

The Scene on Wine.

## Meet the Francs

A long time ago in Southern France a brash young grape named Cabernet Franc met a wild young beauty named Sauvignon Blanc. The two grapes fell madly in love and propagated a child called Cabernet Sauvignon. In order to give their young Cabernet Sauvignon the life that they imagined for him, they moved to the region of Bordeaux, so that their young stud would grow up surrounded by class, wealth and prestige.

Growing up in the Chateau lined streets of Bordeaux, being cared for and treated by the world's best vineyard managers and wine makers; Cabernet Sauvignon was reared into a champion of grapes. This thick skinned, powerful young man's reputation has spread across the globe, making some of the world's most expensive wines from the Napa Valley in California to Bolgheri Superiore in Italy to the Colchagua Valley in Chile. Cabernet Sauvignon's success story has been well documented, but I think it is time that we meet the Parents.

Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc did their best to blend in, in Bordeaux. Cabernet Franc is often seen with his Son hanging out with Merlot, Petite Verdot, Malbec and Carmenere. Sauvignon Blanc on the other hand spends most of her time with her best friend Semillon, and occasionally the very feminine and floral Muscadelle. Blending in, in Bordeaux afforded their Son many opportunities, but Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc are really most comfortable in their historic home along the Loire River Valley which is referred to as the garden of France.

In the Loire Valley Cabernet France goes by such aliases as Chinon, Bourgueil, and Saint Nicolas-de-Bourgueil. The famous hard Tufa soil of the Loire is limestone baked by volcanic activity, and it brings out the masculine side of Cabernet Franc. He loves game hunting and cigar smoking, so he always has an earthy, tobacco hint to him on the nose. Although he is thinner skinned than his son he is capable of making brooding red wines, ripe with red fruits, green bell pepper and meaty qualities. The bucolic countryside of the Loire Valley can bring out the lighter side of Cabernet Franc as well. During his down time he can be seen relaxed in a fruity Rosé style of wine; yet still maintains his signature backbone of masculinity.

Sauvignon Blanc travels a little further up river to find her favorite spots along the Loire River Valley. In Sancerre she loves the famous chalk and Kimmeridgean clay soils that show her ability to be delicate, mineral driven with a touch of gun flint that she must pick up from hanging around Cabernet Franc after a day of hunting. Next door in Pouilly-Fume she occasionally winds down in a bath of some delicately toasted oak barrels, where she picks up a very light smoky scent. After all "Fume" does translate to smoke in French.

Their Son's ambitious nature to travel became contagious and Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc began crisscrossing the globe looking for spots to visit where they could set up roots and thrive outside of France.

It wasn't until Sauvignon Blanc traveled to New Zealand that she really let her hair down. Free from the constraints of French aristocracy, we get to see her true wild side which gave her the name "sauvage" meaning wild and "blanc" meaning white. Here we get to see her spicy side in the form of jalapeno pepper, gooseberry, green grassy

notes, with electric acidity. Her aggressive personality, and refusal to be ignored helped her muscled the ubiquitous chardonnay out of the way for the spotlight as the number one most planted grape in New Zealand. Her wild personality is adored by the Kiwis, and she is sure to reign supreme there for years to come.

One of the places that Cabernet Franc has set up camp is the North Fork of Long Island. The cooling influences of the Long Island Sound, the serenity of the North Fork and rich loam soils appear to agree with Cabernet Franc's wilderness lifestyle. If you can appreciate his masculine nature and embrace his rough edges that are true to his personality, than you should find some time to get together with Long Island's Cabernet Franc and let him tell you the noble history of the Franc family.