



AGED IN PAPPY VAN WINKLE BARRELS



FRENCH BELLE

The Original Bourbon Barrel Wine
Pioneered in 2000 by Dan Philips and Julian Van Winkle

Region: Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux

Blend: 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc

Vines: 30 years old

Soils: Clay and Sandy

Yields: 50 hl/ha

Winemaker: Herve Largeteau et Oriol Illa

Alcohol: 14.1%

Tasting Notes:

Delicious and unique. There's something magical about the interaction of bourbon oak and Bordeaux that somehow makes both better. The texture is silkier, the flavors deeper, the finish longer, the wine more complex. The result is a wine that waltzes between lightness and power. The wine is a Castillon but it tastes like Cru St. Emilion. Castillon soil and region are contiguous and adjacent to St Emilion.

Background

The idea to use the bourbon barrels came over a dinner years ago that I shared with my buddy Julian Van Winkle at a Southern Foodways Alliance meeting at Blackberry Farm in 2001. It was simply an idea that came up in conversation. Hey, let's do something together. What about putting wine in used Pappy barrels? Okay, I'll send you some. I don't know if you've ever seen old, used bourbon barrels, but they're ugly. When the winemakers first saw the barrels, they flat out refused to put wine anywhere near them. But, eventually they did and the result was not only delicious but magical.

The length of time in Van Winkle barrels varies depending on many variables: how many uses they've had, the wine, the year, the taste, the balance. There is no set formula but we know the wine we're trying to create and use the barrels as much as needed to get it. We want the wine to have bourbon influence but still maintain its integrity as a fine wine. We don't want a freaky bourbon wine. Bourbon is an element of complexity not a dominant element. At least that's our aim.

Many people who taste the wine and don't know there is bourbon influence would not necessarily smell or taste bourbon in the wine. I like that. I've been making this wine since 2005 vintage so we've learned a huge amount about the use of these special barrels.

NY Prices:

Frontline: \$192/case

3 Case Deal: \$168/case



APRIL SELECTIONS