

Eau de Vie

a wine, spirits, and travel newsletter

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CORONAVIRUS VS. AIRLINE TRAVEL

I've been waiting to write this column because every day something new and shocking happens. The travel industry is hemorrhaging as never before and where and how it will end is anyone's guess. Here are a few things that I know as they relate specifically to airlines.

All the major airlines are offering fee free ticket changes for e-credits if your travel is before May 31st. This date represents the travel industry's best hope to salvage the summer and fall travel season.

If your travel is June 1st or after and you wish to change or cancel your flight you'll have to pay a change fee, if possible. Some fares, such as basic economy, are unchangeable.

If you cancel your travel plans for any trip before June 1st the airline will issue you an e-credit. Meaning you'll need to rebook your flight and travel before December 31st 2020.

If the airline cancels your flight you have a right to a full refund. They will not want to, or even mention this to you, but this is your right under their Contract of Carriage.

The airline industry is receiving a \$60 billion bailout from the Federal Government in the form of grants and loans. The grants pay for employee salaries through September if needed. These monies help the industry plug the massive short fall in their revenues.

Delta Airlines keeps a web page somewhat hidden from easy view on the news side of their website. [Here is the link to the page.](#) As you scroll down you can see the routes that are canceled. What's interesting to me is that currently Delta is only flying three flights a day to Europe: Atlanta and Detroit to Amsterdam and Atlanta to London.

As we hunker down and practice isolationism I am reminded that this isn't the world's first pandemic, this isn't the first plague and this isn't the first quarantine it's just our first. Our ancestors were here many time before.



QUARANTA GIORNI

The word quarantine originates from two Italian words: Quaranta Giorni meaning forty days. This phrase was first used in Venice during the Black Death.

Between 1348 and 1359, the Black Death wiped out an estimated 30% of Europe's population, and a significant percentage of Asia's population. A document from 1377 states that before entering the city-state of Ragusa (modern Dubrovnik in Croatia), newcomers had to spend 30 days (a trentine) in a restricted place, nearby islands, waiting to see whether the symptoms of Black Death would develop. In 1448 the Venetian Senate prolonged the waiting period to 40 days, thus giving birth to the term quarantine. The forty-day quarantine proved to be an effective formula for handling outbreaks of the plague. According to current estimates, the bubonic plague had a 37-day period from infection to death; therefore, the European quarantines would have been highly successful.

Quarantines have been part of European culture for many years and the New York Times wrote a great travel piece about the English poet John Keats and his quarantine off the coast of Naples in 1820. [Read the article here.](#)



It should come as no surprise that the Spring Pairing Club class is canceled. It seems like spring 2020 has been canceled. Let's self medicate with a glass of wine and thoughts of a Covid-19 free summer.

Wines for Printemps

Springtime is a shoulder season. It is neither hot nor cold but it could also be both. When selecting a wine for spring it should reflect this bipolar attitude in our weather.

This means that I think about wines that are medium weight in most aspects. They have a medium body, there is no need for the sweet warming of a big bodied Port and no need for the light crispness of a Sauvignon Blanc. They have medium alcohol, medium to light tannin and can be paired easily with comfort foods such as mac and cheese or with fresh bright garden greens. Here is a small list of recommended wines for spring.

Whites:

🌿 Viognier. This wine is produced in California under its own name or in France under the name of the region, Condrieu. It can be slightly sweet but good examples have racing fast acidity and bold stone fruit aromas of apricot and peach. Pair it with California cuisine inspired salads or with a hearty pork and bean casserole.

🌿 Oaked Chardonnay. If you don't like chardonnay because you drank a glass of Cupcake brand and found it off putting then you need to try a real Chardonnay before you turn your nose up at the thought. California Chardonnay is big, bold, and buttery. It can have the aromas of honey crisp apples and butterscotch. French Chardonnay is some of the finest wine produced anywhere. Chardonnay is used to make many styles of wine in France and here I'm specifically talking about those from Burgundy. They run from \$20 to over \$500 a bottle and can age for over a decade. It can be difficult to find affordable white Burgundy wines in America but not impossible. Oaked Chardonnay pairs well with roasted chicken and potatoes and with pan roasted asparagus.

Reds:

🌿 Cabernet Franc. This red is less well known and is often included with blended reds. Most bottles of American Cabernet Sauvignon includes some amount of Cabernet Franc in the blend. But in France's Loire River Valley, in Chinon, the old capital city of medieval France, they make Cabernet Franc as a single variety wine. Cabernet Franc is very lean, pale ruby in color with high acidity and red berry and earthy aromas. It can be a bit disappointing in weak examples but when done right it has layers of flavor and is refreshing in the mouth. Just like spring, serve it chilled to start and let the wine warm up during a meal and notice it's changing flavors and aromas. Good pairings for Cabernet Franc would be anything with sautéed spring mushrooms or a leg of lamb with garlic and rosemary.

🌿 California Pinot Noir. If you like fruit forward, medium body, low tannin wines then shop for California Pinot Noir. But don't be cheap - these wines are depressingly terrible when affordable. If you can find good examples under \$20 they are like gold. You should buy a case and you should let your friends know where to get more. These wines are soft on the pallet with acidity that makes the wine taste refreshing. They are loaded with aromas of Bing cherry, coco, cola, and vanilla. This is the ultimate cocktail wine. It pairs well with holiday ham, grilled salmon, shepherds pie, or as my good friend does - everyday with her book.

2020 Pairing Club Classes

The Printemps class is canceled but I'm still hopeful for the summer class. I'll let you know in future editions of this newsletter.

Practical Information:

Class starts @ 6:00pm @ 2620 E. Superior Street. Cost is \$20/pp.

Class size is limited to 12.

R.S.V.P. required.

Class includes: Nose Testing, 6 wines, tasting cards, information, and custom wine pairings.

Each class needs 5 volunteer pairing cooks. Email:

david@savvynomad.com to volunteer to bring a food pairing.

July 18th ~ *Été*
Wines for Summer.

August 15th ~
Diner en Blanc Duluth

November 7th ~ *Automne*
Wines for Fall