

SQUAB WITH BRUSSELS SPROUTS AND BACON

by Christopher Lee

Squab is the American name for a farm-raised fledgling pigeon. Common in Europe, squab can be harder to find in the United States, though many Asian markets sell them fresh, as do good butcher shops. They also can often be found frozen in grocery stores. If squab are unavailable in your area, a good substitute is Cornish hen or quail. The smokiness and char of the brussels sprouts make the dish a sublime pairing with Fantino's Barbera Superiore.

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| 4 whole squab, split down the back,
leaving each in one piece | 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil |
| 2 ounces sweet wine such as muscat,
Madeira, or light port | 1 ½ pounds brussels sprouts,
bottom trimmed, sliced through
the stem ¼ inch thick |
| 1 ½ teaspoons sea salt | 2 whole shallots, peeled,
sliced ¼ inch thick |
| ¼ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper,
preferably Tellicherry | 1 clove garlic, peeled, thinly sliced |
| ¼ teaspoon fennel seed, crushed | Pinch of red chili flakes |
| 3–4 stems fresh thyme | 2 ounces apple cider vinegar or verjuice |
| ¼ pound smoked bacon, cut into lardons | 2 tablespoons unsalted butter |

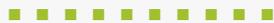
Drizzle squab with sweet wine and toss to coat. Season with 1 teaspoon sea salt, black pepper, and fennel seed. Strip thyme leaves from stems and sprinkle over squab. Allow squab to marinate for 30–45 minutes.

Sauté bacon lardons over medium heat until crisp on the outside and tender within. Toss to brown evenly. Remove lardons from pan and tip off the bacon fat. Wipe pan dry with a paper towel. Add 2 tablespoons olive oil to medium-hot pan. Add brussels sprouts and sauté for 8–10 minutes until browned and soft, turning with a wooden spoon. Add shallots, garlic, and chili flakes. Toss with wooden spoon for 3–4 minutes to brown. Add apple cider vinegar or verjuice to pan and cook until liquid is nearly evaporated. Reduce heat, add lardons and butter to brussels sprouts, and toss to melt butter. Season with remaining ½ teaspoon sea salt. Place brussels sprouts in a warm spot while preparing squab.

Shake squab gently to remove excess liquid. Drizzle with remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil. Grill squab over medium-high heat or pan-fry in a cast-iron pan coated with olive oil skin side down until squab is well browned and crisp. Turn squab and brown on other side.

Transfer brussels sprouts to a warm platter, arranging in a low mound. Cut each squab into 4 pieces and place on top of brussels sprouts. Drizzle with any pan juices.

Makes 4 servings



Christopher Lee is a former head chef of Chez Panisse and Eccolo restaurants in Berkeley and co-founder of Pop-Up General Store in Oakland. Visit his website: oldfashionedbutcher.com.

ROUGE

FEBRUARY 2021



2018 BARBERA D'ALBA SUPERIORE

A. & G. FANTINO

SOMEWHAT UNIQUE as far as red-wine regions go, Piedmont boasts three outstanding grape varieties that star in their own, distinct bottlings. Barbera—not to be confused with Barolo or Barbaresco, villages known for world-class Nebbiolo—is one of those grapes, and it is notable in its versatility. It can be fashioned into lighter *vini da tavola*, suitable for a lunch break, or more robust, complex cuvées that you want to sip throughout the night. Originating from a great *terroir* and having aged over a year according to *superiore* standards, this bottling from Alessandro and Gian Natale Fantino belongs in the latter camp. With succulent fruit and refreshing acidity, it is remarkably full-flavored. It speaks boldly, asking to be paired with hearty winter meals or lighter spring fare, ensuring a delightful match thanks to its food-friendly nature. Notes of wild red fruit and a nice, firm tannin will match well with a variety of dishes, but I highly recommend Chris Lee's recipe for squab and brussels sprouts! —Tom Wolf

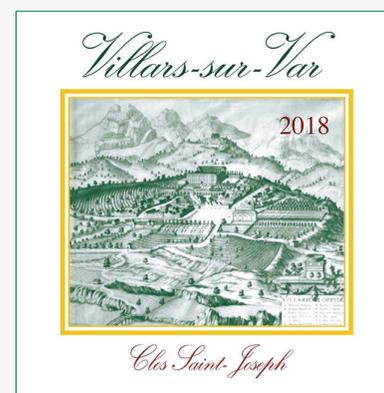
\$24.00 PER BOTTLE \$259.20 PER CASE



2018 CÔTES DE PROVENCE ROUGE CLOS SAINT-JOSEPH

EVEN THE MOST SEASONED TRAVELERS might think they are familiar with all that Provence has to offer—until they drive up the hill to Villars-sur-Var, which sits on the doorstep of the French Alps, three hours east of Marseille and forty-five minutes north of Nice. Tucked in among limestone mountains that shield it from the Mediterranean heat, this slice of the region enjoys a very distinct microclimate. So you can imagine how thrilled we were to make not only a wine discovery but also a geographic and cultural one three years ago, when we ventured to Clos Saint-Joseph, a tiny domaine run by Roch Sassi. Roch crafts red, white, and a rosé that offer entirely different expressions of the region from, say, Bandol or Cassis. His wines are more alpine, showcasing vivid, fresh fruit and less ripeness or muscle, though they still have impressive structure. Conditions were perfect in 2018: the grapes ripened ideally, resulting in an elegant, medium-bodied *rouge* with notes of red fruit and spices. It drinks wonderfully now and will evolve beautifully over the next five to ten years. If you have not become acquainted with this domaine since we introduced it, you're in for a treat. —Tom Wolf

\$55.00 PER BOTTLE \$594.00 PER CASE



2018 Barbera d'Alba Superiore A. & G. Fantino	Barbera	Vines planted in 2015 Gray marl, clay	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant optional	Blackberries, forest, licorice Rich, full-bodied, balanced	Drink now through 2025
2018 Côtes de Provence Rouge Clos Saint-Joseph	50% Syrah, 20% Mourvèdre, 15% Grenache, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% varied	50-year-old vines, on average Clay, limestone	Serve <i>slightly cool</i> 58–62° F Decant optional	Red fruit, earth, spice Fresh, elegant, floral	Drink now through 2030

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