

12 Beaujolais Even a Bond Girl Would Love

BY MEGAN KRIGBAUM | POSTED OCTOBER 24, 2014 AT 1:30PM EDT



Sommelier Liz Vilardi of Boston's Belly wine bar.

©Michael Piazza

Leave it up to Liz Vilardi. When we asked the sommelier from [Belly](#) in Cambridge, Massachusetts to pick a definitive mixed case of wine, she came back with a dozen bottles all from the same region. The woman is a theme master. In fact themes are a recurring...theme with all of her wine lists, which change on a regular basis. The most recent list is titled, "Mud on Your Face" – it's a celebration of her favorite producers and the harvest season. Her way of building a wine list is infinitely creative and idiosyncratic and it always has her fun voice.

[Beaujolais](#) seems to be on the minds of many this fall. Vilardi particularly loves

how Beaujolais, made from the Gamay grape, pairs with food. And she's essentially made a Beaujolais primer with this case of wine, including one bottle from each of the ten crus (or subregions) and two others that she just really loves. "I'm not into high alcohol and lots of wood in my wine. I need a little fruit and lots of minerality, and for my wine list, I need a couple of different styles to kind of fool people who want something a little rounder. Beaujolais hits all of those – I can have a tool belt of 10 wines from 10 different sites, from all different crus, from producers who do something different that will satisfy all those palates."

This fall and into winter, Belly will have a fire raging outside so on nice days, guests can cozy up with a glass of wine by the fire. Beaujolais is perfect fit.

Here, Vilardi's guide to Beaujolais, listed geographically by cru from north to south:

1. 2011 Pascal Granger Juliéнас

"This is racy, minerally high acid, really taut, really nervy Beaujolais. It's like Whooooo!, like a cold wind that just like wrapped you up and makes you think, "whoa! What just happened!?" Remember that York peppermint patty commercial? It's like that. The wine is just ripping. It's good for really fatty foods, head cheese or fondue."

2. 2011 Domaine des Billards Saint-Amour

“Morgon is usually thought to be the biggest and beefiest of all the crus, but I think Saint-Amour sometimes is the secret underlier when it comes to all of that. These wines can age a lot longer. This is the perfect wine for the person who says, “I drink Merlot, I like things that are fruity” – and who may be a little afraid. Beaujolais gets this bad wrap for being tart or really sweet and I have to say, “no no no.” This is one I can reach for – and it has a nice name, Saint-Amour. Everyone wants to talk about love, and I can say, “here! Have it!”

3. 2010 Pascal Granger Chénas

“Granger’s Chénas has more fruit than his Julienas. I think minerality is kind of his rap – he likes acidity. The Chénas is great because if you want to see what it is about the Juliénas, have the Chénas. It’s a little more seductive, it’s friendlier, it smiles a lot. It’s like if you had met two sisters and one was not nice and the other one was nice. At first, you’re drawn to the one that’s nicer, but you find that the one that’s not nice is a little more interesting. That’s how I look at these wines.”

4. 2010 Bernard Diochon Vieilles Vignes Moulin-a-Vent

“Moulin-a-Vent is really floral. For me, one of the hallmarks of Beaujolais is that smell of 3 day old roses that you left in your apartment – they start to have that smell. I really love that scent in Beaujolais.”

5. 2012 Domaine des Terres Dorées Fleurie

“You think Morgon is going to be the monster, Jean-Paul Brun makes this Fleurie that’s a BEAST. Sometimes people would come in, and they wonder, “what are you doing here with these 10 Beaujolais? I just want something kind of unctuous, almost no tannin, super friendly. And I’m gonna eat a steak off the grill. This Fleurie is purple and velvety and lush and dense and it’s perfect. But it’s not big and oaky and the alcohol isn’t high – all the things that people think they want. But it’s perfect. And you won’t wake up with a headache.

6. 2012 Domaine Coquelet Chiroubles

“In looking at my list, I realized that the Chiroubles and the Moulin-a-Vent and the Saint-Amour – and even the Brouilly – kind of come together as the very quintessential, medium bodied, tart, crushed red fruit style of Beaujolais. They’re full of flavors like currants and cranberry and maybe raspberry, with just enough acidity and they’re very well-balanced. They’re not the class clown or the one that never talks – they have a harder time sticking out. They’re just very much about the place and they’re subtle. Chiroubles is the reddest, tartest, cranberry-bog one of them all.”

7. 2010 Jean-Marc Burgaud Côtes du Py Morgon

“This is the black dress. I watched *Pretty Woman* 500 times when I was a kid and this wine makes me think of when Richard Gere says, “Can you find a nice dress? Classic.” And Julia Roberts says, “Boring.” And he says, elegant.” Sometimes wine can be overlooked because on the surface it seems boring, but this is just elegant. The vineyard, the Côte de Py is so beautiful and there’s this giant cross in the middle of it. You stand there and say, wow, that’s kind of amazing – wonder who put that there?” Apparently, it was a winemaker lady 500 who was super religious and just wanted this land to turn out well so she put a cross in the center. Okay, that’s cool.

8. 2011 Domaine de Colette Régnié

“This guy is a lot like the Chiroubles and it’s really affordable. It’s not as minerally as the Chiroubles, it’s more tart and fruity – it has the same weight, though. They’re both really bright and fresh. The Régnié is the more approachable of the two.”

9. 2012 Château Thivin Côtes de Brouilly

“This one is unfortunately getting more and more expensive. When people talk about broad shoulders on wine, it drives me nuts, but this wine it kind of like a really stinky farmer and he’s wearing plaid and it’s *broad* and it really sticks out. This wine is crunchy and earthy. It’s definitely most rustic of them all. It has that black soil flavor to it – not that I eat black soil a lot. But you know how when you’re gardening and you take black soil out of the bag? It has that sweet sour kind of thing that strikes me as really rustic.

10. 2013 Rémi & Laurence Dufaitre Brouilly

“This wine is brand spanking new to me and it’s from a young producer. The wine has that whole natural thing going on. It’s made without temperature control and by using indigenous yeast. It’s a little stinky, but it’s alive and pretty and has a real sense of that place.”

11. 2013 Domaine des Terres Dorées L’Ancien Beaujolais

“This is just plain old Beaujolais – it’s not even villages level, but that’s what a magician winemaker Jean-Paul Brun is. It’s a treat of a simple, but satisfying wine made from 80 year-old vines.”

12. 2012 Jean-Marc Burgaud James Côtes du Py Morgon

“Jean-Marc Burgaud may be my all-time favorite Beaujolais producers. Why is this wine special? Because Jean-Marc is making this old-vine Beaujolais as if it was Burgundy. He’s using some small barrels; he’s very particular about selection in the vineyard; he only makes it in the best vintages and – voila! This gorgeous thing. He calls it “James” because he’s a huge fan of James Bond and when he tasted the wine (which was mostly an experiment at first) he thought it was so good it and pleasurable that it must be what Ms. Money Penny feels like when she says “James” out loud. If you aren’t a James Bond fan, this means nothing, but Ms. Money Penny has a thing for 007.”