverages not named white zinfandel...are you curious? Do you like a wine that can as easily be paired with a simple charcuterie board as a smoked leg of lamb? Does the thought of being refreshed physically and mentally by a glass of fermented grapes sound appealing at this moment? If you or a loved one has said yes to one or more of these questions, you may be entitled to some Clairet.

With the season of big family gatherings upon us, be the one who shakes it up a bit when it comes to the non-basted sauce this year. Be the champion of Clairet. From baked hams and turkeys for Easter to Seder plates for Pesach, this chilled, dark pink Bordeaux beauty holds nothing back and rises to the occasion (a pun that can be exercised judiciously at both of the aforementioned holiday meals, as it turns out). For the sake of this article, I was guided towards Château Massereau for their 2020 vintage. A blend dominated by Merlot, with some notable nuance from friends Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon respectively, this wine is a winner of hearts and minds. A little something for everyone, so no one will feel the need to say anything but "cheers!" when given the chance.

What to know about the nose: you are going to be getting some serious red fruit fragrance, specifically cherries and raspberries. Your palate will find that France fancies the fruit-forward approach. There is a little minerality in the finish,

which makes sense given that this particular potable was fermented in concrete. A solid way to start the journey, no doubt! After this, there is a vacation into barrels where a daily stirring occurs for three months until it too is feeling the need for a release.

At this point in your perusal of this periodical, you might be wondering: who is Greg and why do I care what he is drinking? These are fair questions. I am a Mystic native, raised in the now-coastal cuisine capital of Connecticut before that destination dream started. I am a proud alumnus

of the University of Connecticut, where I can count "mascot" as a brief occupation. Before my journey at Saltwater Farm and Kingdom of the Hawk Vineyards began, I worked down the road at the Beer'd Brewing Company, where I helped expand their regional footprint. My beverages of choice are usually the hoppiest or darkest of beers and whatever wine in the room has more salinity than a New Jersey tourist trying to save time on 95 by weaving dangerously in and out of traffic! I am married to an exceptional human and am constantly in awe of the child turning two this month that I have the honor and privilege of parenting.

Back to the beverage briefing, what else is there to say? As far as cuisine in April goes, you are going to be leaning into the hearty side of the equation. Roasted or grilled proteins, asparagus aplenty, that kind of mood. You might end up

choosing a chowder or a stew if you catch a particularly raw day. Clairet can and will hold up its end of the bargain. It will not be overshadowed, nor will it push the pairing off the stage. It exists to excite and entice. If done right, it is the perfect argument for year-round chilled wines. A side I would champion on the drink debate team squad if given the chance.

I raise my (stemless, I have a toddler chasing an old rescue dog around me while I am writing this) glass to you and yours. Welcome to the daffodils giving hope vibes.

Congratulations on getting through the gray.

