

12 Brix Verjus

Verjus is the tart, fresh juice of unripe grapes.

With all the excitement over the wine, Verjus, a delicious byproduct of the wine-making process, is often overlooked.

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Verjus Relish

This is especially good with grilled fish or chicken breast.

3/4 tsp	ground cumin	1/4 cup	chopped fresh cilantro
5 T	olive oil	2 T	fresh lime juice
1 bunch	green onions, chopped	1/2 tsp	chili powder
1/2 cup	Featherstone Verjus		

Stir cumin in medium skillet over medium heat until aromatic, about 1 min. Transfer to a bowl. Heat 1 T oil in same skillet over medium heat. Add green onions and saute 2 min. Add to cumin. Add remaining 4 T of oil, verjus, cilantro, lime juice and chili powder to bowl and whisk to blend. Season with salt and pepper. Makes about 1 1/3 cups.

Versatile Verjus Marinade

1 cup	Featherstone Verjus	1 tsp	olive oil
1 T	Dijon mustard	1 tsp	herbes de Provence
1 clove	garlic, minced		

Whisk ingredients together in a small bowl. Ideal for fish fillets or chicken. This marinade will keep one week in the refrigerator.

Poached Salmon in Verjus

1 cup	Featherstone Verjus
1/4 cup	shallots, minced
2	salmon steaks, about 8 oz/250 gm each
1 T	butter
	salt and white pepper to taste
1 tsp	chives, chopped

Place the verjus and chopped shallots in a frying pan and heat. Add the salmon steaks. Cover and bring to a simmer. Decrease the heat and simmer until fish is cooked, 4-5 min. Lift the fish onto 2 dinner plates and keep warm. Strain the juices and return to pan. Boil over high heat, uncovered until juices have reduced to 1/3 cup - about 5-7 min. Whisk in the butter, add the chives and adjust seasoning. Pour over the fish.

Verjus (pronounced ver-ZHU) literally means 'green juice' and refers to the tart, fresh juice of unripe wine grapes. It is a mellow substitute for vinegar or lemon juice, and when reduced produces a delectable base for sauces- the perfect balance of sweet and tart.

Brix is a unit of measurement used to determine the sugar content, and therefore the ripeness, of grapes at harvest.

Featherstone 12 Brix Verjus is made from Cabernet Franc grapes removed from our vines in midsummer, at a point in the growing cycle called veraison. Thinning the grape crop is an important part of managing our vineyards and producing high-quality wines because it concentrates energy and flavour in the remaining grapes. The number of grapes thinned by hand depends on the season and usually the culled fruit are left on the ground as compost. However if harvested and pressed into Verjus, they make a non-alcoholic, highly acidic juice with a tart apple-like flavour. Verjus has been used since the Middle Ages as a sauce ingredient, a tenderizer, a condiment and in deglazing. You can use Verjus as you would lemon juice or vinegar in any recipe, but while vinegar may clash with the wine you are serving, Verjus compliments wine.

Goat Cheese and Verjus Salad Dressing

Use on sturdy greens- romaine, radicchio or endive

4 oz (125 gm)	Chevre	2 T	parsley, chopped
2 T	sour cream		pinch black pepper
1/8 tsp	garlic, minced	1/3 cup	Verjus
1 tsp	fresh thyme		

Softened the chevre in a small mixing bowl with the back of a wooden spoon and stir in sour cream, garlic, herbs and black pepper. Whisk in the verjus. Allow flavours to blend for a couple of hours before using.

Winemaker's Lemonade

Pour verjus over crushed ice, add some sparkling water and a slice of fresh lemon.

Verjus should be refrigerated after opening. To best preserve open bottles longer than a week or two, pour into ice cube trays and freeze.

Verjus Poached Pears

Use these pears in a salad, along with a cheese course or as a light dessert with some poaching liquid.

2	pears, firm but ripe	1/2	cinnamon stick
2 cups	Featherstone Verjus	1	whole clove
1/2 cup	granulated sugar	2	whole allspice berries
1/4 tsp	vanilla extract	1/4	inch slice of fresh ginger

Peel, half and core the pears. Combine the remaining ingredients in a non-reactive saucepan and bring to a gentle boil. Add the pears, simmer until just tender, about 10 min. Allow the pears and liquid to cool to room temperature and store refrigerated.