

CHENIN BLANC

Perhaps no wine sums up the Sacramento area more than chenin blanc. This white grape is most closely associated with the Loire Valley in France, with a thirst-quenching acidity and spectrum of sweetness, from bone dry to age-worthy dessert wines.

One of the world's great pockets for chenin blanc is in Clarksburg, about 15 miles south of downtown Sacramento. There, the cooling Delta breezes and rich soils contribute to a thriving growing region for chenin blanc, to the point that local winemakers such as Craig Haarmeyer use the hashtag #hellachenin as a statement of area pride.

Bottle to try: Go for the 2017 *St. Rey Petillant Naturel Chenin Blanc*, a dry, spritzy version of the varietal from Haarmeyer Wine Cellars with citrus and mineral flavors. It's perfect for summer sipping while heckling the Brew Bike from your Midtown porch. *St. Rey Vineyards, 610 Harbor Boulevard in West Sacramento; haarmeyerwinecellars.com.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF REVOLUTION WINES

PETITE SIRAH

The house of Bogle was built on this red grape known for dense, inky-colored wines. The winery powerhouse in Yolo County planted its first petite sirah vineyards in 1968 and currently bottles a port-styled wine based on petite sirah and a table wine version that includes fruit from both Clarksburg and nearby Lodi.

THE SACRAMENTO REGION'S MEDITERRANEAN-LIKE CLIMATE IS CONDUCTIVE FOR GROWING THIS STURDY GRAPE.

The Sacramento region's Mediterranean-like climate is conducive for growing this sturdy grape. While petite sirah is often used

as a blending agent to boost the color of red wines, it's also appreciated on its own merits. You'll also find petite sirah championed by locals such as Matchbook Wines, which sources its grapes from about 30 miles northwest of Sacramento in Dunnigan Hills. To the east in El Dorado County, Oakstone Winery crafts an especially full-bodied version of the varietal.

Bottle to try: Fire up the grill and pair a burger—or any grilled item of your choice—with the bold, blackberry flavored 2017 *Revolution Wines Clarksburg Petite Sirah*. 2831 S Street; rev.wine.com.

ZINFANDEL

This popular red wine variety has regional roots that date back to the Gold Rush days. Head to the hills of nearby Amador County, and you'll find the Original Grandpère Vineyard, which was planted in 1869 and said to be the nation's oldest documented zinfandel vineyard. It's still producing grapes that are used by such Sierra Foothills staples as Andis Wines and Vino Noceto.

Zinfandel also thrives in the southern part of the Sacramento region, especially as you head toward Lodi and deeper into the Central Valley.

POP THE CORK ON PASTA NIGHT AND TOAST THE SACRAMENTO REGION.

While much of this zinfandel is grown for bulk wine, producers including Michael David, Lucas Winery and Klinker Brick are crafting quality versions of zinfandel that range from medium weighted wines with hints of pepper to full flavored party starters with jammy fruit.

Bottle to try: The 2016 *Jeff Runquist Wines "R"* Zinfandel from Amador County ranks among the biggest palate pleasers you'll find locally with impeccably balanced raspberry flavors and acidic zing. Pop the cork on pasta night and toast the Sacramento region. 10776 Shenandoah Road in Plymouth; jeffrunquistwines.com.



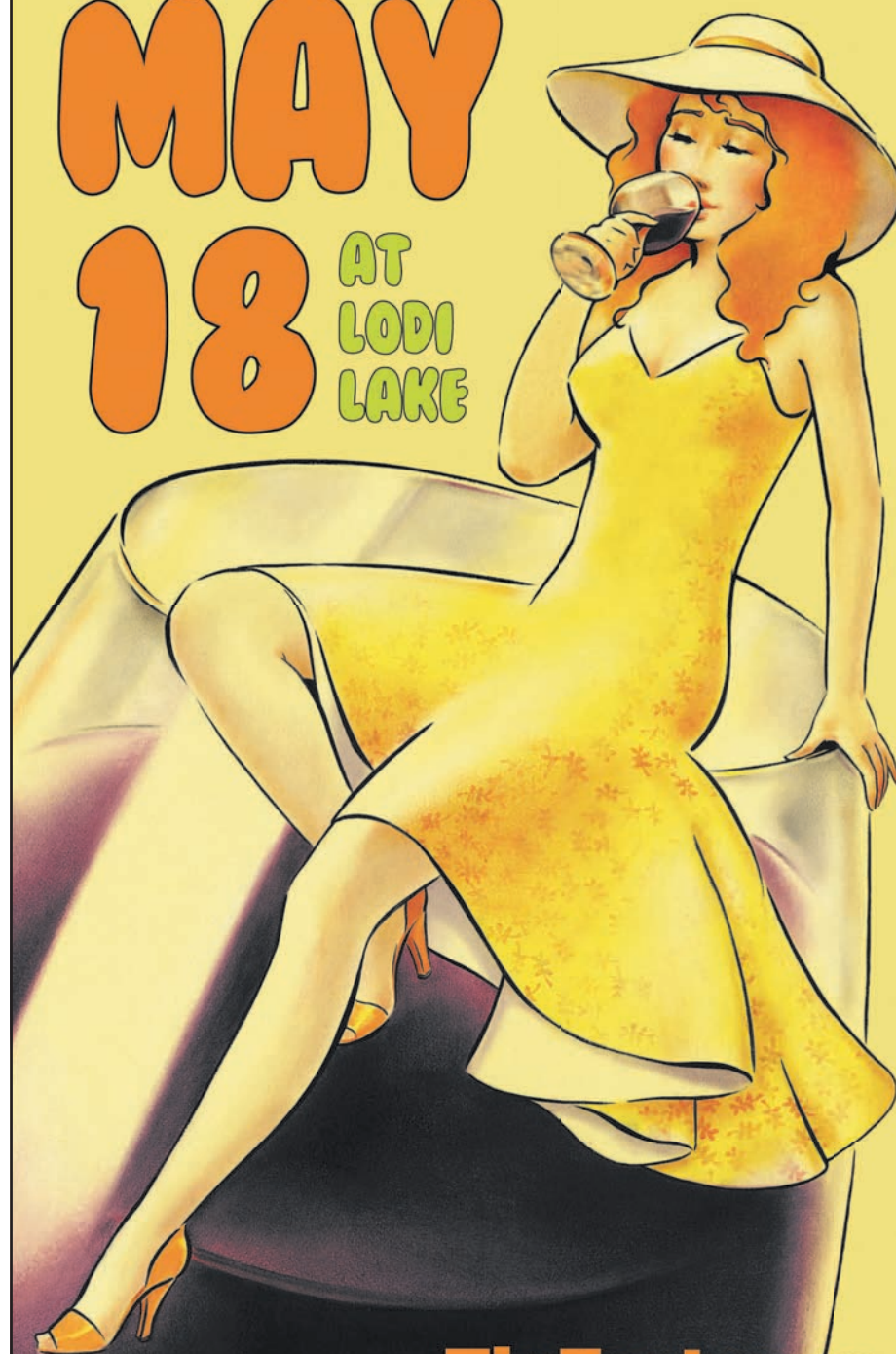
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