

ARIES VIOLET
PINOT NOIR



A PERFECT LUNCH

On a perfect day

The kids were cranky and didn't want to go. We had been traveling through the Piedmont region of Italy, visiting winery after winery, and by the time we set out for one last stop, the children had had enough and were begging to do anything but sit through another boring winery and vineyard visit. But we had an appointment and needed to keep our commitment, so we stuffed them in the back seat of our little Italian sedan and whined our way up into the hills.

What we discovered completely changed the mood. The farm was beautiful in that somewhat chaotic, living way that real farms are beautiful. Our host jumped off an old tractor, fair-skinned and red-haired, wearing a torn white T-shirt, smudged with the work of the day and looking more like an organic farmer than anyone's polished idea of an Italian vigneron. Around him was a lively mix of people from all over the world, drawn there by wine and a shared belief in conscientious farming. Best of all, there were children everywhere, speaking different languages but sharing the one that mattered most: joy.

The kids ran off together, jumping onto an old horse carriage, some playing horse, pulling the carriage while others rode on top. It looked risky, but the kids were giggling, figuring out how to communicate as laughter overcame the language barrier. The adults walked the vines, talked farming, tasted wine, and eventually gathered for lunch beside the barn. There was a big pot of lentils, bread, salad, and wine. Our kids, who were not exactly lentil and salad enthusiasts in those days, followed the lead of the other hungry children and dug in as if it were the best thing they had ever tasted.

What stays with me most is what happened around the table. The meal was simple and modest, but it carried a quiet magic. People from different countries, speaking different languages, found themselves at ease with one another over lentils, bread, and wine. The bright, fresh, slightly chilled wine did what the best wines do: not call attention to itself, but make everything around it more vivid. It sharpened appetite, softened the distance between us, and turned a table of strangers into companions. By the end of lunch, it felt as though we had all been speaking the same language all along - and the kids did not want to leave.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "ROBERT SINSEY". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style with a long, sweeping underline.



Pinot Noir, Aries Violet, Los Carneros, Napa Valley 2024

Bright, juicy, and full of energy, this organically farmed, biodynamic, regenerative Pinot Noir opens with fresh red berries, wild strawberry, and a floral lift. The semi-carbonic fermentation brings purity of fruit and a lively, silky texture, while the palate stays fresh and light on its feet. A light chill draws its brightness into even sharper focus, making it especially good with simple, satisfying food and the kind of meals that bring people together.

Winegrowing Notes

This organic, biodynamic, regenerative Pinot Noir is grown to capture brightness, vitality, and ease at the table. Healthy soils, living cover crops, and a farming system that gives back more than it takes bring balance and energy to the fruit, while careful farming preserves freshness and a clear sense of place.

In the cellar, a semi-carbonic approach emphasizes vivid fruit, lift, and a supple, easy texture. The goal is not weight or power, but a wine that feels alive—something that can brighten a simple meal and make a gathering more convivial. Served with a light chill, it becomes even more refreshing, inviting people to linger at the table a little longer.





GATHERING

Oftentimes, the simplest meal gives the most pleasure. You can't get any simpler than serving up an earthy lentil stew topped with juicy sausages. Hearty and sustaining, it is a meal that begs to be shared with a hungry pack of family and friends gathered around the table. This one-pot meal is also a gift for the cook. It gives them time to sit down, take a breath, and share in the celebration of a simple and sustaining repast.

The vivacity of a lightly chilled bottle of our Aries Pinot Noir is a perfect accompaniment to the delicate, creamy lentils and savory sausage. The bright, lifted fruit notes and zippy acidity lift your taste buds after each sip and carry you through to the last bite of this delicious meal.

Until the next wine... *Maria*

ITALIAN SAUSAGES WITH UMBRIAN LENTILS

Umbrian lentils from Italy are a delicious treat. Unlike the widely known brown lentil in America, Umbrian lentils are creamy on the inside but don't lose their shape unless they are badly overcooked. Be sure to wash the lentils and pick through them to remove stones and debris to avoid any unpleasant surprises. Serves 8

1 pound (2¼ cups) dry lentils

4 garlic cloves

2 medium carrots

1 medium onion

2 celery stalks

2 strips apple wood smoked bacon, cut into small pieces

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1 bay leaf

½ cup tomato puree

Water, veg or chicken stock

6 sweet Italian sausages or your sausage of choice

Extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley

1 lemon

- 1.** Clean the lentils, see headnote. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
- 2.** Peel and trim the garlic cloves; leave whole. Peel, trim, and dice the carrots into ¼-inch cubes. Dice the onion finely. Wash, trim, and dice the celery into ¼-inch cubes.
- 3.** Heat a Dutch oven or 4-quart pot over medium heat. Add the bacon and render it until it exudes fat and starts to brown. Turn up the heat and add the diced onion, celery, carrot, and garlic. Sauté the vegetables until they start to brown, season with salt and pepper.
- 4.** Add the lentils to the pot and sauté until the lentils are warm to the touch. Add the bay leaf. Add the tomato puree and enough liquid to cover the lentils by 1 inch and bring the pot to a boil. Reduce the heat to a gentle simmer. Taste the broth for seasoning and add more salt and pepper if necessary. Cook until the lentils and vegetables are almost tender, about 20 minutes. Add more liquid if it dips below the surface of the lentils.
- 5.** Turn off the heat. Place the sausage on top of the lentils, drizzle with olive oil, add more liquid if needed, and move the pan to the oven and cook uncovered for 20 to 30 minutes until the sausages are cooked through.

6. Remove the bay leaf and set the sausages aside on a plate. Use a slotted spoon to spoon the lentils into shallow bowls. Place the sausages on top of the lentils. Take one cup of lentil broth and season to taste. Whisk in 3 tablespoons of olive oil, the chopped parsley, and a squeeze of lemon, and spoon over the top of the sausages. Serve immediately.

Note: The lentils can be made up to four days ahead of time. Store them in their cooking liquid in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Variation for a fabulous, hearty soup: Remove the bay leaf, then puree 1 cup of the lentils. Add back to the pot. If the soup is too thick, thin it with a little stock or water. Season to taste.





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