



The Joy of Paris in a Glass of Wine

If you're looking for a taste of Parisian style, these wines can help



By Regine T Rousseau | April 27, 2022



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I woke up this morning longing for Paris. I miss **Paris**.

I miss it in the way that I miss summer at the climax of a dramatic winter in my hometown of Chicago. Like I missed the tranquility of a dark movie theater during the pandemic. Like I miss my childhood best friend. Our friendship was uncomplicated, booming with laughter, and intimate. We were mirrors of each other, brown and skinny, always holding hands, sharing secrets and the same name.

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What Paris represents

In my teens, Paris was a fantasy. I dreamed of living in a four-bedroom apartment near the Musée d'Orsay with tall elaborate windows, shiny hardwood floors, and, of course, my handsome French Caribbean boyfriend. I dreamed of wearing black sheath dresses, kitten-heeled shoes, and eating croissants for breakfast; I hadn't yet formed a distrust of carbohydrates. All I knew of Paris in my youth was learned through books and movies.

My first visit was in the winter of 1993 with a group of American college students. One night, I strayed from the group and walked alone. I could not get lost in Paris. It felt familiar, like a rich aunt's home that I visited every summer vacation. Long walks alone in Paris would become a ritual for every visit following. I have shared some wonderful days in Paris with friends and strangers; however, my best days are the ones that I've spent with myself roaming the streets.

A love of beauty

I've been to Paris seven, maybe nine, times. I don't have a favorite restaurant, hotel, or even arrondissement. I would not make a good tour guide. I book an Airbnb, always in a different part of the city. I never want to know Paris fully. I shop at the market nearest my short-term apartment and pick up fresh eggs, pounds of ham, shrimp the size of a child's palm, vibrant vegetables, and yogurt. I empty many pretty glass jars of fresh yogurt. I don't make dinner reservations, but choose a restaurant by instinct, punctuating each pause of my walks with a glass of white Burgundy, Bordeaux, or French sparkling wine at a cafe that speaks to my soul. In Paris, it's all delicious.

I'll take Paris any time of the year, but I prefer to visit in the summer. On my most recent trip in the summer of 2019, I wore my favorite bright orange dress. I floated, and the dress blazed the streets, a streak of reddish yellow in a sky of muted tones. Parisians keep it classic and favor gray, black, and beige, even in the summer. The same orange dress in Chicago compels spectators to give glowing reviews such as, "I see you," or "great color."

In Paris, approval is more subtle and comes in the form of a nod, a raised eyebrow, or a slight upward shift of the corner of lips. Chicagoans celebrate style with a verbal high five, while Parisians simply expect it.



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Unfortunately, I can't hop aboard a plane every time I miss Paris. So, I satisfy the longing by simply creating a moment of beauty and then I am transported. Here are five beautiful French wines that will have you saying, Paris, Je t'aime!

5 French wines to try:

Langlois Crémant de Loire Brut NV (~\$20)

This sparkling wine from the [Loire Valley](#) in southwest France is like happening upon a small family-owned restaurant in Paris with a rising chef and delicious foods at reasonable prices. This wine tastes beyond its price and offers Parisian style luxury at a working woman's budget. The palate has creamy petite bubbles, a fresh citrus zest, and flavors of toasted baguette from 24 months of aging on the lees. A blend of 60% Chenin Blanc, 20% Chardonnay, and 20% Cabernet Franc.

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Joëlle Vrignaud Petit Chablis 2019 (~\$20)

This wine captures the mood of a springtime in Paris, lifting the spirit with its aromas of lemon custard, white flowers, and pears. The mouthfeel is soothing, and the palate has notes of lemon, apples, and minerality. So fresh, so clean, made from 100% Chardonnay from the north of Burgundy.

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Gérard Bertrand Clos du Temple



Languedoc Rosé 2020 (~\$139)

Paris was the first place I visited that exceeded my fantasies. It was everything that I imagined and more. It set the bar for all other travels to come, just as the magnificent [Gérard Bertrand Clos du Temple](#) has set the bar for all other rosé wines. A blend of Grenache, Cinsault, Syrah, and Mourvèdre grapes from the Languedoc in the South of France. The wine is a pale shimmering pink reminiscent of the pink Louis Vuitton purse I had circa 2002. Don't let the color fool you, because the wine is complex, intellectual, and seductive. It's a sip of la vie en rose.

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Château de la Font du Loup Châteauneuf Du Pape 2019 (~\$59)

From the deep ruby color to the nose of sweet red berries, wet earth, wood, warm spices, and wildflowers, the wine is opulent, generous with compounded flavors of red berries, sweet black cherries, roasted cinnamon, and fresh sweet herbs. Grill some lamb, open a bottle, and be transported to dining al fresco at a Parisian bistro.

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Château Guiraud Petit Guiraud Sauternes 2016 (~\$24) (375mL half bottle)



I can hardly make it one day in Paris without eating a “tarte au citron,” lemon tart. The combination of sweet and citrus is my idea of a balanced meal. I prefer to have my pastries midday and end a meal with a dessert wine, such as [Sauternes](#). A bottle of Sauternes can cost up to a night at a five-star suite in Paris. If you’re looking to have a taste of the suite life for less, the Château Guiraud Petit Guiraud Sauternes is an accessible introduction to Sauternes wines. The wine is medium-bodied, medium sweet with notes of honey, lemon, grapefruit, and spices.

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